
Meeting	Cabinet Resources Committee
Date	25 February 2013
Subject	Environment, Planning and Regeneration Fees and Charges for 2013/2014
Report of	Cabinet Members for Environment, Housing, Planning, Safety & Resident Engagement and Customer Access & Partnerships
Summary	To approve the increases and other changes to Environment, Planning and Regeneration fees and charges 2013/14

Officer Contributors	Pam Wharfe, Director for Place
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards Affected	Not Applicable
Key Decision	Yes
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in	Not Applicable
Function of	Executive
Enclosures	Appendix A – Environment, Planning and Regeneration Fees & Charges Appendix B – Building Control Charging Scheme Appendix C – Greenwich Leisure Ltd Charges Appendix D – Environment Impact Assessment Household Waste Bin Charges
Contact for Further Information:	Contact for further information: Cory Sunderland, Performance & Monitoring Support Officer (020) 8359 3014

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Director for Place be authorised in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members to make changes to the Charging Schedule as detailed in Appendices A, B and C of the report subject to consultation findings and Appendix D (Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)) as required to progress through approval and adoption by the Committee to take effect from 1 April 2013, or as soon as practicable.**

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet Resources Committee, 23 September 2004 (Decision item 6) – agreed that increases in fees and charges above the rate assumed in the Financial Forward Plan be approved by the Cabinet Resources Committee.**
- 2.2 Cabinet Resources Committee, 14 December 2011(Decision item 14) – resolved that:**
- The fees and charges (charging schedule) for the Environment, Planning and Regeneration Directorate as detailed in Appendix A and C of the report were approved for public consultation**
 - The Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration is authorised in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members to make changes to the Charging Schedule as detailed in Appendix A and C of the report subject to consultation findings and the Equality Impact Assessments as required to progress through approval and adoption by the Committee to take effect from 1 February 2012 or at the latest 1 April 2012.**
 - That the Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration and the Cabinet Member for Environment give particular consideration to the configuration of parking charges.**
- 2.3 Delegated Powers Report 1508, approved for public consultation the inflation based increases in and other changes to Environment, Planning and Regeneration fees and charges 2012/13**
- 2.4 Delegated Powers Report 1600, approved the inflation based increases in and other changes to Environment, Planning and Regeneration fees and charges 2012/13.**
- 2.5 Delegated Powers Report 1624, approved, after public consultation, the new and above inflation based increases and other changes to Environment, Planning and Regeneration fees and charges 2012/13.**
- 2.6 Delegated Powers Report 1727, approved new Parking initiatives and charges in Environment, Planning and Regeneration.**
- 2.7 Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 31 July 2012, considered Delegated Powers Report 1727 as this matter was called in. The committee resolved not to refer the matter back to Cabinet.**

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Fees, charges and allowances need to be reviewed to ensure value for money thereby complying with the 2012/13 Corporate Plan priority ‘Better Services with Less Money’.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 The increases in fees and charges are necessary to offset rising costs, meet income targets and deliver budget savings.
- 4.2 Increasing fees and charges always poses an element of risk around the proportionate level of increase, when compared to resident’s ability to pay and/or resident’s test of reasonableness. Every effort has been made to manage the charge increase to an appropriate level; however, some element of reputational risk will remain.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 Notifications in respect of annual increases to fees and charges are the subject of public notice; this enables all residents to be made aware of the increase in charges and their applicable date of change. All fees and charges have been published online on the consultation portal for residents’ feedback and comments prior to implementation. Any changes as a result of consultation feedback are reflected in this report.
- 5.2 The Fees and Charges schedule includes above inflation increases to a number of services including Trade Waste, Clinical Trade waste, & Household domestic and green waste collection, as well as new charging regime for special collections. Careful consideration has been given to these proposals in terms of equality and diversity issues in order to identify and analyse what, if any, potential impact the proposals may have on any residents and users of the services within the protected groups. EIA risk assessments for proposals to introduce above inflation fees and charges increase to trade clinical waste and trade waste collections concluded that these are services provided primarily to private businesses in a commercially competitive environment and equalities impact is anticipated for any of the protected characteristics.
- 5.3 An equalities impact assessment also considered the potential impacts of the above inflation charges for fete bin services, special collections and household domestic and green waste bins. Overall, it is not envisaged that the service change will have an adverse impact nor discriminate specifically against any of the equalities groups. The refuse collection service is delivered universally to all households within the borough. It is anticipated that the changes will in fact affect all the identified groups equally. This assessment is included in the Appendices of this report.
- 5.4 The outcomes and impact of these changes will be monitored and measured against current information to ensure that different groups are not adversely affected, as well as being compared against those of different boroughs.

5.5 The Consultation findings and Equality Impact Assessments will be taken into account in this report to the Committee prior to the approval of the decision to implement the new fees and charges set out in the Appendices.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 6.1 The impact of increased fees and charges will be taken into account in the 2013/14 revenue monitoring and the 2014/15 forward plan process.
- 6.2 The new charging schedule will achieve retail price index increases to assist in the continued delivery of high quality services.
- 6.3 All prices listed do not include VAT, which will only be charged where indicated.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 Various legislation permits charging for the different services provided by the Council. They include the Local Government Act 2003; the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010; Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976; and Road Traffic Act Regulation Act 1984.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS (Relevant section from the Constitution, Key/Non-Key Decision)

- 8.1 Council Constitution, Part 3, Responsibility for Functions, paragraph 3.6 states the functions of the Cabinet Resources Committee including considering income sources and charging policies.
- 8.2 Paragraph 3.8 of the Council's Financial Regulations requires that the Cabinet Resources Committee (CRC) approves changes to fees and charges that are significantly different from inflation.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 9.1 Fees and charges are normally increased annually as appropriate. The level of increase is a decision delegated to the relevant director in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member however, increases exceeding the rate of inflation need to be reported to and agreed by the Cabinet Resources Committee.
- 9.2 Planning application fees are set nationally by Government and are therefore not included in this report.
- 9.3 Notifications in respect of 2013/14 proposed annual increases to fees and charges across a range of EPR services were the subject of public consultation during the period 8 November to 21 December 2012. The proposed schedule of fees was published on the council's engagement portal

inviting feedback and comments from members of the public.

- 9.4 No response or feedback was received for any of the fees and charges proposed in the published schedule during the course of the public consultation.
- 9.5 However, 10 responses were received in the consultation mailbox in connection with allotment rents that were the subject of last year's 2012/13 consultation. Those rent increase proposals were approved following last 2011/12 budget setting and consultation process and are due to be implemented 1 April 2013. As a result, they do not fall within the scope of the fees and charges consultation concluded on 21 December 2012.
- 9.6 A majority of the 10 allotment comments expressed the view that the increases are unjustified, unfair and potentially detrimental to the council's reputation. The general feeling is that either the increases should be delayed or that council should ensure that allotment self-management should be implemented before the 2013/2014 increases take effect in April. However, the council is in the process of transferring management of allotment sites across the borough and is confident that the majority of the allotment portfolio will have transferred by April 2013. Any site which has not opted for the self management model will be subject to the new rent structure as approved in Delegated Powers Report 1624 dated 29 March 2012. That report has also dealt with the Equalities Impact Assessment and council's response to the consultation representations in the previous year process.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

Cleared by Finance (Officer's initials)	JH/MC
Cleared by Legal (Officer's initials)	CH