

Committee: Special Council

Date of Meeting:

2nd March, 2020

Report Subject:

**Corporate Fees & Charges Register
2020/2021**

Portfolio Holder:

**Leader/Executive Member –
Corporate Services, Councillor Nigel
Daniels**

Report Submitted by:

**Anne-Louise Clark, Chief Officer
Commercial**

Report Written by:

**Gina Taylor – Service Manager
Accountancy**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	18/02/2020						02/03/2020	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to approve the fees & charges to be applied for the 2020/2021 financial year, including the core fees & charges to be operated by the Aneurin Leisure Trust.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Income Policy was agreed by Council in May 2014 and included the following:

- Relevant legislation which allows councils to generate a range of fees and charges and that income is a budget and funding tool;
- The range of areas in scope;
- Key principles such as the rationale for charging, ability to charge, service cost recovery, subsidies and concessions, trading, income collection, debt management and income management;
- A decision tree for deciding whether to charge;
- Detailed principles;
- Creation of a Fees & Charges Register; and
- Income management which included the creation of a fees and charges register.

- 2.2 The Bridging the Gap Programme includes a Strategic Business Review on Fees & Charges to ensure that the Council is maximising its income by ensuring fees and charges are set at a level that covers the costs of delivering the goods and services it provides where appropriate.

2.3 The review includes:

- A review of the Income Generation Policy – This was undertaken in 2018 by an external consultant and confirmed that the policy was robust and relevant to support the financial priorities of the Council.
- The application of a range of uplifts where the market would allow.

2.4 The current Fees and Charges register has been reviewed to:

- Ensure all fees & charges included on the register are relevant for 2020/2021
- Reflect changes in local and national policy and charges
- Reflect a minimum increase of 2% uplift in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Consider if fees & charges can be increased in line with the principles of the Strategic Business Review, and this includes considering an annual uplift of 5.5%, where applicable.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

To include Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CMT/Committees/Other groups

3.1 **Option 1 (Preferred Option)**

3.1.1 Members of the Council consider and approve the register of Fees & Charges for 2020/2021 attached at Appendix 1, and the core price increases relating to Aneurin Leisure Trust attached at Appendix 2.

3.2 **Option 2**

3.2.1 Members of the Council consider and do not approve the Fees & Charges Register for 2020/2021 and core price increases at Aneurin Leisure Trust, and propose alternative fee increases.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 This report supports the Council Priority, “Efficient Council”. Income generation contribute funding towards the cost of delivering services and supports the Councils’ financial resilience.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)**

5.1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the 2020/2021 budget assumes an inflationary uplift of 2% per annum for fees & charges and the Strategic Business Review assumes an estimated achievement of £200,000 for 2020/2021, of which £95,000 is estimated to be achieved through

increasing discretionary fees by 5.5% where there is scope within the market without having a significant impact on demand.

- 5.1.2 The proposed increases included in the 2020/2021 Fees & Charges Register are in line with the 2020/2021 budget.
- 5.1.3 The proposed 2020/2021 register of Fees & Charges is attached at Appendix 1. The register includes the charge for 2019/2020 financial year, and identifies whether the proposed fee increase equates to:

(A) 2% - This uplift is proposed for a range of fees including:

- Social Services including non-residential, residential, respite care and telecare charges
- Meals on Wheels
- Cemeteries
- Skips & Scaffold Permits

(B) 5.5% - This uplift is proposed for a range of fees including:

- Weddings & Ceremonies
- Rights of Way
- Markets
- Hire charges for grounds /pitches
- Trade Waste replacement receptacles
- Bulky waste collection
- Highways fees
- Education Recoupment fees
- General Offices equipment hire
- Estates fees including garage leases

(C) Other – This proposal includes:

- Regulated fees
- Social Services - Private Provider care charges have increased on average by 7% to reflect the increase in the National Living Wage and pension contributions for 2020/2021.
- Trade Waste charges – these have been set in line with the outcome of the strategic business review.
- Bulky Waste collection – to remain at 2019/2020 prices.
- School meals – an increase of £0.10 per meal (4%)
- General Offices Room Hire – to remain at 2019/2020 prices to remain competitive with the market.
- Planning Fees – A proposed increase of 20%, to reflect the current fee plus VAT.
- Land rentals including garages – No increase proposed at this stage. These charges will form part of the strategic business review for Property and Assets.

5.1.4 The proposed fee increases for Licensing Fees have been included in the Register for completeness, however they are currently out to consultation, which is due to conclude on 13 February 2020 and following this, will be considered by the Licensing Committee.

5.1.5 Aneurin Leisure Trust has submitted a list of proposed fees and charges for 2020/2021 (attached at Appendix 2) for Core Services, to be approved by Council in line with the Funding and Management agreement. The proposed increases range from 2% to 4.48%.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

5.2.1 Fee increases may impact on demand and result in a decrease in income, particularly in the short term.

5.2.2 Demand and the impact on the budget will be monitored and reported as part of the Financial Reporting Framework.

5.2.3 Should Council not agree the proposed increase in Fees & Charges for 2020/2021, this may result in a cost pressure and a reduction in the contribution to Specific Reserves for 2020/2021.

5.3 **Legal**

5.3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report. However, charging and trading for local authorities must comply with the Local Government Act 2003 and The Localism Act 2011.

5.4 **Human Resources**

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications arising out of this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

6.1.1 Fees and charges generate approximately £14m per annum in income, and contribute towards funding the cost of delivering Council service, of which £2m relates to commercial activities.

6.1.2 The forecast income for 2019/2020 (as at December 2019) broken down over activity is as follows:

Table 1 – Analysis of Anticipated Income 2019/2020

	Examples include:	£'m
Commercial Activity	Trade waste/bulky waste collection, markets, industrial units, meals on wheels, cemeteries, Property services – external works	2.1
Internal SLAs	Services provided to Schools including support services, catering and cleaning	3.3
External SLAs	Services provided to Aneurin Leisure Trust	0.2
Court Costs / Fines	Fixed Penalty Notices	0.3
Social Care Charges	Fairer Charging; Charging other Local Authorities; Continuing Health Care; Sale of property	4.4
Other	Planning, Licensing, Recoupment, sale of school meals, RASWA etc	4.1
TOTAL		14.5

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

6.2.1 The setting of fees and charges on an annual basis is essential to maintaining economic resilience, however, these should be set at a cost that local people can afford and taking into account the protected characteristics.

6.3 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

6.3.1 The review of the Fees & Charges Register has been prepared in consultation with relevant officers.

6.3.2 Services look to involve partners and citizens in consultation where possible. The impact of these charges will be reviewed throughout the year by officers, along with any issues raised by users of the services affected.

6.4 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

6.4.1 Full cost recovery will support the long term financial resilience and the ability to maintain facilities and services for the people of Blaenau Gwent.

6.5 Preventative focus

6.5.1 Income generation contributes funding towards delivering Council Services and investing into early intervention and prevention activities.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

6.6.1 The Council works in partnership with Aneurin Leisure Trust to deliver services to the public in support of the well-being objectives.

6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

6.7.1 The services provided have a positive impact socially and on the health and wellbeing of those who use the facilities provided.

6.8 **EqIA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

6.8.1 The Strategic Business Review on Fees and Charges have been subject to screening.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

State how the work will be monitored e.g. through scrutiny or directorate performance management arrangements

7.1 The regular review of the corporate fees and charges register is a vital component of the Council's budget setting proposal and should be monitored and refreshed to ensure it is in line with the Council's agreed income policy and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7.1.1 Actual Income achieved from Fees & Charges during the financial year will be monitored and reported to Corporate Leadership Team and Members as part of the Financial Reporting Framework.

Background Documents /Electronic Links



● Council Fees and Charges register 2020



Appendix 2 - ALT Fees & Charges.docx