

FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW 2024/25

Finance and Investment Advisory Committee – 11 January 2024

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – Finance and Trading

Status: For Decision

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary:

In order to help the Council achieve the aim to deliver a balanced budget position over the next 10-year period a review of all Fees and Charges has been undertaken.

This report supports the Key Aim of: efficient management of the Council's resources.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Kevin Maskell

Contact Officer(s): Alan Mitchell, Ext. 7483

Recommendation to Finance and Investment Advisory Committee:

Members views are requested on the fees and charges included in the report.

Introduction

- 1 The Council is required to deliver a balanced budget which is made up of income & expenditure.
- 2 Sevenoaks District Council hasn't previously conducted an annual review of fees & charges but rather an ad hoc process where individual services review their fees and charges periodically dependant on the service needs or changes in legislation.
- 3 At the start of the budget process and as reported in the 'Budget 2024/25: 'Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIA's)' report, the 2024/25 budget gap was £1.368m. Part of the proposed solution is additional income from fees and charges.

Fees & Charges Review

- 4 With significant budget pressures expected as part of the 2024/25 budget process an extensive review all fees and charges was started in September.
- 5 As part of that review both statutory and non statutory fees and charges have been reviewed to ensure we are charging the appropriate fees.
- 6 As part of the review other authorities were used as a comparison to ensure we remained competitive and in line with the market.
- 7 This review forms part of our Financial Strategy and will be conducted on an annual basis going forward.

2024/25 Budget

- 8 Within the budget assumptions income is set to increase by 2.5% in all years.
- 9 It is anticipated that the fees and charges listed in Appendix A will deliver a further £300,000 in addition to the 2.5% assumption. Should the fees and charges listed in Appendix A not be approved then alternative budget solutions will be required.

Key Implications

Financial

All financial implications are covered elsewhere in this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications.

For the effective management of our resources and in order to achieve a sustainable budget it is essential that all service cost changes and risks are identified and considered.

A separate Risks and Assumptions report will be presented to the Finance and Investment Advisory Committee and Cabinet.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Net Zero Implications

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district or supporting the resilience of the natural environment.

Appendices

Appendix A - 2024-25 Fees and Charges Price list

Background Papers

None

Adrian Rowbotham

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – Finance & Trading