



REPORT TO: SPECIAL MORAY COUNCIL ON 24 JANUARY 2024

SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: CHARGING FOR SERVICES

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Council with a comprehensive list of revised charges for Council services for 2024/25.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Council in terms of Section III (B) (1) and (48) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to financial policy and the setting of charges.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current Charging for Services Policy was approved by Council on 12 December 2023 (paragraph 7 of the draft Minute refers). Under the policy, an annual revision of charges is required. In order to preserve the Council's financial position, charges within the control of this council are generally inflated annually and Council at the same meeting agreed that the default increase for 2024/25 would be 5.7%.
- 2.2 The Charging for Services Policy assumes a default position of full cost recovery, recognising that there will be exceptions to that rule. In cases where the Council offers a service where there are alternative service providers then market conditions should be taken into account. In other instances benchmarking with other local authorities may be a good test of reasonableness. There may be policy reasons for charging at less than full cost recovery for some services. However, charging for services is an important tool when considering the Council's overall budget and the Council's Short to Medium term Financial Strategy, which was approved by Council on 27 September 2023, includes maximising income as a priority to minimise the needs to reduce service levels.
- 2.3 Not all charges are within the Council's control. Some charges levied by the Council for services provided are set by statute, some are limited by statute and some have the method of calculation prescribed by statute – these are included in the list of charges for Council services for the sake of completeness.

- 2.4 A full list of proposed charges is appended to this report as **APPENDIX 1**, under exception of burial charges which are currently being prepared and Fit Life charge, which are the subject of discussion with Moray Leisure Ltd..

3. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The levying of charges for Council services is an essential component of delivering Council priorities on a sustainable basis.

(b) Policy and Legal

The current policy for charging for Council services was approved by this Council on 25 October 2023. There are no legal implications arising from this report. Some charges are set or limited by legislation.

(c) Financial implications

Increased income from charges will contribute to the Council's financial sustainability.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities implications or implications for the socio-economic duty arising from this report

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no implications for climate change or biodiversity arising from this report.

(i) Consultations

All services have been consulted as to recommended charges and reasons for any departures from the default increase.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 **A comprehensive list of charges proposed for 2024/25 is appended at APPENDIX 1, with the exception of burial charges which are still under preparation and Fit Life charges which are still under discussion with Moray Leisure Ltd.**

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Background Papers:
Ref: SPMAN-1293228629-1030