

Rother District Council

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	2 November 2020
Title:	Fees and Charges 2021/22
Report of:	Joe Powell, Head of Housing and Community
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Brewerton
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of Report:	To propose a set of revised fees and charges for a range of services provided by the Council.
Decision Type:	Key
Officer Recommendation(s):	It be RESOLVED: That:
1)	the charges shown in Appendices 1 - 6 be approved and brought into effect from 1 April 2021;
2)	the charges shown in Appendix 5(b) be brought in from July 2021; and
3)	the charges in Appendix 9 be brought into effect from January 2021.
4)	the Head of Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Performance Management and Environment and Place be given delegated authority to implement an incentive scheme for new garden waste customers who sign up before March 2021.
Reasons for Recommendations:	To ensure that the Council achieves sufficient income and thereby reduces subsidy on non-essential services which may compromise the Council's ability to fund statutory services.

Introduction

1. This report proposes a set of revised fees and charges for a range of services provided by the Council. The Council regularly reviews and revises its rates for fees and charges so that either all or a proportion of the cost of service provision can be met and built into the Revenue Budget accordingly. In most cases the recommended increases to fees and charges are in line with the current cost of inflation as based on the Retail Price Index (RPI). The RPI rate as of September 2020 is 0.5%. If approved, the new rates for fees and charges will be built into the draft Revenue Budget for 2021/22.
2. It should be noted that if the increases in charges are too high income levels may drop due to customer resistance and affordability for the customer.

Usage and uptake of services needs to continue at optimum levels to support funding of increasing service costs, including administration and contract uplifts where applicable. Failure to achieve sufficient income and thereby reduce subsidy on non-essential services may compromise the Council's ability to fund statutory services and savings may need to be made elsewhere in the budget to mitigate a loss of income.

3. The charges set out are inclusive of value added tax (VAT) at the current rate, where appropriate. Charges are rounded to the nearest 25p if under £50.00 or the nearest £1.00 if £50.00 or over.

Park Activities – Sports Pitches

4. A detailed illustration of the recommended increases to fees and charges for Park Activities and Sports Pitches can be found at Appendix 1.
5. Sports pitches across the District provide areas for local clubs to carry out their activities. These clubs play an important role in maintaining the health and wellbeing of residents as well as providing activities for young people.
6. Current charges for sports pitches help to subsidise the costs to the Council in providing them. The pitches are maintained by our grounds maintenance contractors and their costs are subject to an annual increase based on inflation (RPI). Additional costs in providing services such as showers are also subject to increases in contractor cleaning charges and the cost of utilities. Therefore, officers recommend that an increase of 0.5% is applied to all charges to cover the effects of inflation.

Park Activities – Special Events

7. A detailed illustration of the recommended increases to fees and charges for special events can be found at Appendix 1.
8. The number of events being held on public land within the District was steadily increasing prior to COVID-19. We expect the trend to continue after the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. It is important that the level of charges for both charitable and commercial events are not be perceived as a deterrent.
9. The administration and the level of associated staff resources required for park events continues to increase and there is an ever more stringent responsibility to ensure that each event has the appropriate safety measures, insurance and risk assessments in place.
10. Work carried out to parks and open spaces by contractors to maintain areas before and after events and to provide assistance during events are subject to annual increases in contract charges based on RPI.
11. Therefore, officers recommend that an increase in line with inflation of 0.5% is applied to all charges to cover the effects of inflation and work undertaken by officers.

Park Activities – Allotments

12. With regard to the Bexhill-on-Sea allotments held under the Allotments Acts, following the establishment of the Bexhill-on-Sea Parish (Town) Council, these will all transfer by operation of law in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Local Government (Parishes and Parish councils) (England) Regulations 2008.
13. Whilst it is for this Council to set the budget and the precept for the new Parish Council it is considered appropriate that the rates remain the same as any increase would not take effect until 1 April 2021 at which time this Council will cease to manage and operate the Bexhill-on-Sea allotments. Any new rates to apply from 1 April 2021 should be set and agreed by the new Parish (Town) Council.
14. Officers recommend therefore that the rates remain the same and no increase is applied in respect of the two Bexhill-on-Sea Allotments sites that are currently managed by RDC (Preston Road and All Saints, Turkey Road). The management of all other allotment sites have been devolved.

Cemetery Charges

15. A detailed illustration of the recommended increases to fees and charges for cemetery services can be found at Appendix 2.
16. In October 2017 officers reported to Cabinet on the provision of cemetery services (Minute CB17/29 refers). This report outlined the challenges for the service and compared charges with other local authorities. These challenges have persisted during 2020/21.
17. The current charges for interments (burials and cremated remains) have remained static since 2016 to encourage use of local services; however, contractor costs for services have risen annually in line with inflation creating a real terms reduction in income to the Council over the period. The current rates of fees and charges no longer meet the cost to the Council. Therefore, it is recommended that these fees are increased by the rate of inflation of 0.5% in 2021/22.
18. The Council provides a range of memorial services such as installing benches, tree planting, grounds maintenance and the hire of the chapel. It is recommended that the fees for cemetery services are increased by 0.5% in line with inflation to match the equivalent rise in the Council's costs.

Beach and Foreshore

19. A detailed illustration of the recommended increases to fees and charges for Beach Activities can be found at Appendix 3.
20. Beach hut sites are extremely popular and remain in high demand. The recommendation therefore is for the licence fee for beach huts to rise by £9 per licence in 2021/2022 to £530 per annum, equivalent to a 1.7% increase.
21. It is recommended that charges for Seasonal Tent sites increase by a similar amount as above of 1.7% to £368 for the 6 months season.

22. For other foreshore services, such as winch and boat licences it is recommended that these increase by the rate of inflation of 0.5% is applied.

Car Parking

23. A detailed illustration of the current and inflationary increases to fees and charges for car parking can be found at Appendix 4.
24. In October 2020 some of the current car parking charges were changed, and some charges introduced into car parks that were previously free to use following the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) and on-street charges. In addition, the Council sought alignment of some parking charges between equivalent areas of the district. These changes to car park charges are identified in Appendix 4.
25. In October 2020, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee formed the Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group to consider the impact of CPE on its off-street car parks. It is recommended that the current charging structure be left unchanged until such time that the proposed Task and Finish Group can make recommendations to Members on whether or not to change car park charges further.
26. We have observed a significant increase in the costs of managing Camber Western car park during 2020. In addition to recent improvements to the car park surface, we have consulted with Sussex Police and decided to increase the security presence at the car park to better manage increased levels of antisocial behaviour. It is proposed, therefore, that the summer season tariffs (from 1 April to 30 September) are increased in all Camber Sands car parks managed by the Council, as shown in Appendix 4, from £5 to £6 (1 to 3 hrs); £10 to £12 (3 to 6hrs); £12 to £15 (for 6hrs +).
27. Members should note that the Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group will review the viability of introducing a new two-tier charging system in car parks that experience high visitor numbers, such as Camber. The approach would charge Rother residents a reduced rate relative to visitors from outside the District.

Bulky Waste Collections

28. A detailed illustration of the recommended increases to fees and charges for Bulky Waste Collections can be found at Appendix 5.
29. The recommendation is that the fee for the Council collecting one to three bulky waste items increases from £38 to £40.
30. It is important that the set of charges for bulky waste collection does not deter people from using the service and so increase fly tipping. This small increase in charges for the two most popular of the three price brackets will help cover the cost of collection and provide a contribution towards the administration of the service.
31. There is a risk that an increase in price may deter residents from using the service and increase fly tipping. This risk is felt to be low.

Garden Waste Collections

32. A detailed illustration of the recommended increases to fees and charges for Garden Waste Collections can be found at Appendix 5.
33. The annual charge for the garden waste collection service was increased from 15 July 2020 to £40 per bin per annum for all **new** customers subscribing to the service. The subscription was held at £35 for renewing customers who had missed out on several collections due to COVID-19 and the consequent suspension of the service.
34. The total cost of the service to the Council is approximately £930,000 per annum. It is projected that in 2021/22 the present charge of £40 per subscription would generate an income to the Council of approximately £790,000 across the present 19,700 subscribers. Therefore, the £40 per subscription charge will leave the Council with a deficit of approximately £140,000 to operate the garden waste collection service in 2021/22.
35. It is recommended therefore that the subscription cost for garden waste service be increased from £40 to £45 per bin which, at the current rate of subscription, would increase the income to the Council to approximately £890,000 and which would go some way to reducing the deficit while minimising the risk of deterring from new subscribers.
36. Members should note that the waste contract has a tiered charging structure for garden waste collections. This means that there is a lower cost per collection available to local authority areas that reach 20,000 subscribers. The present number of garden waste collection subscribers in Rother is approximately 19,600. The Council will be working to increase the number of subscribers to 20,000 households by 31 March 2021 using a focused marketing campaign and so achieve savings.
37. Officers are currently working on ways to incentivise new subscribers to the service before March 2021. Members are requested to give delegated authority to the Head of Service Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Performance Management Environment and Place to implement such an incentive scheme.
38. There is a risk that the higher cost of the service will deter some residents from renewing their garden waste collection subscription in July 2021. If the total number of subscribers falls below 14,999 by 31 March 2022 we would fall into a higher cost per subscription tier from where we are presently. If this were to happen there would be an increased deficit of £4.42 per household and an overall increased deficit of up to £66,000 per annum. It is felt that this risk is unlikely to occur but it is a possibility.
39. Officers are exploring options to work with for example local garden centres and other relevant businesses to offer incentives for residents using the garden waste service.
40. The garden waste subscription charge in neighboring authorities are:
 - Hastings £70
 - Eastbourne £52

Lewes £70
Wealden £50

Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013

41. It is recommended that the charges for scrap metal dealers as set out in Appendix 6 do not increase as there has been no increase in costs to the Council.

Localism Act 2011

42. To ensure that the costs of providing non-statutory services are covered by the user, officers in the Environmental Health and Licensing Service have previously identified two areas where a charge can be levied under Section 3 of the Localism Act 2011:

a. Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

A revisit to rate a premises under the FHRS is not a statutory duty and it is therefore recommended that the scale of fees shown in Appendix 7 is approved. As a Council we would want food businesses to have the highest rating and therefore the fee only reflects the costs incurred by the Council.

b. Health Certificates (for food exported)

The Council receives requests for health certificates which must be signed by Environmental Health Officers or Official Veterinary Surgeons. If the health certificates are not correct and do not have a wet signature, the Port Health Authority of the importing country will reject the consignment of food. By issuing health certificates the Council is supporting local businesses to export food. The fees in Appendix 8 are recommended to cover the Council's costs, which are only sufficient if businesses provide adequate time and accurate information to allow certificates to be produced efficiently.

HMO Licences

43. A Supreme Court judgement has determined that local authorities must have two sets of fees. One fee to cover the costs of applying for a licence (not refundable) and a fee for issuing the licence and on-going enforcement. It is recommended that the Council also have a combined fee to reflect the reduced administration costs associated with only one fee being paid and processed, as set out in Appendix 9. Fees can only be set which reflect the costs incurred by the Council.

Conclusion

44. The increases recommended within this report support the Medium Term Financial Strategy of the Council, ensure that non-statutory services are broadly self-funding and ensure that income levels are protected against the effects of inflation.

45. Members are requested to consider the proposals and determine the range of charges applying for 2021/22.

Implications

Financial Implications

46. As highlighted within this report, if the increases in charges are too high income levels may drop due to customer resistance and affordability for the customer. Failure to achieve sufficient income and to reduce subsidy on non-essential services may compromise the Council's ability to fund statutory services in the future.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

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Appendices:	1 - 9
Relevant Previous Minutes:	CB17/29
Background Papers:	-
Reference Documents:	-

PARKS ACTIVITIES

Unless stated all charges include VAT @ 20%

Sports Bookings

	Current Charges per Booking per Pitch (2020/2021)			Proposed Charges per Booking per Pitch (2021/2022)		
	Adult (over 18)	Youth (12 – 18)	Under 12's	Adult (over 18)	Youth (12 – 18)	Under 12's
Football Pitch	£80.00	£17.75	£13.75	£81.00	£17.75	£13.75
	Adult (Over 18)	Colts		Adult (Over 18)	Colts	
Cricket Pitch	£78.00	£17.25		£79.00	£17.25	

		Current Charges per Booking per Pitch (2020/2021)	Proposed Charges per Booking per Pitch (2021/2022)
Stoolball Pitch	Casual Games	£27.00	£27.25
Additional Charges	Showers	£28.00	£28.25
	Closed Gate	£47.00	£47.25
	Cancellation (pitch fees)	£23.00	£23.00

Events and Fairs

		Current Charges (2020/2021)	Proposed Charges (2021/2022)
Commercial Event – Small	Per Day	£115.00	£116.00
Commercial Event – Med	Per Day	£344.00	£346.00
Commercial Event – Large	Per Day 1 – 4 Per Day 5 +	£646.00 £496.00	£649.00 £499.00
Charitable / Not for Profit Event – Small	Per Day	£62.00	£62.00
Charitable / Not for Profit - Medium	Per Day	£192.00	£193.00
Charitable / Not for Profit - Large	Per Day 1 – 4 Per Day 5 + days	£354.00 £281.00	£356.00 £283.00
Damage Deposits	Small Events	£329.00	£331.00
	Medium Events	£547.00	£550.00
	Large Events	£1,093.00	£1,099.00

Allotment Gardens

		Current Charges per Plot per Annum (2020/2021)	Proposed Charges per Plot per Annum (2021/2022)
Small Plot	<125sqm	£50.00	NIL
Large Plot	>125sqm	£95.50	NIL

CEMETERY CHARGES

	Current Charges (2020/2021)	Proposed Charges (2021/2022)
INTERMENTS – For the burial of:		
The body of a child up to 18 years old	£0	£0
The body of a person whose age at the time of death exceeded 18 years. At 1.52m (5') deep	£950.00	£955.00
Each additional 0.61m (2') depth	£380.00	£382.00
Cremated remains - internment	£260.00	£261.00
EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS – For the Exclusive Right of Burial at the time of interment, for 50 years, including the preparation of the Deed of Grant		
Full size plot (2.74m x 1.22m)	£950.00	£955.00
Small size plots (1.37m x 0.61m)	£470.00	£472.00
Garden of Remembrance at Rye (0.69m x 0.61m)	£270.00	£271.00
Plot Reservation for 5 year period		
Full size plot (2.74m x 1.22m)	£240.00	£241.00
Small size plots (1.37m x 0.61m)	£120.00	£121.00
Garden of Remembrance at Rye (0.69m x 0.61m)	£70.00	£70.00
OTHER CHARGES		
Use of Chapel	£193.00	£194.00
Transfer of burial rights	£122.00	£123.00
Search fee – 10 years to present	No Charge	No Charge
Search fee – before 10 years	£122.00	£123.00
d) Disinterring: Double appropriate re-opening fees, plus any additional charges to be determined by the proper officer according to the circumstances.		

Cemetery Charges

The whole of the foregoing fees and charges will be doubled in the case of any person who at the time of death was not a Council Tax payer or resident of the Rother District and has not so resided at any time during the twelve months preceding his or her death.

CEMETERY CHARGES – *continued*

	Charges (2020/2021)	Proposed Charges (2021/2022)
GROUNDS WORK – maintenance and planting in respect of Bexhill Cemetery only		
Lawn Sections Twice yearly planting with bedding plants For Exclusive Burial Rights	£156.00 £2095.00	£157.00 £2106.00
Traditional Sections Turfing of a grave space Maintenance with twice yearly planting per annum	£177.00 £469.00	£178.00 £471.00
MEMORIALS		
Permission to erect a memorial – (Cemeteries Only)	£122.00	£123.00
Permission to insert an additional inscription – (Cemeteries Only)	£50.00	£50.00
Commemorative BENCHES AND TREES		
Commemorative Benches 10 year scheme, including installation, plaque and 10 year maintenance.	£703.00	£707.00
Cost of bench to be in addition - selection of four benches provided at current cost plus 5% charge.	On request	On request
Replacement / Additional Plaque for bench (not including inscription)	-	-
Replacement / Additional Plaque for bench, including inscription - maximum of four lines of text	£158.00	£159.00
Commemorative Trees Planting of a commemorative tree, including ground preparation, soil nourishment, stabilisation and protection of the sapling. Cost price plus 5% charge (not including tree)	£226.00	£227.00
A selection of trees and shrubs are available for planting, cost for the supply of the tree will be provided at time of request, current cost plus 5% charge	On Request	On Request
Plaque – including up to four lines of inscription	£65.00	£65.00
Installation and Plaque Mount for commemorative tree	£190.00	£191.00
Additional line of engraving on plaque	£7.50	£7.50
FOR INSCRIPTIONS IN THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE		

Up to five-line entry	£260.00	£261.00
Standard Embellishments (Extra)	£395.00	£397.00

BEACH AND FORESHORE

Unless stated all charges include VAT @ 20%

	Charges 2020/2021	Proposed Charges 2021/2022
Beach Hut Site Licenses – Annual charge per hut East/West Parade	£521.00	£530.00
Glyne Gap	£521.00	£530.00
Beach Hut Site Licenses – Seasonal charge per site Tent Sites, 6 months only	£362.00	£368.00
Beach Hut Site Transfer Fee per hut	Minimum fee £1,575 or 10% of sale price (whichever is highest)	£1,583.00
Foreshore License –Annual charge per item: One Boat Site	£73.00	£73.00
Winches –Annual charge per winch	£36.50	£36.75
Equipment Boxes –Annual charge per box	£36.50	£36.75
Sailing/Angling Boat Site	£48.00	£48.25
Commercial Fishing Boat Site	£363.00	£365.00

CAR PARK PERMITS

Unless stated all charges include VAT @ 20%

	Charges 2020/2021	Proposed Charges 2021/2022
Annual Permit for One Car– All Car Parks	£815.00	£819.00
Half Yearly Permit for One Car– All Car Parks	£498.50	£501.00
Nominated Permit for One Car– Single Named Car Park	£498.50 until 15.10.20 then £321.50	£323.00
Wainwright Road –Annual Permit per Car	£125.00 until 15.10.20 then £321.50	£323.00
Gibbets Marsh - Annual Permit per Car	£321.50	£323.00
Little Common- Annual Permit per Car	£175.00 until 15.10.20 then £321.50	£323.00
Gun Gardens – Rye- Annual Permit per Car	£1,090.00	£1,096.00
Western Road – Bexhill- Annual Permit per Car	£715.00	£719.00
The Strand – Rye- Annual Permit per Car	£655.00	£658.00

Car Parks – Camber Summer Tariffs (1 April – 30 September)

	Charges 2020-2021	Proposed Charges 2021-2022
Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
1 – 3 hours	£5.00	£6.00
3 – 6 hours	£10.00	£12.00
6+ hours	£12.00	£15.00

All other current car park tariffs, including pay and display charges are available online at www.rother.gov.uk/carparks

WASTE CHARGES

Unless stated all charges include VAT @ 20%

Bulky Waste Charges (a)

	Charges 2020/2021	Proposed Charges 2021/2022
Up to 3 items	£38.00	£40.00
4 – 6 items	£73.00	£73.00
7 – 9 items	£108.00	£108.00
Additional items above, per 3 items	£38.00	£40.00

Garden Waste Charges (b)

	Charges 2020/2021	Proposed Charges 2021/2022 (From July 2021)
Annual charge per container	£35.00 (existing subscribers) £40.00 (new subscribers)	£45.00

Appendix 6**SCRAP METAL DEALER LICENCE (3 years)**

Unless stated all charges include VAT @ 20%

	Current Charge 2020/2021	Proposed Charge 2021/2022
New Application	£500.00	£500.00
Renewal	£400.00	£400.00
Variation	£60.00	£60.00

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

Unless stated all charges include VAT @ 20%

	Current Charge 2020/2021	Proposed Charge 2021/2022
First request for an inspection for FHRS scoring within 3 months of planned inspection	£150.00	£150.00
Further request for an inspection for FHRS scoring within 3 months of planned inspection	£200.00	£200.00
First request for an inspection for FHRS scoring after 3 months of planned inspection	Free	Free
Further request for an inspection for FHRS scoring after 3 months of planned inspection	£200.00	£200.00

Appendix 8**Health Certificates (for food exported)**

Unless stated all charges include VAT @ 20%

	Current Charge 2020/2021	Proposed Charge 2021/2022
First certificate issued	£70.00	£70.00
Subsequent certificates issued on the same working day (same batch)	£20.00 each	£20.00 each

Appendix 9**HMO Licences (5 years)**

	Current Charge 2020/2021	Proposed Charge from January 2021
Initial (first) Application Fee	£920.00	£920.00
Initial Issuing Fee	£50.00	£50.00
Combined Fee (if paid at the same time)	£950.00	£950.00
Additional fee if premises inspected and found not to be licensed	£300.00	£300.00
Renewal Application Fee	£650.00	£650.00
Renewal Issuing Fee	£50.00	£50.00
Combined Fee (if paid at the same time)	£680.00	£680.00