

**A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
WAS HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Mayor Councillor Hutchison

Councillors Burgess, Chegwyn, Hylands, Marshall, Pepper, Philpott and Raffaelli

Part I

56. FEES AND CHARGES

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer detailing the amended fees & charges contained in the report.

Members were advised that some work had been undertaken and needed to continue to be undertaken looking at full cost recovery where possible to ensure that all tax payers did not bear the burden of a small amount of users and that a review would be undertaken to ensure fees and charges were consistent with others.

The Board was advised that the lack of increase to fees and charges in previous years had caused pressure and meant it necessary to increase them this year. The 10% increase had been derived from the current rate of inflation and realistic evaluations had to take place in order to preserve services.

It was acknowledged that the funding package from Central Government had been reduced and therefore it was necessary to make increases to ensure the Council continued to provide services.

Members were advised that comparisons would be made to other relative charges, but concern was expressed that at a time when there was a significant cost of living crisis, access to leisure and fitness facilities were being impacted by an increase in cost.

It was felt that an increase in such charges may encourage residents to walk or cycle to the venues.

Members acknowledged that it was important to review charges for things such as sports pitches to ensure they were comparable, however, it was equally important not to price out users to other facilities such as schools, sports centres and in other Boroughs.

A Member advised that they felt there was inconsistency in the quality of facilities provided at the pavilions but that capital investment in them was expensive. It was important that the charges in place reflected the quality of the provision available and that the prices were reasonable.

Members commented that some of the proposed increases were far greater than inflation and would add to the current struggles lots of people currently faced. Concern was expressed that the fees and charges were being increased to accommodate other projects, particularly to the detriment of sporting activities.

Policy and Organisation Board
30 November 2022

Car park permits in particular were increasing by 36 and 40% and which far exceeded inflation of 11.6%, whereas in comparison Fareham Borough Council had frozen their Town Centre car park charges. Members recognised that the charges would impact on visitors.

Councillor Mrs Cully was invited to address the Board as the Ward Councillor for Harbourside and Town ward. She advised that she wished to address the Board regarding the residential parking permits for Town Centre Car Parks.

She advised the Board that residents were only eligible for such permits if their housing provider, or the surrounding area, had no parking provision at all. If there was limited parking available, albeit less than needed, residents did not qualify. Residents that had garages also did not qualify.

Those residents eligible were mostly located in Mumby Road, Trinity Green and Church Path. These residents had no other option for parking, and rather than it being an optional visit, parking was required because it was for them to be at home.

Currently there were 37 residents with Town Centre resident's permits and that the proposals were to increase them from £85 to £100. This increase would generate minimal in the way of addressing the shortfall, however removing it would support residents that had no other option for their parking. It was also recognised the provision was important to keep residents safe that finished work late at night.

The situation for the residents had been made worse as the enforcement of parking restrictions in the surrounding area had increased. She advised the Board that she hoped that the cost for the permits could be frozen.

It was proposed and seconded that the charge for Town Centre Residents Permits be frozen at £85.

Members felt that there should not be a charge for RADAR keys, Members were advised that the charge was a deposit. It was also suggested that it be considered making the keys available to Hackney Carriage Drivers located at the Ferry to allow them to have facilities available. It was recognised that most RADAR keys were not returned.

A Member advised that the deposit for RADAR keys had remained fixed at £5 for a number of years.

It was proposed and seconded that the £5 deposit charge for RADAR keys be removed and that investigations be made into making keys available to Hackney Carriage Drivers.

As there were proposed amendments to the recommendations each recommendation was taken individually in the following order.

Recommendation iii) Amended to read

Following the review described at recommendation ii) above, where fees and charges are found to be significantly at variance to full cost recovery and/or other comparative charges, the Borough Treasurer be given delegated authority in

Policy and Organisation Board
30 November 2022

consultation with the Leader of the Council to amend charges either upwards or downwards accordingly to more comparable levels.

RESOLVED: That this be approved.

An additional recommendation iv) that the Town Centre residents permits price be frozen at £85.

RESOLVED: That this be approved.

An additional recommendation v) that the £5 deposit charge for a radar key be removed, and that investigations be made as to whether radar keys can be made available to Hackney Carriage drivers.

RESOLVED: That this be approved.

That it be recommended that the Council approve the fees and charges referred to in the report including amendments to iii) and the addition of iv) and v) and appendix for implementation from 1 January 2023 or as soon as practically possible thereafter unless stated otherwise.

RESOLVED: That this be approved.

- i) The Council undertakes a further review of its fees and charges to identify areas where the council's fees and charges:
 - a. Are at a level significant variance to the cost of providing the service
 - b. Are significantly at variance other comparable charges

RESOLVED: that this be approved.