

**Proposed Decision to be made by the
Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety**

18th March 2022

**Approval for Increasing Fees and Charges within Environment
Services (Trading Standards)**

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety
Date of decision	18th March 2022
	Signed

Decision taken

1. That the Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety approves the increases in fees and charges as set out in the report.
2. A review of the fees and charges took place during 2021 to ensure that they are fully reflective of the full costs to the council and in line with the government and commercial sector. The findings of the review formed part of the Fees and Charges Proposals for 2022/2023 (Appendix 1).

Reasons for decision

- 1.1 It is a requirement of the County Council's Constitution that Portfolio Holders approve increases to fees and charges on behalf of the County Council.
- 1.2 It is the County Council's practice that all fees and charges are reviewed annually and are increased each year by at least the rate of inflation. In calculating the fees and charges for 2022/2023 our review of the current charging structure in line with other similar sized Local Authorities was conducted during 2021/2022 financial year. It was noted that our current hourly rate calculation was significantly lower and out of date. To bring our fees into line, we have adopted the cost recovery formula model used by most County Councils who provide Primary Authority advice to businesses.

Background information

- 2.1 This report seeks such approval in relation to the Trading Standards & Calibration Services fees and charges for 2022/2023.
- 2.2 The fees increase from £62.00 per hour (2021/2022) to £74.00 per hour under the new calculation is a significant increase. It is our proposal to increase some fees using an intermediate point of £69.00 per hour during 2022/2023 with the full calculated fees being used from 2023/2024. Primary Authority fees are recommended to be increased to the full £74.00 per hour immediately.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 attached below details the proposed fees and charges for 2022/2023, relating to the Trading Standards Service and Calibration Service.
- 2.4 Fees and charges have been rounded to the nearest ten pence (Trading Standards) and twenty five pence (Calibration Services).
- 2.5 The option would be to increase all the Fees and Charges in line with inflation. However, we have undertaken a benchmarking exercise for a number of the current charges and there are clearly opportunities to increase some of the fees in line with other local authorities and commercial competitors.
- 2.6 Following approval by the Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety, the new Trading Standards and Calibration Services Fees and Charges (2022/2023) structure will be implemented from the 1st April 2022.

Financial implications

- 3.1 The changes to the Trading Standards' Fees & Charges for 2022/2023 should allow the appropriate maintenance of income reflecting the additional costs incurred due to inflation and cost recovery.
- 3.2 Please note that some fees are governed by legislation and cannot be changed independently.
- 3.3 The public weighbridge fees are not increased every year to avoid the inconvenience to customers caused by small coinage (a 'chip and pin' card machine is also available. This means that such fees are held over and are then periodically increased above inflation.

Environmental implications

None

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Assistant Director	Scott Tompkins Assistant Director – Environmental Services
Lead Director	Mark Ryder Strategic Director – Communities
Lead Member	Cllr Andy Crump

Urgent matter?	<i>No</i>
Confidential or exempt?	<i>Yes</i>
Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?	<i>No</i>

List of background papers (If applicable)

Appendix 1 Fees and Charges within Environment Services (Trading Standards) 2022/23

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Andy Crump

Corporate Board – N/A

Legal – Ian Marriot - YES

Finance – Andy Felton - YES

Equality – N/A

Democratic Services –

Councillors – N/A

Local Member(s): N/A