

Report To: Safe, Sustainable Communities
Committee

Date: 9 March 2010

Report By: Corporate Director Environment &
Community Protection

Report No:
ECP/SCS/MM/10/035

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Subject: Safer Communities Charges

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek approval for a range of charges for works carried out by Safer Communities.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 A report to committee on 5th May 2009 introduced some additional charges for services supplied by Safer Communities. The report also stated our intention to return to committee with recommendations for further changes once a thorough benchmarking exercise has been carried out on a number of other charges.

2.2 This exercise has now been carried out resulting in the recommendations for new and revised charges contained in Appendix 1. The implementation of the EU Services Directive has further required us to publish charges for a number of services (e.g. Zoo Licences) which we might previously have dealt with should they have arisen.

2.3 Although there is likely to be a wider charging review for the whole Council the charges in Appendix 1 have been benchmarked and, in the case of revised charges, are a more realistic recovery of the actual cost of the licensing process.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That the Committee approves the charges listed in Appendix 1 for 2010/11.

4.0 Background

- 4.1 It is our intention to review and benchmark all discretionary charges and charges which are not set either by statute or guidance, for example explosives licence fees. The first batch of these was revised in a report to committee in May 2009.
- 4.2 The proposed fees for 2010/11 represent more realistic cost recovery than has previously been the case.
- 4.3 The charges for animal licensing (specifically charges 2-9) have been based on the number of hours taken to process applications effectively. Some of these are existing charges, others are proposed to fill gaps where we do not have a published fee. The extension of animal boarding establishment licences to home boarding reflects a consensus amongst Scottish local authorities.
- 4.4 The removal of free Wasps' Nest eradication for OAPs (charge 1) reflects the fact that there is no free provision for the treatment of rats and mice. The continuation of free wasp treatment is therefore anomalous.
- 4.5 New fees for Street Trader's Certificate of Compliance, Food Hygiene Certificates and Immigration Reports (charges 10-12) have been set following a survey of other Scottish authorities and are in line with similar charges made by Safer Communities. This puts them at a median level in respect of other authorities.
- 4.6 The situation regarding weights and measures charges (charge 13) is more complex. The Scottish Chief Officers of Trading Standards (SCOTS) intend to come forward with proposals for Scottish Councils before the end of the financial year. It would be our intention to set our charges at that agreed level.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Finance

Financial Implications – Recurring

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend	Virement From	Other Comments
02275	Sales Fees and Charges	20010/11	(2,500)	-	Estimated additional income

5.2 Legal

None

5.3 Personnel

None

5.4 Equalities

None

6.0 Consultations

- 6.1 Legal and Administration and Finance have been consulted on the proposals and have no objections.

Appendix 1 – Safer Communities proposed charges for 2010/11

Item No	Charge	Fee 2009/10	Proposed Fee 2010/11	Comments	Recommendation	Projected Additional Income 2010/11
1	Wasps Nest Eradication	£41.35	Increase will be in-line with general uplift.	Previously free to OAPs. This benefit does not apply to Rats & Mice therefore recommend its removal.	To remove the free service to OAPs	£1,000 - £2,000 (70 treatments for OAPs in 2009/10 though some of these will have been for RCH properties)
2	Animal Boarding Establishment Licence	£41.40	£137.50 four or more animals at any time. £87.50 for fewer than four.	This reflects the actual cost of licensing visits and administration. It is further recommended that the lower charge is introduced to include home boarding and dog sitting businesses.	Proposed fees for 2010/11 with extension to cover home boarding etc.	2009/10 £250 2010/11 £862.50 (estimated)
3	Pet Shop Licence	£41.40	£137.50	This reflects the actual cost of licensing visits and administration.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	2009/10 £200 2010/11 £550 (estimated)
4	Dog Breeders Licence	N/A	£137.50 plus Vet Fees if required	Currently there are no licensed dog breeders in Inverclyde. A survey will be carried out to check that this accurately reflects reality. The proposed fee reflects likely costs.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	Currently unknown. There may be unlicensed breeders.
5	Riding Establishment	£41.40	£190 plus Vet Fees	Currently none but realistic licence fee required should there be demand.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	N/A
6	Zoo Licence	N/A	£200 initial fee. Any costs above that (including costs of Scottish Government Inspectors) to be invoiced.	Although we are unlikely to receive an application we must set a fee to comply with the EU Services Directive. As the definition of a “zoo” covers a very wide range of establishments there is a need to be able to recover full costs.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	N/A
7	Dangerous Wild Animals	N/A	£137.50 plus Vet Fees if required	Currently none but realistic licence fee required should	Proposed fees for 2010/11	N/A

				there be demand.		
8	Performing Animals Registration	N/A	£87.50	Currently none but realistic fee required should there be demand.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	N/A
9	Animal Dealing Licence	N/A	£137.50 plus Vet Fees if required	Currently none but realistic licence fee required should there be demand. This charge relates to the sale of young cats and dogs and does not apply to licensed pet shops and dog breeders.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	N/A
10	Street Traders Certificate of Compliance	N/A	£37.50	Currently not charged. Benchmarking with other authorities reveals a number charging.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	2010/11 £200 (estimate based upon 2009/10 numbers)
11	Food Hygiene Certificate (S. 50 Licensing Scotland Act 2005)	N/A	£75 (plus general percentage uplift for 2010/11 to keep this in line with other such certificates)	Currently not charged. A survey of other authorities reveals charges in the range of £100-£200. This proposed charge has been discussed with Legal & Admin who have no objections.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	2010/11 £375 (estimate based upon 2009/10 numbers)
12	Immigration Report	N/A	£75 (plus general percentage uplift for 2010/11 to keep this in line with other such certificates)	Currently no set fee. Benchmarking reveals fees at this level. These are issued rarely but we should have a realistic fee.	Proposed fees for 2010/11	N/A
13	Metrology (Weights and Measures) Charges	There is currently a long list of individual charges.		LACORS which produces fee guidance recommends moving to an hourly rate for all Metrology charges. There is concern in Scotland that the proposed rate does not reflect all the on-costs for small authorities. SCOTS (Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards) is likely to seek a consensus on charging in Scotland	Fees to be set at level agreed with other Scottish authorities through SCOTS.	Not known at this time. Movement to the new LACORS fees would result in a reduction in potential income.