

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE			
PORTFOLIO AREA: CORPORATE RESOURCES			
Date of Meeting:	30 September 2002		
Public			
Key Decision:	Yes	Recorded in Forward Plan:	Yes
Inside Policy Framework			

Title: REVIEW OF CHARGES 2003/2004

Report of: CITY SOLICITOR AND SECRETARY AND CITY TREASURER

Report reference: TC.195/02 AND FINANCIAL MEMO 2002/03 NO.55

Summary:

The Report summarises proposed increase in charges in respect of Hire of the Civic Centre, Purchase of Council Minutes and matters relating to Electoral Registers.

Recommendations:

The recommendations are set out in paragraph 14 of the Report.

Contact Officer: John Egan **Ext:** 7004

1. INTRODUCTION
- 1. Each service is required to carry out an annual review of its charges.
 - 2. This Report proposes the review of a number of charges in respect of room hire and the publication of registers and has been prepared in accordance with the principles set out under the Council's current Corporate Charging Policy.

3. The charges which have been reviewed are addressed separately below.
4. Attached at Appendix A is an extract from the summary of charges booklet, which shows the current and proposed level of charge for each of these services.

2. CORPORATE CHARGING POLICY

2.1 The Corporate Charging Policy was included as part of the Council's Budget Policy Framework for 2003/04 and was approved by Council at its meeting on 16 July 2002 set an income target so as to produce an overall increase in income equal to inflation plus 1%. (3.5%)

2.2 Therefore, for 2003/04 each service is required to achieve a corporate target for income generation of 3.5% (RPI of 2.5% plus 1%) and the increases proposed have been set with this requirement in mind. In addition, the policy requires Service Managers to investigate charges in line with the following overarching principles: Corporate Approach, Consistent Concessions and Income Targets including consideration of charging for services where this is not currently the case.

3. CIVIC CENTRE

1. The charge for hire of a room in the Civic Centre is currently £67.80 per session; a session comprising morning, afternoon or evening use. An increase of inflation plus 1% ie 3.5% to £70.00 is recommended from 1 April 2003. The level of income expected to be generated in 2003/04 is £2,350.
2. A number of users of the Civic Centre Accommodation are provided with free use under the Council's current policy (attached at Appendix 'B') and in view of the requirement of the Corporate Charging policy to consider charges for services where there is currently no charge Members are required to confirm the existing policy or direct Officers to consider the matter further. It should however be noted that no attempt has been made in the past to promote the use of the Civic Suite by outside bodies as the view has been taken that the primary use of the rooms must be for Council business and maximising lettings could result in meetings being arranged around external bookings.

4. COUNCIL MINUTES

1. The charge levied for the sale of Council Minute Books is £13.00 per copy plus VAT. A number of outside bodies continue to receive free copies of Minute Books and at present no Companies receive chargeable copies but it is recommended that the charge is increased by 3.5% to £13.50 from 1 April 2002. The annual income from sale of council minutes is negligible.

5. ELECTORAL REGISTERS

1. The charge for sale of printed copies of electoral registers is fixed by the Home Office. This was last raised in February 2001 to £10 plus £5 for each 1,000 entries.
2. The electoral register is available as computer data at a statutory charge of £20 plus £1.50 for each 1,000 entries again as set by the Home Office.
3. The City Council determines the binding charge and it is recommended that this be increased by 3.5% from £3.25 to £3.35.
4. Under the local election rules, any person is entitled to take a copy of the marked electoral registers used on polling day, subject to a fee determined by the Council. A charge of 11p per page was set in 2002 which was an increase of 10% and in view of the significant percentage increase last year it is recommended that the fee for copies of marked registers remain unchanged at 11p per page.
5. Due to a change in regulations which came into force in February 2001 the scope for selling copies of the register has reduced and it is suggested that the estimated income for 2003/04 should be retained at £1,030.

6. SUMMARY OF INCOME GENERATED

1. The introduction of the charges suggested above is forecast to produce the following additional receipts in a full year:

Detail	Original Est 2002/03 £	Estimate 2003/04 £	% increase
Civic Centre – Room Hire	2,180	2,350	7.8%
Council Minutes	-	-	
Electoral Registers	1,030	1,030	0
Total	3,210	3,380	5.3%

7. CITY TREASURER’S COMMENTS

The City Treasurer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and is in agreement with the recommendations.

8. LEGAL COMMENTS

The comments of the City Solicitor are included in the report.

9. CORPORATE COMMENTS

The report and recommendations reflect the Council's Corporate Charging Policy.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

The increase in the level of fees for booking Civic Suite accommodation could affect the level of demand. However given the level of income involved the degree of risk involved is negligible.

11. EQUALITY ISSUES

None

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

13. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1

It is recommended that the charges referred to above are increased as follows from 1 April 2003:

14.2 Civic Centre room hire as per paragraph 3.1.

14.3 Council Minutes as per paragraph 4.1.

14.4 Electoral Registers as per paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4

14.5 The Executive are recommended to confirm the existing policy with regard to the charging for the use of the Civic Suite as referred to in paragraph 3.2 and Appendix B attached.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To increase Departmental charges in line with the Council's Corporate Charging Policy.

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CITY SOLICITOR AND SECRETARY

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CORPORATE RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

<u>Charges</u>	<u>Implementation</u>
<u>£</u>	<u>Date</u>

Civic Centre (VAT Exempt)

- Room Letting - per session

67.80	1.4.02
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Authorising Minute EX.03/02 - 28.1.02

Estimated Income 2002/03 - £2,180

Council Minutes (VAT Standard Rate)

Per Booklet

13.00	1.4.02
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Authorising Minute EX.03/02 - 28.1.02

Estimated Income 2002/03 - £ negligible

Electoral Registers (VAT - Outside/Scope)

- Full Printed Copy *	410.00	16.2.01
- Register per 1,000 entries *	5.00	16.2.01
- Binding of Register	3.25	1.4.02
- Full Data Copy *	140.00	16.2.01
- Fee for marked copy of the electoral register (per page)	0.11	1.4.02

* These charges are set by the Home Office

Authorising Minute EX.03/02 - 28.1.02

Estimated Income 2002/03 - £1,030

Current Civic Centre Users & Charging Policy

The following shows the present Civic Centre users analysed over the various categories within the current charging policy.

Categories of Bookings

1. Council or Civic Centre Use

Current Charging Policy: No Room Charge even after normal hours.

Overtime to be paid by Council

(Meetings of Council and Civic Events only see 2 for other meetings organised by Council Departments)

LGA Cumbria Branch (~~Formerly ABC Cumbria Branch~~)

Carlisle Countryside Group (Pays for Refreshments)

Conservation Area Advisory (Pays for Refreshments)

County Joint Committee

Cumbria & Lancs Road Accident Prevention Federation

District Auditor

Guild of Retailers

Mayor Making

Mayor's Sherry Party

Mayor's Use

Political Group Meetings

Royal Visits

Social Services Department (Carlisle Office Only entitled under user rights.) (Normally provide their own refreshments)

Twinning Link Visits (e.g. Flensburg & Slupsk)

2. Quasi Council Use

Current Charging Policy: No charge apart from overtime payments and refreshments.

(Normal charging policy for Council Departmental use unless booking is briefing Councillors etc. when 1. above applies. Refreshments are not normally available as a matter of course as provision will depend on Council and Civic Business and staff availability.)

Carlisle Aid for Women (26/08/97)

Carlisle Anti-Poverty Forum (17/02/98)

Carlisle Cycling Campaign (13/04/99)

Carlisle Sports Council

Carlisle Schools' Sports Association

C.I.P.F.A. Students

Crossroads

Cumberland Society of Architects (14/04/98)

Quasi Council Use Continued

Cumbria Association of Local Councils (01/07/97)
Cumbria Housing Training Group
Cumbria Local Authority I. T. Users
Cumbria Tourist Board (18/10/94)
Cumbria Valuation Tribunal
East Cumbria Welfare Rights Forum (27/08/96)
Housing Associations
Institute of Building Surveyors (Branch Meetings for Members)
Institute of Civil Engineers (Branch Meetings for Members)
Institute of Highway Engineers (Branch Meetings for Members)
Municipal Bowls League
National Blood Transfusion Centre – Newcastle
Northern Arts
Northern Consortium of Housing Authorities (NCHA)
Northern TUC
North of England Assembly (Membership ceased ref.PR.122/99)
Parish Councils
Quality Street Awards
Trade Unions - Meetings of recognised Carlisle City Branches
Workplace Meetings Social Services Carlisle Office Only (Entitled under user rights)

3. Voluntary/Charitable Organisations with no direct Council Involvement

Current Charging Policy: Hirer to pay for overheads e.g. energy costs and cleaning plus any overtime payments and refreshments unless Resources Sub-Committee exempts.

Duke of Edinburgh Awards Committee (Usually hosted by the Mayor)
Horticultural Society (Not met for several years)

4. Others

Current Charging Policy: Hirer to pay Full Charge plus any overtime payments plus refreshments.

Carlisle Magistrates' Court
Commissioners for Income tax
Coroner's Court (22/08/97)
Cumbria County Branch of Unison
Industrial Tribunals
Legal Aid
North West Traffic Commissioners

No attempt has been made to widen the use of the Civic Suite by outside bodies as the view has always been taken that the primary use of rooms must be for Council business and maximising lettings could result in special meetings having to be fitted around external bookings.

