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## **EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS AND TRANSFORMATION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2019**

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**BTSP.86/19      BUDGET 2020/21 to 2024/25**

### **(c)    Review of Charges**

#### **Community Services**

The Deputy Chief Executive presented Report CS.25/19 setting out the proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 relating to those services falling within the Community Services Directorate.

The charges highlighted within the report would result in an anticipated income level of £2,929,300 against the MTFP target of £3,132,800 which represented a shortfall of £203,500 against the MTFP target.

The Executive had on 18 November 2019 (EX.96/19) received the report and resolved:

“That the Executive:

1. Had reviewed the proposed charges as set out in the body of Report CS.25/19 and relevant appendices with effect from 1 April 2020, noting the impact those would have on income generation as detailed within the report.
2. Made the report of proposed charges available to relevant Scrutiny Panels for their review and comment”.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments and questions:

- The Panel commented that the increase to car parking charges of 5p may prove inconvenient for customers and suggested that the fee be rounded up or down to a whole number.
- Why did some Council car parks only have one machine that would take cards?

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that following the 2015 flood there was an opportunity to upgrade some, but not all, of the car park ticket machines.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder commented that the City Council was trying to balance car parking income with the economic vitality of the city centre. He was disappointed by recent changes to on street parking in the city centre and felt they went against the City Council’s desire to encourage people into the City Centre.

- Why was the Old Fire Station income below target?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that there had been a reduction in the number of events offered at the Old Fire Station and discussion was under way with different promoters to encourage more events to take place.

RESOLVED – That the Charges Review report 2020/21 – Community Services (CS.25/19) be received.

## **Economic Development**

Report ED.36/19 was submitted setting out the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Economic Development Directorate.

The proposed charges in relation to Planning Services included Development Control income; Building Control income; and Local Plan income.

Acceptance of the charges highlighted within the report, with the exception of Building Control which was self-financing, would result in an anticipated level of income of £628,600 against the Medium Term Financial Plan target of £749,600.

The Executive had on 18 November 2019 (EX.97/19) received the report and resolved:

“That the Executive agreed for consultation the charges, as set out in Report ED.36/19 and accompanying Appendices, with effect from 1 April 2020; noting the impact those would have on income generation as detailed within the report.”

A Member asked about the costs of running the Development Control section as he had concerns regarding the considerable income shortfall. The Corporate Director of Economic Development assured the Panel that the income exceeded the staff costs. She gave an overview of how the Development Control team operated and the peaks and troughs of their workload.

RESOLVED – That Charges Review report 2020/21 – Economic Development (ED.36/19) be received.

## **Governance and Regulatory Services**

Report GD.46/19 was submitted concerning the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Governance and Regulatory Services Directorate.

The report set out the proposed charges relative to Environmental Health and Housing; Homeless, Prevention and Accommodation Services; and Legal Services. The introduction of the proposed charges was forecast to generate income of £872,500 in 2020/21 as summarised in the table at Section 5.9.1 of the report.

The Executive had on 18 November 2019 (EX.98/19) received the report and resolved:

“That the Executive agreed for consultation the charges as detailed within Report GD.46/19 and accompanying Appendices, with effect from 1 April 2020; noting the impact those would have on income generation as detailed within the report.”

It was noted that Armed Forces Veterans had been accidentally omitted from the Targeting Concessions list.

RESOLVED – That the Review of Charges 2020/21 report – Governance and Regulatory Services (GD.46/19) be received, with the inclusion of Armed Forces Veterans in the Targeting Concessions list

## **Governance and Regulatory Services - Licensing**

Report GD.64/19 was submitted setting out the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Licensing Section of the Governance and Regulatory Services Directorate. The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services advised Members that the Regulatory Panel had responsibility for determining the licence fees, with the exception of those under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013, which fell to the Executive.

The Executive had on 18 November 2019 (EX.99/19) received the report and agreed:

“That the Executive:

1. Noted the charges which were considered by the Regulatory Panel on 16 October 2019.
2. Noted that the fees under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 had been determined by the Executive for a three year period on 16 September 2019.”

The Panel noted that the Gambling Premises and Machine Permits fee had not been changed since 2007. The Panel had some concerns regarding the negative impact of gambling on the community and asked if the Licensing Committee could review the charges.

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services informed the Panel that the fees for Gambling Premises and Machine Permits were set in bands by Central Government and the Licensing Committee set the fees within those bands.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Governance and Regulatory Services - Licensing Review of Charges 2020/21 report (GD.64/19) be received.

2) That the Licensing Committee be requested to review the fees for Gambling Premises and Machine Permits, taking into account the impact of gambling on the local community.