

**Health and Housing  
Fees & Charges 2012/13  
17 January 2012**

**Report of Head of Health & Housing**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report has been prepared as part of the 2012/13 estimate procedure and sets out options for increasing the level of fees and charges.

Key Decision	<b>X</b>	Non-Key Decision		Referral from Cabinet Member	
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Date Included in Forward Plan	December 2011
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This report is public.

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR LEYTHAM**

- (1) That the Environmental Health & Private Sector Housing fees in Appendix 1 be increased by 5%.
- (2) That the 50% discounts in qualifying cases (fleas, bedbugs, rodents) for those in receipt of Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit is retained.
- (3) That the fees and charges for the Neptune Baby and Young Child Memorial Garden are not increased for 2012/13.
- (4) That last years approved reduction of 50% for the lease of memorial plaques in the Neptune Baby area is retained for this and future years and forms the base fee for any proposed increases.
- (5) That a new fee of £80.00 (plus vat) be introduced for drain camera surveys as detailed in the report.

## 1.0 Introduction

Fees and charges for Environmental Health and Private Sector Housing are reviewed every year and Members set fee levels as part of the budget process.

## 2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 Appendix 1 details the current charges and the options for increases. The charges are rounded to the nearest 10p. The proposals take account of the Council's stated intention to try to protect the most vulnerable in our community by keeping increases to a reasonable level and retaining the reductions for those in receipt of council tax /housing benefit. This has been balanced against the need to generate additional income.

### 2.2 Pest control fees

The pest control fees were increased last year by 10% on the previous year and some new charges were introduced. Our current fees remain affordable and competitive but any further large increases could deter the public from seeking expert advice. This can lead to people carrying out their own DIY treatments, which may have serious health and safety implications. It also allows pest problems to escalate to a point at which the Council is forced to intervene, by which time treatment is more difficult, more labour-intensive and more costly.

This year the pest control service has been trialling drain camera surveys. Camera surveys are an important part of pest control work because they enable officers to safely and rapidly identify problems in difficult to reach places. Rats are often present in drains and where underground pipe work is defective they can escape into domestic properties, in particular cavity walls and roof spaces. By carrying out drain camera surveys, pest control officers can identify and locate such drainage defects. This enables householders to make cost effective repairs and prevent further infestation. Trials have been completed and the pest control service is now in a position to offer a drain camera survey, including a DVD and written report, at the competitive price of £80.00 plus VAT (total £96.00). This is considered to be a reasonable price recouping the council's costs and contributing to the pest control service's income generation whilst having regard for charges levied in the private sector.

Over the next few months, officers are involved in a new project looking at how we can improve the pest control service using lean systems techniques. Part of this process will examine income generating options which will be reported in next year's Fees and Charges report.

### 2.3 Cemetery Fees

*Neptune Baby and Young Child Memorial Garden.*

As last year, uptake of memorial options in this area has been limited. No memorial plaque options have been sold this year, although enquiries have been made. Feedback suggests the reductions made last year were welcomed and appear to make the memorial garden more affordable. It is proposed therefore that the fees for burial options, cremated remains, memorial plaques and associated extras be retained at the same level as last year.

It is also proposed to retain the 50% reduction made last year to the lease of memorial plaques and that this amount now becomes the base fee for this and future year's fee increases.

2.4 Most of the fees and charges covered in this report relate to the provision of statutory services. The following table shows which services are statutory and which are discretionary

	<b>Statutory</b>	<b>Discretionary</b>
Cemeteries	✓	
Dog Warden Service (except sale of dog bags)	✓	
Pest Control		✓
Health & Safety	✓	
Port Health	✓	
Private Water Supplies	✓	
Accredited Property Scheme		✓
Immigration Inspection Charges		✓

2.5 Although the majority of services provided are statutory, the council does have flexibility in setting fees for these services. Our research has shown that our fees are comparable with other neighbouring authorities.

2.6 For the discretionary services, the council is at discretion to set its own level of fee provided that the fees remain competitive and affordable to retain customers. The pest control service operates at a loss of £68,100 inclusive of recharges and £18,000 exclusive of recharges in 2012/13 based on the latest draft budget which includes an inflationary increase of 2.6%. If Option 2 (5% increase) is approved the deficit will be reduced by £2,400. However, it should be noted that the internal recharges are currently being reviewed and this will affect the bottom line of the account.

2.7 The situation with Accredited Property Scheme and Immigration Inspection charges is more complex. These services form part of the private sector housing team's work to improve standards in the private sector. Although not statutory, they do contribute to improving housing standards in the district. They are not offered as fee generating services but more to complement the existing statutory work. They generate income of approximately £7,900 per year for APS and £300 per year for Immigration Inspections.

### 3.0 Options and Options Analysis

#### 3.1

	<b>Option 1</b> To approve an inflationary increase of 2.6% in fees.	<b>Option 2</b> To approve a 5% increase.	<b>Option 3</b> To do nothing and retain the existing fees and charges.
Advantages	<p>This option allows for increased fee revenue whilst retaining fees at competitive levels.</p> <p>The increase in pest control fees reduces the council's subsidy of this service by a substantial amount whilst retaining pest control fees affordable compared to some private sector providers.</p>	<p>This option allows for a greater increase in revenue..</p>	<p>This option would mean no price increases for customers.</p>
Disadvantages		<p>Any increase in fees is likely to be unpopular with customers.</p>	<p>No opportunity to raise additional revenue through fees and charges.</p>
Risks	<p>There is always a risk that customers will choose not to access services if fees are too high.</p> <p>However, evidence gathered shows core fees and charges are comparable to other nearby local authorities.</p>	<p>There is always a risk that customers will choose not to access services if fees are too high.</p> <p>There is a risk that even current income levels will fail to be achieved if fees are perceived to be too high.</p>	<p>This option increases the difficulties of securing a viable budget at a time when additional income and savings are required.</p>

### 4.0 Officer Preferred Options

4.1 There is no officer preferred option.

#### **RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Fees and charges form an integral part of the budget setting process, which in turn relates to the Council's priorities.

#### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

Large increases in fees can disadvantage those residents least able to pay. However any of the proposed increases are considered to be fair and reasonable and in the case of pest control fees are less expensive or equal to that charged by most commercial companies.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2012/13 latest draft budget includes an inflationary increase of 2.6% in respect of fees and charges, which would generate a total income of £9,500. The report also sets out a proposed alternative inflationary increase of 5.0% which if approved would generate a further income of £8,700.

These proposed fees are detailed in Appendix 1, the impact of which is summarised in the table below:-

Fee Charging Area	2012/13 Base Budget	2012/13 Projected Increase 2.6%	2012/13 Projected Increase 5.0%
	£	£	£
Cemeteries	(241,800)	(6,300)	(12,100)
Dog Warden Service	(4,900)	(100)	(200)
Pest Control	(103,400)	(2,700)	(5,100)
Private Housing	(8,000)	(200)	(400)
Public/Port Health	(8,300)	(200)	(400)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(366,400)</b>	<b>(9,500)</b>	<b>(18,200)</b>

### Cemetery Fees

#### *Neptune Baby and Young Child Memorial Garden*

Demand for the Young Child Memorial Garden has been very low and has not been included within the income estimates. No adjustments will be needed if the recommendation is approved. It is therefore proposed that any income received during the year will be highlighted if the reduction of fees for Young child memorial gardens and the reduction of 50% for the lease of memorial plaques are approved and will be reported as part of the corporate monitoring process during the year.

### Pest Control Fees

Retaining the 50% discount offered to people on low income has been included in to the base budget. There are approximately 50-60 Treatments per year which qualify for the discount. If the recommendation is not approved this would create an additional income of £400.

The introduction of charges for Drain Surveys is estimated to generate an additional income of £1,200 in 2011/12, £2,400 in 2012/13 and £2,800 in 2013/14 which has not been built in to the base budget.

As the pest control function is a discretionary service, the council is at discretion to set its own level of fee, a table has been produced below to outline, the contribution Lancaster City Council will be making to keep the existing services and team at its current level. The table below includes an inflationary increase which has been built in to the base budget.

Pest Control Service	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	£	£	£
Expenditure	124,100	126,900	134,400
Income	(106,100)	(106,700)	(108,800)
<b>Deficit - Without Support Charges</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>20,200</b>	<b>25,600</b>
Support Charges	50,100	51,400	52,700
<b>Deficit - With Support Charges</b>	<b>68,100</b>	<b>71,600</b>	<b>78,300</b>

The above table demonstrates that the Pest Control Service is running at a deficit for all three years and will require an inflationary increase of 17% in 2012/13 above the latest draft budget to breakeven without support charges (64% including support charges, however it should be noted that this is based on the current recharges which are under review and will be revised, the implications of which, may result in an increase or a decrease). If option 2 is approved to increase the fees by 5%, this will reduce the deficit by £2,400 in 2012/13. Any increase in fees must be weighed against the impact it may have on demand and to remain affordable to retain customers.

### **Private Housing Fees**

The Accredited Property Scheme and Immigration Inspection charges are discretionary services being delivered by the Private Standard Housing Service. The additional work created is difficult to quantify but deemed minimal and is managed within existing workloads and budgets. Both schemes complement the services that are offered and produces and estimated income of £8,200 to offset the cost of the statutory service.

Should members approve a different percentage than the option with in the report, the impact on the base budget will be unknown until new financial implications are assessed based on the new percentage proposed.

### **SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

Members are advised to consider the proposals in context of their draft priorities and the Council's financial prospects, as well as service objectives and value for money.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Legal Services have been consulted and have no further comments to make.

### **MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Fees & Charges 2011/12 report to Cabinet  
18 January 2011.

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**Ref:** C101

**HEALTH AND HOUSING****FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE YEAR 2012-13****CEMETERY CHARGES**

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
<b>Exclusive Right of Burial:</b>			
i) For the exclusive right of burial for a period of 75 years from the date of purchase, of a single earthen grave, walled grave or vault	631.75	648.20	663.30
ii) Exclusive right of burial in a woodland area - 1 space	277.25	284.50	291.10
Transfer of Grave Deed	Legal Costs	Legal Costs	Legal Costs
Duplicate Grave Deed	81.50	83.60	85.60
Searches – hourly rate	36.50	37.40	38.30
<b>Interment Charges</b>			
(a) For the interment in a grave or woodland site either where the exclusive right of burial <b>HAS</b> or <b>HAS NOT</b> been granted:-			
i) of the body of a child whose age at the time of death exceeded one year but did not exceed 16 years.	167.25	171.60	175.60
ii) of the body of a person whose age at the time of death exceeded 16 years.	564.75	579.40	593.00
iii) interment of cremated remains	135.50	139.00	142.30
iv) interment of cremated remains under headstone	206.50	211.90	216.80
(b) There is no charge for the interment or burial of cremated remains of a non-viable foetus, the body of a still-born child or a child whose age at the time of death did not exceed one year.			

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
<b>Scattering of Cremated Remains</b>	35.50	36.40	37.30
<b>Use of Cemetery Chapel</b>	92.75	95.20	97.40
<b>Walled Graves &amp; Vaults:</b>			
For one person	1843.25*	1891.20*	1935.40*
For two persons	2560.00*	2626.60*	2688.00*
For opening and resealing vault	329.00	337.60	345.40
<b>Garden of Remembrance Memorials</b>			
(a) Aluminium Plaque – Carnforth	112.25*	115.20*	117.90*
(b) Bronze plaque – Price on Application	POA	POA	POA
(c) Torrisholme, Scotforth, Skerton, Hale Carr, Carnforth:			
<b>Old Style:</b>			
i) Granite memorial incorporating flower vase and inscription up to 3 lines	471.25*	483.50*	494.80*
ii) Each additional line (up to 6 in total)	45.50*	46.70*	47.80*
iii) For cleaning and re-gilding following second inscription.	40.00*	41.00*	42.00*
<b>New Style:</b>			
i) Granite memorial incorporating flower vase and full inscription	499.75*	512.70*	524.70*
ii) Deed of grant fee	33.25	34.10	35.00
iii) New inscription	100.00*	102.60*	105.00*
iv) Motif	11.00*	11.30*	11.50*
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			



	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
<b>Vault Memorial</b>			
i) Granite memorial for up to 4 plastic urns, including first interment and flower vase (25 year lease)	650.00*	666.90*	682.50*
ii) Back to back vault for up to 2 plastic urns including first interment inscription, flower vase for a 25yr lease	516.00*	529.40*	541.80*
iii) Additional inscribed plaque for second interment	149.50*	153.40*	157.00*
iv) Renewal of lease period	129.00	132.30	135.40
<b>The Neptune Baby and Young Child Memorial Garden</b>			
<b>Burial Options</b>			
Purchased Grave including EROB, headstone and plaque with up to 6 lines of text.	1,140.00*	1169.60*	1197.00*
Public Grave	Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Free of Charge
<b>Cremated Remains</b>			
Niche Wall Plaques including up to 4 lines of text	195.00*	200.00*	204.70*
10 year lease for external niche wall	£87.50	89.80	91.90
10 year lease for internal altar niche	£175.00	179.50	183.70
Scattering of ashes	Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Free of Charge
<b>Memorial Plaques</b>			
Perimeter plaque including up to 4 lines of text	195.00*	200.00*	204.70*
10 year lease for perimeter plaque	£75.00	76.90*	78.70*
Centre feature plaque including up to 6 lines of text	345.00*	354.00*	362.20*
10 year lease for centre plaque	£175.00	179.50	183.70
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
<b>Charges for Extras</b>			
Additional line of inscription	30.00*	30.80*	31.50*
Posy holders for niche wall	10.00*	10.30*	10.50*
Motifs	30.00*	30.80*	31.50*
Custom Motif	P.O.A.	P.O.A.	P.O.A.
Oval Ceramic Photo Plaque 5cm x 7cm (Colour)	65.00*	66.70*	68.20*
Oval Ceramic Photo Plaque 5cm x 7cm (Black & White)	35.00*	35.90*	36.70*
<b>Memorial Fees</b>			
A memorial not exceeding 6' (1800 mm) in height	97.50	100.00	102.40
Kerb or border stones not exceeding 2' 6" (750 mm) in height:			
(a) enclosing a space not exceeding 7' 9" (2325 mm) in length by 3' 3" (975 mm) in width	130.75	134.10	137.30
(b) enclosing a space not exceeding 7' 9" (2325 mm) in length by 7' 3" (2175 mm) in width.	262.25	269.00	275.40
A tablet or footstone not exceeding 1' 6" (450 mm) by 1' (300 mm)	59.75	61.30	62.70
Additional charge for exceeding above size	37.50	38.50	39.40
An inscribed vase	32.25	33.00	33.90
Temporary marker	14.00	14.40	14.70
<b>Woodland Burial Memorial Plaque</b>	175.00*	179.50*	183.70*
<b>Memorial Tower</b>	200.00*	205.20*	210.00*
* = PLUS VAT			

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
<b>Lawn Sections</b>			
A memorial not exceeding 4' (1200 mm) in height, 2' 6" (750mm) in width and 1' 6" (450 mm) in depth from front to back.	97.50	100.00	102.40
<i>The charges indicated include one inscription (name)</i>			
For each additional inscription (name)	32.25	33.00	33.90
Annual registration fee for memorial mason	41.25*	42.30*	43.30*
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			

#### **DOG WARDEN SERVICE CHARGES**

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
Kennelling charge per day	10.75	11.00	11.30
Detention Fee	9.00	9.20	9.40
Dog faeces bags	1.50/100	1.50/100	1.60/100
Return of stray dog from dog warden service (prior to kennelling)	35.75	36.70	37.50

## PEST CONTROL CHARGES

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
<b>Common Insects:</b>			
<b>Domestic Premises</b>			
- Cockroaches	Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Free of Charge
- Bedbugs (up to one hour of treatment)	40.00	41.00	42.00
- Bedbugs (subsequent complete or part hours)	25.00/hr	25.60/hr	26.20/hr
- Fleas	40.00	41.00	42.00
- Standard charge re bedbugs and fleas for those in receipt of Housing and/or Council Tax benefits.	20.00	20.50	21.00
- All other insects (excluding wasps)	40.00	41.00	42.00
- Wasp treatment	40.00	41.00	42.00
Multiple nests at same property at one visit.	Half full price/ treatment	Half full price/ treatment	Half full price/ treatment
- Moles and squirrels	27.75/hr	28.50/hr	29.10/hr
<b>Business Premises</b>			
- All visits (including wasps) (minimum 1 hour)	77.25*/hr	79.30*/hr	81.10*/hr
<b>Rodents:</b>			
- Domestic premises	27.50	28.20	28.90
- Those in receipt of Housing and/or Council Tax benefits.	13.75	14.10	14.40
- Business premises (minimum 1 hour)	70.75*/hr	72.60*/hr	74.30*/hr
- Drain camera surveys	-	(New Fee for 2012/13) 80.00*	(New Fee for 2012/13) 80.00*
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			

	<b>2011/12 Current Fee</b>	<b>2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)</b>	<b>2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%</b>
<b>Emergency Callouts:</b>			
- Weekday (outside 0800-16.30 hrs)	Standard Rate x 1.5	Standard Rate x 1.5	Standard Rate x 1.5
- Saturday	Standard Rate x 1.5	Standard Rate x 1.5	Standard Rate x 1.5
- Sunday and Bank Holidays	Standard Rate x 2	Standard Rate x 2	Standard Rate x 2
<b>Disclosure of Information on</b>			
<b>Health &amp; Safety matters:</b>			
- Full factual statement which may also include sketches, copy of F2508, witness statements, etc.	131.50	135.00	138.00
- Brief statement where the information may be of limited use to the recipient.	46.00	47.20	48.30
- Photographs & an administration charge	2.50 each & admin charge to be 12.50	2.60 each & admin charge to be 12.80	2.60 each & admin charge to be 13.10
- Photocopying	14p/sheet	14p/sheet	15p/sheet
<b>Contaminated Land Information:</b>			
- Domestic enquiry	101.00*	103.60*	106.00*
- Industrial enquiry	128.75*	132.00*	135.20*
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			

## PORT HEALTH CHARGES

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
<b>Ship Inspection Charges</b>			
<b>Gross Tonnage:</b>			
Up to 3,000	108.25	111.00	113.70
3,001-10,000	162.50	166.70	170.60
10,001-20,000	216.50	222.10	227.30
20,001-30,000	248.00	254.40	260.40
Over 30,000	325.00	333.40	341.20
<b>With the exception of:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vessels with the capacity to carry between 50 and 1000 persons -</li> </ul>	325.00	333.40	341.20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vessels with the capacity to carry more than 1000 persons -</li> </ul>	541.75	555.80	568.80
<b>Water Sample Charges:</b>			
Water sample as part of sanitation certificate	81.50	83.60	85.60
Water sample from Heysham Port	89.75	92.00	94.20
Water sample from Glasson Dock	103.00	105.70	108.10

## PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY CHARGES

	2011/12 Current Fee	2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)	2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%
Risk assessment (each assessment) ‡	Up to maximum of £500	Up to maximum of £500	Up to maximum of £500
- Flat rate including travel and one hour on site	90.00	92.30	94.50
- Hourly rate (up to maximum £500 minus flat rate) for subsequent hours	35.75‡	36.70‡	37.50‡
Sampling (each visit) ** (Up to a maximum of £100) ‡	50.00‡	51.30‡	52.50‡
Investigation (each visit) ‡	Up to a maximum of £100	Up to a maximum of £100	Up to a maximum of £100
- Flat rate including travel and one hour on site	90.00	92.30	94.50
- Time on site exceeding one hour	10.00	10.30	10.50
Granting an authorisation (Each authorisation ) ‡(Up to a maximum of £100)	71.25‡	73.10‡	74.80‡
Analysing a sample:			
- under Regulation 10 (Up to a maximum of £25) ‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡
- taken during check monitoring (Up to a maximum of £100) ‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡
- taken during audit monitoring (Up to a maximum of £500) ‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡	Actual laboratory costs up to max.‡
** No fee is payable for repeat sampling/analysis solely to clarify the results of a previous sample			
‡ Subject to a maximum permissible fee.			

**PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING:**

	<b>2011/12 Current Fee</b>	<b>2012/13 Option 1 Proposed Fee @ 2.6% (Inflation)</b>	<b>2012/13 Option 2 Proposed Fee @ 5%</b>
- Immigration Inspection Charges	58.50	60.00	61.40
- Accredited Property Scheme	54.25	55.70	57.00