

**CABINET**

**Health and Strategic Housing  
Fees & Charges 2008/09  
22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008**

**Report of Corporate Director (Community Services)**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report has been prepared as part of the 2008/09 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 2007
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This report is public.

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET MEMBER**

- (1) That Cabinet decides whether the Health & Strategic Housing's fees (in Appendix 1) are increased by 2.5% or 4.5%, with the exception of fees for rats, mice or fleas, which are suggested to remain at £20.00, with a reduction to £10.00 for customers in receipt of Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit.
- (2) That Cabinet approves the new fees for Port Health Ship Inspections and the taking of water samples.
- (3) That Cabinet approves the proposals to increase fees for the Accredited Property Scheme and HMO Licence fees as outlined in the report.

**1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Fees and charges for Health & Strategic Housing Services 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 25p.

## 2.2 Dog Bags

These are no longer sold by Health & Strategic Housing Service following a decision to cease cash collection on the opening of the Customer Service Centres. However, the Tourist Information Centres are selling the remainder of our current stock and therefore an increase in fee for these is included in the Schedule in the Appendix.

## 2.3 Pest Control Fees

It is proposed to retain the charge for rats, mice and flea treatments at £20.00, with a reduction to £10.00 for those in receipt of Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit. This is suggested because the charges were increased from £16.50 to £20.00 in 2006/07 and a 2.5% increase would result in a charge of £20.50 (£10.25 concessions) which would mean the Pest Control Officers needing to carry much more loose change, making the collection of money on site more difficult.

It is anticipated that electronic payments for pest control fees will be introduced during 2008/09 which will mean the cash collection issues will be resolved.

## 2.4 Port Health Inspection Fees

Charges for Ship inspections under the Public Health (Ships) Regulations 1979 (as amended) have previously been prescribed by the Department of Health, but with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 it is the responsibility of Lancaster City Council to locally determine the appropriate fees and charges.

The Association of Port Health Authorities (APHA) are recommending to its members a standard charging regime and hopes that all UK ports will adopt these charges and in doing so consistency in the UK will be promoted.

A new fee for the taking and examination of ships' water samples is also required.

The new fees have been incorporated into Appendix 1 and were introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 under the Urgent Business procedure (reported elsewhere on this agenda).

## 2.5 Accredited Property Scheme (APS)

The APS was approved by committee in 1995 and has been operating for 10 years. The aim of the scheme is to work in partnership with landlords to improve the condition of privately rented accommodation. The scheme is open to all landlords of privately let residential property and is designed to recognise good quality privately rented accommodation. Membership is subject to the property meeting required standards.

The fee does not cover the actual cost of providing the accreditation, but the fee needs to be kept low to encourage participation. The existing charge of £30 runs for a period of 3 years. It is proposed to extend this period to 5 years to fit in with the HMO licensing period of 5 years and it is proposed to increase the fee from £30 to £50.

## 2.6 HMO Licensing

Cabinet recommended in their report dated 21 February 2006, 'Licensing in the Private Rented Sector', that the fees for Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation be reviewed annually.

When the original fee was set, there was no guidance available on how it should be calculated. Since licensing was implemented, the Local Government Association have published an HMO

fees toolkit and LACORS recommend that any reviews are done in accordance with this guidance.

Using this toolkit, we have reviewed our fees based on the lower than anticipated rate for applications submitted in the first six months of the scheme. This meant that the average fee was approximately £350. Once the discount was removed, the average fee increased to approximately £500.

HMOs are frequently changing hands and licences are not transferable. Although the property information remains the same, we are still required to carry out a fit and proper person check and re-issue the documentation to all interested parties. An administrative fee of £60 is proposed for this service.

Using the toolkit mentioned above, officers have recalculated the average fee now to be £627.00. The new fee structure is suggested below:

	<b>HMO up to and including 3 units accommodation</b>	<b>HMO per additional unit of accommodation</b>
Discount Rate (this will apply only for renewals within 2 months of their expiry date)	£400	£60
Basic Rate	£500	£70
Administrative Fee	£60	

The above fees will also apply to the Lancaster City Council (Registration of Houses in Multiple Occupation) Special Control Scheme 1998 until it comes to an end in October 2008.

### **3.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)**

3.1 The options to Members include:

- (i) To approve either the 2.5% or 4.5% increase in fees for Environmental Health charges.
- (ii) To approve the fee increases for HMO licensing and APS fees.
- (iii) To approve a different fee structure for HMO licensing and APS fees.
- (iv) Increase the fee for rats, mice and fleas in line with the other increases, or a different amount. This would make the collection of the fee on site slightly more time consuming and inefficient for the Pest Control Officers.

### **4.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)**

4.1 The Officer preferred option is (i) and (ii) for reasons set out in the report.

## **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)**

Increasing pest control fees greatly can disadvantage those residents who need the service most, but can least afford to pay. Maintaining the fee for public health pests at last year's charge supports the most disadvantaged.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed fees and charges have been considered and the 2.5% increase has been built into the budget for 2008/09 during the budget setting process. Should an increase of 4.5% be introduced, it would generate a total additional income of just under £10K on Cemetery, Pest Control and Dog Kennelling charges, assuming that there would be no change in the level of demand for service.

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

In reaching a decision on the level of increase, Members are advised to consider the budget position and their targets for achieving savings and for Council Tax levels, as well as the impact on service users.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Fees & Charges 2007/08 report to Cabinet  
16 January 2007.

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**HEALTH AND STRATEGIC HOUSING****FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE YEAR 2008/9****OPTION FOR CEMETERY CHARGES**

	<b>Present Charge</b> £	<b>2.5% Option Proposed Charge</b> £	<b>4.5% Option Proposed Charge</b> £
<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	500.00	512.50	522.50
ii) Exclusive right of burial in a woodland area - 2 space - 1 space	500.00 250.00	512.50 256.25	522.50 261.25
Transfer of Grave Deed	Legal Costs		
Duplicate Grave Deed	73.50	75.25	76.75
Searches – hourly rate	33.00	33.75	34.50
<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.	150.75	154.50	157.50
ii) of the body of a person whose age at the time of death exceeded 16 years.	508.75	521.50	531.75
iii) interment of cremated remains	122.00	125.00	127.50
iv) interment of cremated remains under headstone	185.75	190.50	194.00
(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.			
<b>Scattering of Cremated Remains</b>	31.75	32.50	33.25
<b>Use of Cemetery Chapel</b>	83.50	85.50	87.25

	<b>Present Charge £</b>	<b>2.5% Option Proposed Charge £</b>	<b>4.5% Option Proposed Charge £</b>
<b>Walled Graves &amp; Vaults:</b>			
For one person	884.50*	906.50*	924.25*
For two persons	1473.75*	1510.50*	1540.00*
For opening and resealing vault	296.00*	303.50*	309.25*
<b>Garden of Remembrance Memorials</b>			
(a) Aluminium Plaque – Carnforth	101.00*	103.50*	105.50*
(b) Bronze plaque – Price on Application			
(c) Torrisholme, Scotforth, Skerton, Hale Carr, Carnforth			
<b>Old Style:</b>			
i) Granite memorial incorporating flower vase and inscription up to 3 lines	424.50*	435.00*	43.50*
ii) Each additional line (up to 6 in total)	41.00*	42.00*	42.75*
iii) Carriage fee for returning memorials for additional inscription	38.25*	39.25*	40.00*
<b>New Style:</b>			
i) Granite memorial incorporating flower vase and full inscription	450.00*	461.25*	470.25*
ii) Deed of grant fee	30.00*	30.75*	31.50*
iii) New inscription	90.00*	92.25*	94.00*
iv) Motif	10.00*	10.25*	10.50*
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			

	<b>Present Charge</b> £	<b>2.5% Option Proposed Charge</b> £	<b>4.5% Option Proposed Charge</b> £
<b>Memorial Fees</b>			
For the permit to erect a memorial on a particular grave in respect of which the exclusive right of burial has been granted.			
A memorial not exceeding 6' (1800 mm) in height	87.75	90.00	91.75
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	117.75	120.75	123.00
(b) enclosing a space not exceeding 7' 9" (2325 mm) in length by 7' 3" (2175 mm) in width	236.00	242.00	246.50
A tablet or footstone not exceeding 1' 6" (450 mm) by 1' (300 mm)	53.75	55.00	56.25
Additional charge for exceeding above size	33.75	34.50	35.25
An inscribed vase	29.00	29.75	30.25
Temporary marker	12.75	13.00	13.25
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			
<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.	87.75	90.00	91.75
<b>The charges indicated include one inscription (name)</b>			
for each additional inscription (name), the charge is	29.00	29.75	30.25
Annual Registration Fee for Memorial Masons Registration Scheme	37.00	38.00	38.75

### **OPTIONS FOR KENNELING OF DOGS CHARGES**

	<b>Present Charge £</b>	<b>2.5% Option Proposed Charge £</b>	<b>4.5% Option Proposed Charge £</b>
Kennelling charge per day	9.75	10.00	10.25
Detention Fee	8.00	8.25	8.50
Dog faeces bags	1.30/100	1.35/100	1.40/100

### **OPTIONS FOR DISINFESTATION CHARGES**

	<b>Present Charges £</b>	<b>2.5% Option Proposed Charge £</b>	<b>4.5% Option Proposed Charge £</b>
<b>Common Insects:</b>			
<b>Domestic Premises</b>			
- Cockroaches and bedbugs	FREE	FREE	FREE
- Fleas	20.00	20.00	20.00
- Those in receipt of Housing and/or Council Tax benefits.	10.00	10.00	10.00
- All others (including wasps)	33.50	34.25	35.00
<b>Business Premises</b>			
- All visits (including wasps) (minimum 1 hour)	65./hr*	66.50/hr*	68./hr*
<b>Rodents:</b>			
- Domestic premises	20.00	20.00	20.00
- Those in receipt of Housing and/or Council Tax benefits.	10.00	10.00	10.00
- Business premises (minimum 1 hour)	59.25/hr*	60.75/hr*	62./hr*
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			



	<b>Present Charges</b> £	<b>2.5% Option Proposed Charge</b> £	<b>4.5% Option Proposed Charge</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 Health &amp; Safety matters:</b>			
- Full factual statement which may also include sketches, copy of F2508, witness statements, etc.	118.25	121.25	123.50
- Brief statement where the information may be of limited use to the recipient.	41.50	42.50	43.50
- Photographs & an administration charge	£2.30 each & admin charge to be £11.75	2.40 each & admin charge to be 12.00	2.40 each & admin charge to be 12.25
- Photocopying	12p/sheet	13p/sheet	13p/sheet
<b>Contaminated Land Information:</b>			
- Domestic enquiry	91.00*	93.25*	95.00*
- Industrial enquiry	115.75*	118.75*	121.00*

## PORT HEALTH CHARGES

<b>Ship Inspection Charges</b>		
<b>Gross Tonnage:</b>		
Up to 3,000	-	100
3,001-10,000	-	150
10,001-20,000	-	200
20,001-30,000	-	230
Over 30,000	-	300
<b>With the exception of:</b>		
• Vessels with the capacity to carry between 50 and 1000 persons -		300
• Vessels with the capacity to carry more than 1000 persons -		500
<b>Water Sample Charges:</b>		
Water sample as part of sanitation certificate	-	75.00
Water sample from Heysham Port	-	82.50
Water sample from Glasson Dock	-	95.00

## STRATEGIC HOUSING:

	Present Charge £	Proposed Charge £	
		53.75 (+2.5%)	54.75 (+4.5%)
- Immigration Inspection Charges	52.50	53.75 (+2.5%)	54.75 (+4.5%)
- Accredited Property Scheme	30.00	50.00	
- HMO Licence Fees:			
Discounted Rate (Renewal within 2 months)	£250	£400	(Proposed fee per additional unit) £60
Basic Rate	£350	£500	(Proposed fee per additional unit) £70
Admin Fee		£60	
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>			