

**Health and Strategic Housing  
Fees & Charges 2009/10  
20 January 2009**

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

<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>			
This report has been prepared as part of the 2009/10 estimate procedure and sets out options for increasing the level of fees and charges.			
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Non-Key Decision</b>	<b>Referral from Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Date Included in Forward Plan</b>	<b>November 2008</b>		
This report is public.			

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR KERR**

- (1) That Cabinet decides whether the Health & Strategic Housing fees in Appendix 1 should be increased by either 2%, 5% or 10% with the exception of the fees for rats, mice and fleas and the fee for Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB).
- (2) That the fees for rats, mice and fleas are increased to £25.00 with a reduction to £12.50 for customers in receipt of Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit.
- (3) That the EROB base fee is increased by £100 to reflect the costs of maintaining cemeteries and bring our charges in line with most other Councils.
- (4) That Cabinet agree to the introduction of new charges for cremated remains memorial vaults and a reduced EROB fee for purchased baby graves.

**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 Pest Control Fees

It is suggested that fees for rats, mice and fleas be increased from £20.00 to £25.00 (still retaining the reduction of 50% to £12.50 for those in receipt of Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit).

This is recommended for the following reasons:

- a) The charges for rats, mice and fleas has remained at £20.00 (with a reduction for those in receipt of Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit) since 2006/07.
- b) Although payment by card over the phone is being introduced from January 2009, there is evidence that a sizeable minority will be unable to pay by debit/credit card and therefore will continue to pay the Pest Control Officers either by cheque or cash at the time of visit. Our experience shows that where the fee is less than a round figure, collection of the fee on site is problematic and means Pest Control Officers carrying loose change.
- c) A survey of other neighbouring local authorities pest control fees has revealed a wide variation of fees, but there are authorities that charge at least £25.00 or more for such treatments and therefore the Council would not be out of step with other local councils' charges.
- d) Although from £20.00 to £25.00 is quite a large increase, it still represents good value for money when compared with the private sector.

### 2.3 Cemetery Fees

#### *Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB)*

It is proposed to increase the EROB base fee by £100.00 to reflect the increased costs of cemeteries maintenance as a result of the memorial safety programme and to bring charges in line with those of most other councils.

The following table outlines current fees for a number of authorities and indicates that with an increase of £100, Lancaster would still be competitive by comparison.

<b>Lancashire authorities:</b>		<b>Other authorities:</b>	
Blackburn	573	South Lakes	375
Blackpool	482	Carlisle	832.50
Burnley	704 traditional 865 lawn	Macclesfield	610
Chorley	N/K	Salford	700
Fylde	445	Stockport	731
Hyndburn	495	Harrogate	from 785
<b>Lancaster</b>	<b>512.50</b>	Stoke	950
Pendle	783.50	Gloucester	773.95
Preston	448	Leeds	636
Rosendale	N/K		
Wyre	753		

#### *Cremated Remains Memorial Vault (New fee)*

Currently, the Council does not offer this type of facility which is an above ground memorial vault. However, they do appear to be popular in other local authority cemeteries.

It is, therefore, proposed to construct a small scheme at Torrisholme Cemetery, as a pilot, before considering their use in our other cemeteries.

Made from polished granite, each unit has an integral vault able to accept two sets of cremated remains. The inscription tablet is big enough for a full inscription with motif or photo plaque. Each unit also comes with a floral tribute vase for fresh flowers.

It is proposed that these units are offered for a 25 year lease period which can then be renewed.

#### *Proposed Baby and Young Child Burial Area*

The Council currently does not have a specific and dedicated area for the burial of babies and young children. This was highlighted by the Cemeteries Task Group and should be provided to meet the Charter for the Bereaved standards.

It is planned to have several memorial options for the bereaved and these are normally offered at a reduced cost when compared to the standard adult fees, as can be seen with our existing interment charges.

It is, therefore, proposed that where a private baby grave is required resulting in an EROB, that the fee to be charged is 50% of the adult fee applicable at the time of purchase.

### **3.0 Options and Options Analysis**

3.1 The options to Members include:

- (i) To approve either the 2%, 5% or 10% increase in fees for Health & Strategic Housing charges.
- (ii) To approve a different % increase.
- (iii) To approve an increase to £25.00 (with a reduction to £12.50 for those in receipt of Council Tax and/or Housing Benefit) for rats, mice and flea treatments.
- (iv) To approve the fees for rats, mice and fleas in line with the other increases or a different amount.
- (v) To approve an increase of £100 in the base EROB
- (vi) To approve the proposed fees and charges for the provision of new cemetery services.

#### **4.0 Officer Preferred Option**

4.1 The Officer preferred option is (i) 5% increase, (iii), (v) and (vi) 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)**

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 than most commercial companies charge.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed fees and charges have been considered and the 2.0% increase has been built into the budget for 2009/2010 during the budget setting process. Should an increase of 5% or 10% be introduced, it would generate a total additional income of just under £16,000 and £33,000 per year respectively.

##### **Cemeteries**

The Officer preferred option for EROB, would create additional income of £15,000 per year, over and above current budget projections. This would be subject to annual fluctuations and is based on average income levels, i.e 150 EROBs per year. Also the introduction of a dedicated burial area for Baby Graves, may have an impact on the budget, but this likely to be small and could be either favourable or adverse depending on the numbers of graves sold.

The introduction of Vault memorials will be fully financed within existing budgets and at this stage, the demand for this service is not known.

**Pest Control**

The officer preferred option to increase the fee to £25 in respect of the rats, mice and fleas charges, reflects an increase of 25%, which would create additional income of approximately £6,000 per year over and above current budget projections.

**Port Health, and Strategic Housing**

All other fee increases are in line with inflation and have been included within the draft budget.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

In reaching a decision on the level on fee increases, 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 add.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

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

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Fees & Charges 2008/09 report to Cabinet  
22 January 2008.

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**HEALTH AND STRATEGIC HOUSING****FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE YEAR 2009/10****CEMETERY CHARGES**

	<b>Present Charge £</b>	<b>2% Option Proposed Charge £</b>	<b>5% Option Proposed Charge</b>	<b>10% Option Proposed Charge</b>	<b>Officer 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	512.50	522.75	538.25	563.75	Additional £100.00
ii) Exclusive right of burial in a woodland area - 1 space	256.25	261.25	268.75	282.00	
iii) Exclusive right of Burial in Baby area	N/A	50% of adult fee	50% of adult fee	50% of adult fee	
Transfer of Grave Deed	Legal Costs	Legal Costs	Legal Costs	Legal Costs	
Duplicate Grave Deed	75.25	76.75	79.00	82.75	
Searches – hourly rate	33.75	34.50	35.50	37.25	
<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.	154.50	157.50	162.25	170.00	
ii) of the body of a person whose age at the time of death exceeded 16 years.	521.50	532.00	547.50	573.75	
iii) interment of cremated remains	125.00	127.50	131.25	137.50	
iv) interment of cremated remains under headstone	190.50	194.25	200.00	209.50	
(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>	32.50	33.25	34.25	35.75	
<b>Use of Cemetery Chapel</b>	85.50	87.25	89.75	94.00	

	Present Charge £	2% Option Proposed Charge £	5% Option Proposed Charge	10% Option Proposed Charge
<b>Walled Graves &amp; Vaults:</b>				
For one person	906.50*	924.75*	951.75*	997.00*
For two persons	1510.50*	1540.75*	1586.00*	1661.50*
For opening and resealing vault	303.50*	309.50*	318.75*	333.75*
<b>Garden of Remembrance Memorials</b>				
(a) Aluminium Plaque – Carnforth	103.50*	105.50*	108.75*	113.75*
(b) Bronze plaque – Price on Application ©Torrisholme, Scotforth, Skerton, Hale Carr, Carnforth				
<b>Old Style:</b>				
i) Granite memorial incorporating flower vase and inscription up to 3 lines	435.00*	443.75*	456.75*	478.50*
ii) Each additional line (up to 6 in total)	42.00*	42.75*	44.00*	46.25*
iii) Carriage fee for returning memorials for additional inscription	39.25*	40.25*	41.25*	43.25*
<b>New Style:</b>				
i) Granite memorial incorporating flower vase and full inscription	461.25*	470.50*	484.25*	507.50*
ii) Deed of grant fee	30.75*	31.25*	32.25*	33.75*
iii) New inscription	92.25*	94.00*	96.75*	101.50*
iv) Motif	10.25*	10.50*	10.75*	11.25*
<b>Vault Memorial</b>				
i) Granite memorial including first interment and flower vase (25 year lease)	N/A	630.00*	630.00*	630.00*
ii) Additional inscribed plaque for second interment	N/A	145.00*	145.00*	145.00*
iii) Renewal of lease period	N/A	125	125	125
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>				

	Present Charge £	2% Option Proposed Charge £	5% Option Proposed Charge	10% Option Proposed Charge
<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	90.00	91.75	94.50	99.00
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	120.75	123.25	126.75	132.75
(b) enclosing a space not exceeding 7' 9" (2325 mm) in length by 7' 3" (2175 mm) in width	242.00	246.75	254.00	266.25
A tablet or footstone not exceeding 1' 6" (450 mm) by 1' (300 mm)	55.00	56.00	57.75	60.50
Additional charge for exceeding above size	34.50	35.25	36.25	38.00
An inscribed vase	29.75	30.25	31.25	32.75
Temporary marker	13.00	13.25	13.75	14.25
<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.	90.00	91.85	94.50	99.00
<b>The charges indicated include one inscription (name)</b>				
for each additional inscription (name), the charge is	29.75	30.25	31.25	32.75



## **DOG WARDEN SERVICE CHARGES**

	<b>Present Charge £</b>	<b>2% Option Proposed Charge £</b>	<b>5% Option Proposed Charge</b>	<b>10% Option Proposed Charge</b>
Kennelling charge per day	10.00	10.25	10.50	11.00
Detention Fee	8.25	8.50	8.75	9.00
Dog faeces bags	1.35/100	1.40/100	1.45/100	1.50/100

## **PEST CONTROL CHARGES**

	<b>Present Charges £</b>	<b>2% Option Proposed Charge £</b>	<b>5% Option Proposed Charge</b>	<b>10% Option Proposed Charge</b>	<b>Officer Proposed Charge</b>
<b>Common Insects:</b>					
<b>Domestic Premises</b>					
- Cockroaches and bedbugs	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	
- Fleas	20.00	20.50	21.00	22.00	25.00
- Those in receipt of Housing and/or Council Tax benefits.	10.00	10.25	10.50	11.00	12.50
- All other insects (excluding wasps)	34.25	35.00	36.00	37.75	
- Wasp treatment	33.50	34.25	35.25	37.00	
<b>Business Premises</b>					
- All visits (including wasps) (minimum 1 hour)	66.50/hr*	67.75*/hr	69.75*/hr	73.00*/hr	
<b>Rodents:</b>					
- Domestic premises	20.00	20.50	21.00	22.00	25.00
- Those in receipt of Housing and/or Council Tax benefits.	10.00	10.25	10.50	11.00	12.50
- Business premises (minimum 1 hour)	60.75/hr*	62.00*/hr	63.75*/hr	66.75*/hr	

**\* = PLUS VAT**

All charges inclusive of VAT where appropriate.

	<b>Present Charges</b> £	<b>2% Option Proposed Charge</b> £	<b>5% Option Proposed Charge</b>	<b>10% 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	Standard Rate x 1.5
- Saturday	Standard Rate x 1.5	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	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.	121.25	123.75	127.25	133.75
- Brief statement where the information may be of limited use to the recipient.	42.50	43.25	44.75	46.75
- Photographs & an administration charge	2.40 each & admin charge to be 12.00	2.45 each & admin charge to be 12.25	2.50 each & admin charge to be 12.50	2.60 each & admin charge to be 13.25
- Photocopying	13p/sheet	13p/sheet	14p/sheet	14p/sheet

<b>Contaminated Land Information:</b>				
- Domestic enquiry	93.25*	95.00*	98.00*	102.75*
- Industrial enquiry	118.75*	121.25*	124.75*	130.75*

## PORT HEALTH CHARGES

	Present Charges £	2% Option Proposed Charge £	5% Option Proposed Charge £	10% Option Proposed Charge £
<b>Ship Inspection Charges</b>				
<b>Gross Tonnage:</b>				
Up to 3,000	100	102.00	105.00	110.00
3,001-10,000	150	153.00	157.50	165.00
10,001-20,000	200	204.00	210.00	220.00
20,001-30,000	230	234.00	241.50	253.00
Over 30,000	300	306.00	315.00	330.00
<b>With the exception of:</b>				
• Vessels with the capacity to carry between 50 and 1000 persons -	300	306.00	315.00	330.00
• Vessels with the capacity to carry more than 1000 persons -	500	510.00	525.00	550.00
<b>Water Sample Charges:</b>				
Water sample as part of sanitation certificate	75.00	76.50	78.75	82.50
Water sample from Heysham Port	82.50	84.25	86.75	90.75
Water sample from Glasson Dock	95.00	97.00	99.75	104.50

## STRATEGIC HOUSING:

	Present Charges £	2% Option Proposed Charge £	5% Option Proposed Charge	10% Option Proposed Charge	
- Immigration Inspection Charges	53.75	54.75	56.50	59.25	
- Accredited Property Scheme	50.00	51.00	52.50	55.00	
- HMO Licence Fees:					
Discounted Rate (Renewal within 2 months)	£400	408.00	420.00	440.00	(Proposed fee per additional unit) £60/61.25/ 63/66
Basic Rate	£500	510.00	525.00	550.00	(Proposed fee per additional unit) £70/71.50/ 73.50/77
Admin Fee	£60	61.25	63.00	66.00	
<b>* = PLUS VAT</b>					