

17th March 2016**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS****CHARGES FOR HIGHWAYS SERVICES 2016/17****Purpose of the Report**

1. To outline the outcomes of the review of the charges for services which Highways provide and seek approval from Committee to the charges for 2016/17.

Information and Advice**Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

2. The County Council has powers to recover its reasonable costs in the preparation and publication of documentation and data through the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Similarly, Local Authorities have been able to charge for various services associated with their duties under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. These powers have been supplemented by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, the Local Authorities (England) (Charges for Land Searches) Regulations 2008 and the Local Authority (Transport Charges) Regulations 1998. Additionally there are general powers for charging for discretionary services through the Local Government Act 2003.
3. On April 1st 2016 the Joint Venture Company, **Via East Midlands** will be created and will operate as Shadow Company until its 'go-live' some months later. The majority of the charges outlined in APPENDIX 1 will be administrated on behalf of the Authority by Via East Midlands and they will be responsible for determining next year's charges. Where these charges cannot be transferred to the company for legal reasons, they will continue to be co-ordinated by the retained Client. In all cases Committee will still approve the charges.
4. The annual review of charges for Highways Services has now been undertaken and the proposals are as set out in the attached Appendix A. Where service descriptions have changes the new description is highlighted using italics. Charges have increased by inflation (1.25% rounded to whole pounds) except where charges are set by statute.

Changes to Charging Mechanisms

5. Members of the Transport and Highways Committee agreed in principle (July 2015) to introduce short-term virtual permits in Nottinghamshire to make it easier for households within a residents parking scheme to manage visitors to their address. The current system of residents' permits and a single visitor permit will be augmented with an online option to easily purchase additional day or week permits. The existing annual permits will remain but the new short-term permits will not be paper permits. Residents within a scheme will use a unique access code to exempt specific vehicles using the vehicle registration plate details. Enforcement Officers equipped with hand-held GPRS-enabled units will then be able to check instantly to see if a car is registered or not. The administrative costs of delivering the service include the set-up and maintenance of the online facility and the process of checking vehicles for the presence of a permit. It is proposed that the charge should initially be set at £2 per day for permits issued less than 7 days. One week permits would be £10. It is not expected that the virtual permits will replace the annual visitor permits and residents will be initially limited on the number they can purchase to a maximum of 100 short term permits annually.

Statutory and Policy Implications

6. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

7. Charges for some of Highways Services have had to be increased. Where these are necessary they have been kept to a minimum and reflect the current financial climate and actual costs to the Authority for these services.

Financial Implications

8. If the proposed charges are made there will be no adverse financial impacts on the Authority.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) Approval be given for the proposed charges for highways services, documents and data for the financial year commencing 1 April 2016.
- 2) All charges for highways services continue to be reviewed annually and also as may be required consequent on any change in circumstances.

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Financial Comments [TMR 21/01/2015]

9. Financial implications are set out in paragraph 8.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All