

**TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Thursday, 21 November 2019**

**Present: Councillor Alan McDermott (Chairman)  
Councillors March (Vice-Chairman), Bailey, Dawlings, Mackonochie and Scott**

**Officers in Attendance:** William Benson (Chief Executive), Lee Colyer (Director of Finance, Policy and Development (Section 151 Officer)), Paul Taylor (Director of Change and Communities), Jane Fineman (Head of Finance and Procurement), Keith Trowell (Team Leader (Corporate Governance)) and Caroline Britt (Democratic Services Officer)

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillors

**APOLOGIES**

CAB87/19 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stanyer.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

CAB88/19 There were no disclosable pecuniary or other significant interests declared at the meeting.

**NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK**

CAB89/19 There were no visiting Members who had registered as wishing to speak.

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

CAB90/19 There were no questions from members of the Council.

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

CAB91/19 There were no questions from members of the public.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN AS AT 11 NOVEMBER 2019**

CAB92/19 Members considered the plan. No amendments were proposed.

**RESOLVED** – That the Forward Plan as at 11 November 2019 be noted.

**FEES AND CHARGES SETTING 2020/21**

CAB93/19 Jane Fineman, Head of Finance and Procurement introduced this report to agree the fees and charges and agree the timings for the implementation of price increases and included the following:

- The Report sets Fees and Charges for 2020/21 and the delivery of a budgetary income of £6.5m.
- All income streams were covered except property rents and licencing income. It also excluded parking fees which were assumed to remain unchanged next year. The exception to this was a proposal to amend the discount for pay by phone purchases.
- The Report also included a review of forecast sales volume and

usages for 2021, which when multiplied by the prices proposed created the servicing income budgets for the next year.

- The medium term financial strategy assumed an increase of 3% for 2021. And this report achieved this with a surplus of £234,550 which would help fund Government grant reductions and inflation.
- The dates and details of when the price changes would take effect were detailed in the report.
- The number of residents who had signed up to the new garden waste collection service had exceed expectations. The budget was now set at 20,152 subscribers – the actual number as at the time of the report. This was significantly above the anticipated 12,046 last year. The income would be used to mitigate against the expected reduction in New Homes Bonus.
- Government had indicated that they intended to make the income for Land Charges Searches themselves but the Council would retain responsibility for providing the data. Government would need to give the Council notice of their intention to implement, which to date they had not done. As such another year of income had been included in the Fees and Charges budget.
- The report included a proposal to reduce the discount to customers who paid by phone at car parks from 40p to 20p. The discount was in recognition of a 20p administrative charge that had been applied and as an incentive to use this method of payment. The new contractor did not include an administrative charge so this element would be removed. The remaining 20p incentive would be retained. The net discount to the customer remained the same.
- The ultimate aim was to encourage customers to use the cheaper and electronic forms of payment.
- The Crematorium fees had been repackaged to make it clearer for customers. The repackaging had resulted in the price increase looking high – this was not the case, the overall increase was 4.6%.
- The Go-Card was still in operation at the Theatre which also included the Ice Rink. This incentive was a plus as it encouraged activity at an affordable level.
- Electric charging points were currently only available in the Crescent Road and Great Hall car parks. It was the Council's intention to install charging points in all car parks.
- At present there was no charge for the electricity used at the charging points but this was under review with the Council minded to start charging for this service.

#### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the fees and charges set out in the report and the attached appendices be agreed; and
2. That the timings for the price increases to be implemented as indicated in the report be agreed.

#### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

Securing revenue in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy remains vital to balancing the budget annually in order to support all of the services provided by the Council.

**URGENT BUSINESS**

CAB94/19 There was no urgent business.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

CAB95/19 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 5 December 2019 commencing at 10:30am in Committee Room A at the Town Hall, Tunbridge Wells.

**NOTES:**

The meeting concluded at 12.20 pm.

An audio recording of this meeting is available on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council website.