

Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director (Development Services)

Report to:	Cllr William Webb, Exec Cllr (Highways & Transport)
Date:	5 November 2010
Subject:	Increase of Current Income Charges
Decision Reference:	01782
Key decision?	Yes

Summary:

Following a recent review of Income Charging, Development Services are seeking approval to increase the ten areas of current charging, as agreed with Development Services Director's Management Team and Heads of Service.

Recommendation(s):

Approval to implement new charging values with effect 1 November 2010 and 1 April 2011 for those areas identified as staggered increases.

Alternatives Considered:

1. To increase charge values from 1 April 2011.
2. To retain current charging values with no review date.

Reasons for Recommendation:

Charging for local services makes a significant contribution to Lincolnshire County Council's finances; this approval is to maximise income.

1. Background

- 1.1 In October 2009 it was decided that a full benchmarking review of current fees and charges for the provision of Development services, documents and publications should be undertaken. The decision to hold such a review followed advice issued by the Audit Commission in a 2008 report regarding the ways in which Councils can maximise their potential income given the current economic climate.
- 1.2 Current service charge levels have been held over a number of years, but should reflect those charged by other Authorities.

- 1.3 The Audit Commission 2008 suggested that Councils benchmarked their charging policies against other Authorities, which we have undertaken in full. We aggregated the data from 16 Councils and presented this to the Development Services Director's Management Team meeting held on 16 July 2010 and Heads of Service. After reviewing all the information at the meeting, ten areas were agreed for increase, with one area, temporary road closure notices, should have a staggered increase approach.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 We therefore seek approval for implementing new charge values from the 1 November 2010 and 1 April 2011, where indicated.

3. Legal Comments:

This decision is within the remit of the Executive Councillor provided he has the delegated authority of the Leader. In reaching his decision he needs to be mindful of any market research that suggests any increase in charges may negatively affect service demand.

4. Resource Comments:

Approval of this report will increase charges for a number of highway services to a level that is comparable with other local authorities. This will allow Lincolnshire County Council to maximise income and enable existing funding to be either more effectively utilised or provide savings without detriment to service provision.

5. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

n/a

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

n/a

c) Scrutiny Comments

n/a

d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

Not applicable

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report

Appendix A	Director's Management Team (DMT), Heads of Service (HoS)
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	Agreed Increase Charges.
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7. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Benchmarking Review Services Fees & Charges 2009	Support & Performance Management Section, 4th Floor, City Hall, Lincoln LN1 1DN

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