

2016-17 FEES & CHARGES – ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

1. ITEM FOR DECISION

As part of the annual review of budgets, decisions are required to agree any non-statutory fees and charges for the forthcoming financial year.

2. POLICY FRAMEWORK

The decisions over fees and charges have to be within the constraints of the overall financial framework and the medium term financial plan. At the same time decision making regarding these needs to reflect a 'commercial' environment where there is a need to react swiftly and proactively to changing conditions. As a result power to agree fees and charges or to make formal arrangements for the setting of fees and charges within a Portfolio is delegated to the Portfolio Holder.

3. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

The Executive Head of Operations has implemented consultation procedures as appropriate for the various fees and charges applicable and the Portfolio Holder has been involved in the process or been notified of the outcome.

The Portfolio Holder's decision has due regard to any issues which have emerged from the consultation.

4. OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council is aware of the difficulties it is experiencing in obtaining suitable land for future cemetery provision. The Council has set up a member task and finish to look at this issue and also the impact the Council's charging policy will have on future cemetery provision.

Detailed comparisons have been undertaken with a number of neighbouring authorities, the results which were shared with the member task and finish group. This comparison identified that the level of fees for certain activities within our cemeteries falls well below what other Councils are charging.

The Council is also aware that the operational cost of the day to day running of the council's cemeteries costs the council tax payer £60,000 per annum, where as other councils run their cemeteries to break even.

The increase in charges which across the board will average out at 27% will lead to the Council breaking even on revenue expenditure for its cemeteries. The basis of this decision is that those families who decide not to use cemeteries are not contributing to their ongoing maintenance.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Section 4 identifies that the councils cemeteries currently run at a deficit of £60,000 per annum and these increase in cemeteries charges aim to close that gap to make the cemeteries run at break even.

Any financial implications will have been or will be reported as part of the ongoing Portfolio Plan and budgetary control.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL, CRIME & DISORDER AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Land suitable for the provision of cemetery space is becoming more difficult to obtain and is attracting a premium in terms of land purchase. The Council needs to protect its current proposed Cemetery provision for those who currently or have previously resided in the New Forest District Council Boundaries.

7. VIEWS OF THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

This issue was considered by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel at their meeting on 14 January 2016 (minute 36 refers). The Panel resolved "That the Portfolio Holder be advised that this Panel supports, in principle, the proposed amendment to the charging structure for the Council's cemeteries; and also the proposal to reduce the term of an exclusive right of burial to 30 years.

8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED: None

9. RECOMMENDATION

That the fees and charges attached be agreed and adopted from the dates shown.

Portfolio Holder's endorsement: I agree the recommendation

SIGNED: CLLR S V BEETON

Date: 26 February 2016

Date Notice of Decision given: 26 February 2016

Last Day for call-in: 4 March 2016

For Further Information Please Contact:

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ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

PROPOSED SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2016/17

	Current Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase £	Increase %
CEMETERIES*				
The fees shown below are fees applicable to those who have resided within New Forest District within the past 2 years and therefore receive a 50% discount those residing outside the district for 2 or more years will pay the full fee which is double that shown in this document.				
Interment Fees				
Interment of ashes in cremated remains section	245.00	270.00	25.00	10.2
Interment of ashes in a grave or woodland grave	245.00	270.00	25.00	10.2
Child not exceeding twelve years	<-----No Charge----->			
Person over twelve years:				
Single depth grave	475.00	595.00	120.00	25.3
Single depth woodland grave	525.00	595.00	70.00	13.3
Double depth grave including woodland	525.00	595.00	70.00	13.3
Grave in a traditional kerbed area - specific sections and cemeteries	765.00	765.00	-	-
Use of memorial garden	40.00	45.00	5.00	12.5
Burial Chamber for uncoffined burials	1,250.00	1,450.00	200.00	16.0
Postponement less than 48 working hours notice	-	Interment Fee	n/a	n/a
Burial on Saturday	<-----Double Fees----->			
Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial				
Cremated remains section	220.00	250.00	30.00	13.6
Woodland cremated remains plot	n/a	365.00	-	-
Single depth Child grave not exceeding twelve years	100.00	100.00	-	-
Single / Double lawn / woodland grave	475.00	725.00	250.00	52.6
Eling single / double lawn grave - including memorial ground support	525.00	825.00	300.00	57.1
Traditional kerbed area - specific sections and cemeteries	1,175.00	1,175.00	-	-
Location selected by purchaser	180.00	200.00	20.00	11.1
Assignment / Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial	45.00	75.00	30.00	66.7
Legally prepared Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial	150.00	185.00	35.00	23.3
Re-issue of EROB	-	40.00	-	-
Surrender or cancellation of EROB - pro-rata refund	-	pro-rata	-	-
Purchase of oversized grave	<-----Double Fees----->			
Memorial Fees				
Fee for permission to erect or amend a memorial	130.00	145.00	15.00	11.5
Fee for permission to erect a kerbstone - designated kerbed sections only	130.00	130.00	-	-
Permission for <i>insitu</i> maintenance of memorial - no changes to memorial	no charge	no charge	n/a	n/a
Permission for offsite repair or maintenance of memorial and removal from Cemetery	35.00	35.00	-	-
Application for a woodland burial or memorial garden plaque with plinth + VAT	P.O.A.	P.O.A.	-	-
Application for a woodland burial or memorial garden plaque only + VAT	P.O.A.	P.O.A.	-	-
Woodland tree grave - select any time after first interment	n/a	95.00	-	-
Woodland shrub grave - select any time after first interment	n/a	80.00	-	-
Memorial bench donation +VAT - subject to availability	730.00	845.00	115.00	15.8
Sundry Fees				
Use of chapel - included in interment fees	40.00	-	-40.00	-100.0
Copy of an entry of burial	N/A	N/A	-	-
Research fees per hour minimum 1 hr	32.00	40.00	8.00	25.0