

Resources Fees & Charges Proposals – 2015/16

1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the starting points in building the base budget is that fees and charges should increase by a minimum of 1.8%. In reality, however, officers seek to look at every opportunity to maximise income accepting that:
- Fees and charges can have a direct impact on usage and take up of services;
 - In some circumstances the Council is providing services in direct competition to the private sector. Where this is the case, price is likely to have a direct link with demand and it is important that the Council does not 'price itself out of the market';
 - Raising fees and charges can in some instances work against the Council's social inclusion agenda by effectively discriminating against those who are less able to pay;
 - For some services there is a clear expectation that fees and charges will reflect the costs incurred in providing the service. The Council may open itself to legal challenge if the increases it makes cannot be justified.
- 1.2.1 Within the Resources Directorate the main services and functions to which fees and charges apply are detailed in the specific proposals section below.

2. Specific Proposals

Registration Services

- 2.1 Registration fees are largely controlled by statute. Regular benchmarking exercises are undertaken in order to ensure our charges are commensurate with the other Berkshire authorities.

Electoral Services

- 2.2 These charges are statutory, set by Government and the Council has no discretion to vary.

Land Charges

- 2.3 There has been increasing private sector competition in the area of Land Charges in recent years. As a result of this competition the Council has improved its performance. However, it should be noted that any improvement in turnaround times of the searches has to be delivered to the private sector as well.
- 2.4 From 1st July 2007 a new fee structure was introduced to comply with new legislation which requires the Council to only recover cost incurred in service delivery.

Legal Fees

- 2.4. It is proposed to increase the Team Leader charge and add a cost for Trainee Solicitors. There has also been the addition of Fees for Commons Registration which came into effect nationally on 15th December 2014.

Description	Current Fee 2014/15	Proposed Fee 2015/16	Notes
Registration			
Decommissioned room fees:			
Mon-Thu	£110	£120	
Fri	£140	£150	
Sat am	£160	£170	
Sat pm	£220	£230	
Ceremonies at approved premises (Mon-Thu)	£340	£350	All increases rounded to the nearest £10
Ceremonies at approved premises (Fri)	£360	£370	
Ceremonies at approved premises (Sat)	£390	£400	
Ceremonies at approved premises (Sun and Bank Holidays)	£450	£460	
Approved Premises Licence (more than one room)	£1950	£1950	
Approved Premises (one room)	£1770	£1770	
Celebratory Services –Baby Naming/Affirmation of vows - Shaw House			These fees are subject to VAT
Mon to Fri	£180	£185	
Sat	£210	£215	
Sun	£280	£285	
Celebratory Services – Baby Naming/Affirmation of vows-at Approved Premises			These Fees are subject to VAT
Mon to Fri	£210	£215	
Sat	£240	£245	
Sun	£300	£305	
Private Citizenship ceremony			Cannot justify increase based on the time involved
Mon to Fri	£100	£100	
Sat	£100	£100	

Description	Current Fee 2014/15	Proposed Fee 2015/16	Notes
Nationality Checking			
Single application	£60	£60	£25 extra charged for Saturday appointments
Minor	£20	£30	As above
Elections			
All fees are statutory			
Local Land Charges			
LLC1	£61	£62	
Con29 PT1	£37	£38	
Con29 PT11	£20	£20	
Additional Questions	£37	£38	
Con29 additional parcel	£25	£25	
LLC1 additional parcel	£44	£45	
Personal search	£0	£0	
Personal search additional parcel	£0	£0	
Legal			
Hourly charging costs:			
Managers	£123	£130	
Team Leader	£118	£125	
Solicitor	£113	£120	
Legal Executive / Senior Legal Assistant	£103	£110	
Trainee Solicitors		£95 (new)	
This covers salary, employers' costs and other support charges – rent, office space, photocopying, postage, etc.			
Landowners Statements		£1,000	New
Registration of new town or Village Green by Landowner by Owner		No Fee	

Description	Current Fee 2014/15	Proposed Fee 2015/16	Notes
Registration of new town or Village Green by Landowner by Owner		No Fee	
Correction for the purpose of section 19(2)(a) of a mistake made by the Registration Authority		No Fee	
Correction for a purpose described in section 19(2)(b) (c) or (e)		£200	New
Correction for a purpose described in section 19(2)(d) – payable per register unit		£30	New
Non-registration of common Land or Town or Village Green		No Fee	
Waste Land of a Manor not Registered as Common Land		No Fee	
Town or Village Green wrongly registered as Common Land		No Fee	
Deregistration of certain land registered as common land or as a Town or Village Green		£1,000	

Social Care Training

- 2.5 The Government provides funding for care sector training and we use this funding to deliver a comprehensive joint training programme for staff and people working in the private and voluntary care sector. Anyone can access training and charges represent the average costs, for example for a place on a course. The grant funding enables charges to local and accredited social care providers to be subsidised, hence the lower rate fee. Charging is essential to make the funding go further and ensure people book on courses and turn up. We have applied an increase to our charges to recognise increasing costs.

The Department of Health requires Councils to work closely with its partners on joint training and to facilitate improved standards of care through training initiatives; therefore some joint training will have the same charges as the partners involved and will sit outside this charging policy.

	2014 Full Day	2015 Full Day	2014 Half Day	2015 Half Day
Adult & Children's Social Care Staff at WBC	Funded	Funded	Funded	Funded
Private, Voluntary & Independent social care providers, partners & accredited organisation & Direct Payments service users	£39.00	£39.70	£25.70	£26.20
Anyone else	£70.90	£72.20	£39.00	£39.70
Social Care Trainer Hire to Private, Voluntary & Independent social care providers, partners & accredited organisation	£133.50	£135.90	No half day rate	No half day rate
Social Care Trainer Hire to anyone else	£336.90	£343.00	No half day rate	No half day rate
Hire of training room & equipment for Private, Voluntary & Independent social care providers, partners & accredited organisation	£72.90	£74.20	No half day rate	No half day rate