

APPENDIX D - Fees, Charges and Concessions Policy

Objective and Aims of the Policy

To ensure greater consistency and fairness across the Council in the application of concessions and greater transparency on the extent to which service costs are covered by fees and charges.

Policy Principles

- The policy shall apply to all fees and concessions that the Council has discretion to set. (Services where we have discretion include for example: pavilion and hall hire, bulky waste services, trade waste services and car parks).
- The policy is designed to give consistency in the way charges are calculated and concessions are applied. Fees and charges should be set to reflect the cost of the service and should not be based purely on historical rationale. Where possible there should be no net cost to the Council. All fees, charges and concessions should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- Where alternative service providers are available, market forces will be taken into account when calculating charges (using benchmarked information), however, the level of concession should be taken into account when fee setting and the total realisable fees should be at no net cost to the Council.
- Payment for any services should be made prior to it being provided. All income for fees should be banked prior to the service being provided. Where possible direct debit should be the preferred option of payment.
- The Council will not subsidise commercial operators. The council tax payer should not subsidise commercial businesses as a result of the fee being less than the service cost.
- Concessions apply only to those in receipt of means tested benefits and to under 18s.
- Concessions will not apply for example to commercial organisations, Faith groups or older persons.
- Residents will need to confirm the type of the benefit they are claiming and to give permission for a check to be made.

- In exceptional circumstances the Council will use its discretion in setting fees and concessions.
- To set an appropriate and consistent rate across the whole organisation, the Council's maximum concession will be set at 25% (with the proposal that it is phased in over the next 2 years as from January 2016).