

21 March 2024

**Economic Development - Fees and
Charges 2024/25**



Report of Andy Kerr, Head of Economic Development

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to update Regeneration, Economy and Growth (REG) Management Team regarding the proposed fees and charges to be set in respect for Economic Development for 2024-25 and to seek approval for them.

Executive summary

- 2 All fees and charges must be reviewed on (at least) an annual basis and adjusted where appropriate. This is necessary given the current and future pressures on budgets and the need to make targeted efficiency savings through maximising service income as well as reducing expenditure.
- 3 The Council's delegated powers means that the fees and charges recommended in this report do not need to be approved by Cabinet, but instead can be agreed between the Corporate Director for Regeneration, Economy and Growth and the Portfolio Holder.
- 4 The service proposes to set charges as set out in Appendix 2.
- 5 Any changes will be implemented from 1 April 2024.

Recommendation

- 6 REG Management Team is recommended to approve this report and associated schedules of fees and charges for 2024-25 and agree these be implemented at the 1 April 2024 in an appropriate way to meet the needs and aspirations of the service.

Background

- 7 All fees and charges must be reviewed on (at least) an annual basis and adjusted where appropriate. This is necessary given the current and future pressures on budgets and the need to make targeted efficiency savings through maximising service income as well as reducing expenditure.
- 8 There is no minimum standard increase in discretionary fees and charges recommended for next year. The difficult economic climate means that careful consideration must be given to increasing prices in discretionary fee charging areas to unrealistic levels that might affect business and the overall income achieved.
- 9 The Council's delegated powers means that the fees and charges recommended in this report do not need to be approved by Cabinet, but instead can be agreed between the Corporate Director for Regeneration, Economy and Growth and the Portfolio Holder.
- 10 In the calculation of the budget for 2024/25, price inflation assumptions include a provision for increases on all income budgets of 2%, however, it is for service groupings to decide how this is applied.
- 11 These increases will be implemented from 1 April 2024.

Context

- 12 The Council has addressed the issue of harmonisation of fees and charges across the County over a period of time since LGR. This was based on a Corporate Fees & Charges Policy that supports future budget processes and provides a framework and approach to charging for services. The Policy is built around the following key principles:
 - a) Develop an entrepreneurial approach so that charges whether new or reviewed are properly considered, and consistent.
 - b) Compliance with the Local Government Act 2003, which gives wide general powers to provide and charge for "Discretionary Services".
 - c) Adherence with the financial duty to ensure income does not exceed cost.
 - d) Charges may be set, so that different people are charged different amounts and in different areas to satisfy local needs and objectives. (A service can also continue to be provided free).
 - e) The income derived from charging will normally be used to offset the costs of providing the service being charged for, including support service costs.
 - f) As a general principle all proposals put forward to alter charges must be affordable, equitable and sustainable. These principles

have been applied with regards to price increases and the harmonisation of concessionary pricing

Statutory / Regulatory and Discretionary Charges

- 13 The Council can charge for certain statutory services, with the fee being determined by the Council, in accordance with regulatory restrictions to ensure no “undue profit” is being generated from the charging policy applied.
- 14 Other fees and charges are set at the discretion of the Council, with only reputational and market conditions being a factor in the decision on the charge that is appropriate. The attached schedule at Appendix 2 details the proposed fees and charges for 2024/25, including increases from 2023/24.

Economic Development Budget 2024-25

- 15 The approved budget for Economic Development in 2024-25 is £56,776 net. The budget is made up of £13.702 million in expenditure and £13.645 million in income. The fact that the total budgets income is approximately 99% (fees and charges element 3%) of expenditure, emphasises the need to ensure that the contribution from all income streams is maximised.

Proposed Fees & Charges 2024-25

- 16 The service proposes to raise charges for Durham Employment & Skills training courses and room hire in Business Durham buildings as set out in Appendix 2.
- 17 The fees and charges for Durham Employment & Skills training courses and Business Durham meeting rooms in Tanfield Lea Business Centre, Derwentside Business Centre and Salvus house were reviewed and increased in line with market conditions to ensure a cost recovery principal is followed.
- 18 Proposed alterations or increases in pricing shall come into effect from the 1 April 2024.

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable.

Finance

The recommendation will increase the level of fees and charges income received in the Economic Development service.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable.

Human Rights

Not applicable.

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable.

Staffing

Not applicable.

Accommodation

Not applicable.

Risk

Limited increases in the charges made to more vulnerable clients will minimise the potential fall in demand.

Procurement

Not applicable.

Appendix 2: Fees & Charges

Qualification Title	Durham Employment & Skills - Training Workshops and Qualification details							
	2023/24 Current charge per person	2023/24 Current charge per course	2024/25 Proposed charge per person	2024/25 Proposed charge per course	2024/25 Increase per person	2024/25 Increase per course	% Increase per person	% Increase per course
Equality & Diversity	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Professional Telephone Techniques	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Management Skills for Personal Assistants	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Communicating Assertively	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Presentation Skills	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Minute Taking	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Report Writing	£60	£600	£60	£600	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Time Management	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Conducting Team Meetings	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Dealing with Negativity in the Workplace	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
How to be a successful Team Leader	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Leadership Skills	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Successful Coaching Skills	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Social Media for Business	£50	£400	£50	£400	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Safeguarding and Protecting Children, Young people and adults at risk	£50	£400	£50	£480	£0	£80	0.00	20.00
Principles of Manual Handling	£50	£480	£50	£480	£0	£0	0.00	0.00
Food Safety in Catering	£50	£480	£55	£500	£5	£20	10.00	4.17
Health and Safety in the Workplace	£50	£480	£55	£500	£5	£20	10.00	4.17
Principles of COSHH	£50	£480	£55	£500	£5	£20	10.00	4.17
Emergency First Aid at work	£50	£480	£55	£500	£5	£20	10.00	4.17
Level 2 Award in Basic Life Support and Safe Use of an Automated External Defibrillator	£25	£250	£30	£300	£5	£50	20.00	20.00
Conflict Resolution and Personal Safety	£50	£480	£55	£500	£5	£20	10.00	4.17
Principles of Risk Assessment	£50	£480	£55	£500	£5	£20	10.00	4.17
Health and Safety in the Workplace	£150	£1,200	£165	£1,300	£15	£100	10.00	8.33
Risk Assessment Principles and Practice	£100	£800	£110	£850	£10	£50	10.00	6.25
First Aid at Work	£150	£1,200	£165	£1,300	£15	£100	10.00	8.33
First Aid at Work Refresher	£100	£800	£110	£850	£10	£50	10.00	6.25

Business Durham - Room Hire

Site/Room Description	2023/24 Hourly Rate	2024/25 Hourly Rate	2024/25 Increase in Hourly Rate	% Increase per person
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Meeting Room A (internal)	£9.00	£10.00	£1.00	11.11
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Meeting Room S15 (internal)	£10.00	£12.00	£2.00	20.00
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Meeting Room S16 (internal)	£9.50	£11.00	£1.50	15.79
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Conference Room (internal)	£15.00	£20.00	£5.00	33.33
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Meeting Room A (external)	£11.00	£12.00	£1.00	9.09
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Meeting Room S15 (external)	£12.00	£14.00	£2.00	16.67
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Meeting Room S16 (external)	£11.50	£13.00	£1.50	13.04
Tanfield Lea Business Centre - Conference Room (external)	£18.00	£23.00	£5.00	27.78
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 3 (internal)	£11.00	£12.00	£1.00	9.09
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 4 (internal)	£11.00	£12.00	£1.00	9.09
Derwentside Business Centre - Training Room (internal)	£15.00	£18.00	£3.00	20.00
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 6 (internal)	£8.00	£10.00	£2.00	25.00
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 7 (internal)	£12.00	£14.00	£2.00	16.67
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 8 (internal)	£12.00	£14.00	£2.00	16.67
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 3 (external)	£15.00	£15.00	£0.00	0.00
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 4 (external)	£15.00	£15.00	£0.00	0.00
Derwentside Business Centre - Training Room (external)	£18.00	£20.00	£2.00	11.11
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 6 (external)	£10.00	£12.00	£2.00	20.00
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 7 (external)	£16.00	£16.00	£0.00	0.00
Derwentside Business Centre - Meeting Room 8 (external)	£16.00	£16.00	£0.00	0.00
Salvus House (Meeting room daily rate - £80/Conference room daily rate £100)	£10.00	£12.50	£2.50	25.00