

# **CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO**

## **DECISION RECORD**

20 January 2009

The meeting commenced at 2.00 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

Councillor Victor Tumilty (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder)

Officers: John Mennear, Assistant Director – Community Services  
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

### **21. Fees and Charges – Exceptions Report** *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update of the annual review of charges for services and identify those increases which are in excess of the inflationary increase of 2.5%.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Assistant Director reported that the Community Services Division of the Department was heavily reliant on earned income from a wide variety of fees and charges to maintain service levels and opportunities across the Borough. There are over 900 separate fees and charges which on balance have been increased by an average of 2.5%. Approval was sought to the identified exceptions which sought to redress specific areas where fees and charges have either been unable to keep pace of costs of provision or are significantly cheaper than regional or sub-regional comparisons. A list showing those charges which had increased in excess of 5% was appended to the report.

A number of areas were highlighted for consideration including increases in library fees, charges for outdoor activities and hire charges for Community Centres and the Town Hall and Borough Hall theatres. Swimming charges would also increase particularly given forthcoming introduction of the Free Swim Initiative in April 2009. The Assistant

Director felt these were reasonable adjustments made to maximise reasonable income and still among the lowest fees in the region.

The Portfolio Holder concurred with this, saying the increases were not excessive but were necessary. The public should be made aware of the value for money they were getting for these services in comparison with other local authorities.

### **Decision**

That the revised schedule of fee and charge increases for 2009/2010 be approved.

The meeting concluded at 2:05 pm.

**PETER DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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