The report covers proposals for the fees and charges for 2017/18 for the services provided by Leisure and Cultural Services.

**RECOMMENDATION:** CABINET IS ASKED TO RECOMMEND THAT

(A) THE PROPOSALS FOR THE LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES AS DETAILED IN APPENDICES A TO G BE AGREED; AND

(B) MEMBERS AGREE EITHER OPTION A (1.5%) OR OPTION B INCREASE FOR THE CEMETERIES FEES AND CHARGES.

**REPORT:**

1. **Introduction**

2. In December 2014, Council approved that for future years, the RPIX figure be automatically applied (with rounding) as an annual uplift for Leisure and Cultural Services fees and charges. Only where proposed fees exceed the RPIX figure, would member approval be sought. For 2017/18 the Retail Price Index (RPIX) figure has been set at 1.9% except for the leisure facilities contract which is detailed below.

3. **Leisure Facilities Contract**

4. Within the contract with Places for People (PfP) for the management of the Xcel Leisure Complex and Hurst Pool (2006 to 2021), the Council retains the ability to set maximum fees and charges for the following core activities:

   - Swimming;
   - Sports Hall activities (Xcel only);
   - Crèche (Xcel only).

   All remaining fees and charges can be set at the discretion of PfP.
5. Under the terms of the contract, the fees and charges for Council controlled core activities are increased by RPIX annually. The index for July 2016 was 1.9%.

6. PFP have reviewed their current fees and charges, and have proposed increases in line with 1.9% (allowing for rounding). These fees will be reported to members through an information item in January.

7. The Xcel 3G Synthetic Turf Pitch opened in 2009, and the fees have not been increased since this date. PFP have reviewed against other similar facilities (see Appendix A), and proposals for fees and charges for 2017/18 have been included at Appendix B.

8. **More Card**

9. The more card scheme was introduced in 2006 to coincide with the start of the new leisure management contract. There has been no review of card charges since that date and it is therefore considered appropriate to increase the charge for all card categories by £1, except for the concessionary card which will remain free of charge.

10. **Shout! Holiday scheme**

11. The Shout holiday activity scheme continues to provide childcare during the Easter, Summer, October and Christmas Holidays. So far during 2016/17 the scheme has filled 2324 places across three sites, 301 of which (Chandlers Field site) were concessions (12% of all spaces sold).

12. In 2016/17 the net cost of the discretionary Shout! holiday scheme is £144,220. In order to meet customer needs as identified through recent consultation, reduce the net cost of the service, and to help offset rising staffing costs, two distinct yet linked strands of school holiday provision are proposed.

13. **Strand 1 – community activity programme**
   The purpose; *Provide me & my family with something fun, exciting and affordable to do during the school holidays.*

14. The service will continue to deliver a number of large scale family play events such as Play Day and Teddy Bear’s Picnic along with a broad programme of ‘Stay & Play’ activity sessions in parks and open spaces during the school holidays, provided free of charge at the point of access. These are key engagement activities that are valued and well supported by the local community.

15. A new “drop in” Play Ranger programme aimed at older children will also be delivered across the Borough, particularly targeting areas of deprivation and physical inactivity. This will also be free at the point of access.
In addition, a programme of “one off” paid for activity sessions such as tennis, quad biking and kayaking will be provided in response to demand. Some caution will be applied since 168 places across a range of activity sessions were cancelled last year because of low demand, which had a negative impact in terms of customer experience, finance and administrative process. The cost of these activities will vary, however, they will be kept at an affordable level.

The school holiday childcare strand outlined below is also a key element of the community activity programme for children, since ad hoc single day places can be booked, regardless of the need for childcare.

Strand 2 - school holiday childcare (Holiday Activity Schemes)
The purpose; Provide me (parents & carers) with high quality, affordable childcare which enables me to work during the school holidays.

It is proposed that the childcare offer is simplified and improved with a distinct theme at each of the three current delivery settings. The enhanced customer experience and journey will be underpinned by the introduction of a new online booking system in 2017. The three settings & themes are:

- Shout! Sport Camp (Xcel)
- Shout! Sports & Arts Camp (Bell Farm)
- Shout! Holiday Camp (Chandlers Field)

The principles of the proposal are;

- Consistent pricing point across all three settings
- Concessionary places available across all three settings
- Activity specialists brought into all three settings
- Settings will be Ofsted registered where applicable (presently Chandlers Field)
- Economies of scale maximised by increasing number of places at each setting (except Chandlers Field)

In order to achieve a consistent pricing point it is proposed that an average 30% increase in fees is applied to the Shout! Holiday Camp (Chandlers Field) activity programme to bring it into line with the other two settings. Core day and extended day options will be retained at Chandlers Field to increase flexibility for customers.

The proposed fees and charges detailed at Appendix C take into consideration market rates and have been set mindful of the current economic conditions.

Despite the proposed increase, the recommended pricing points remain very competitive when compared to other providers in the Borough. An analysis of other providers within Surrey and Elmbridge has been provided at Appendix D, indicating an average week long member rate for an extended day is £157. Even with the proposed increase the new Shout rate would be £125 for broadly comparable provision.
24. It is important to note that the Shout! Sports & Arts Camp currently being delivered at Bell Farm already charges £30 (standard) / £25 (More card) per day and frequently reaches capacity with a waiting list, indicating that there is more demand for places than supply and scope for a price increase. The proposal recommends the retention of a significantly discounted concession price for residents on a low income. The concession places will apply across all three settings generating an overall increase in the number of concession places available across the year, thereby providing the customer with greater choice and ensuring the service is more inclusive.

25.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shout Sports (Xcel)</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>1520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout Sport &amp; Arts (Bell Farm)</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>1088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout holiday camp (Chandlers Field)</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2496</strong></td>
<td><strong>3160</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. Wage costs have risen this year to meet minimum wage obligations and to attract & retain suitably experienced and qualified, specifically at senior site manager level.

27. The proposals will ultimately allow us to deliver a high quality, affordable holiday childcare scheme that meets the distinct and diverse needs of both parents / carers and children during the school holidays. The number of places available will increase by 26%.

28. It is anticipated the proposals above will generate an additional £4,500 income in 2017/18.

29. **GP Exercise Referral scheme**

30. The Purpose: “Provide me (customer) with information, advice, support and activities appropriate for my health condition, which enable me to make healthy choices and confidently lead a physically active life”

31. The GP Exercise referral scheme currently provides two strands of activity for customers, the first a 12 week supported gym programme at Xcel leisure centre gym and the second a “pay as you go” exercise class programme, delivered in a variety of community venues.
32. The classes are very popular and in order to expand capacity further for customers with medium to high risk medical conditions, it will be necessary to employ and train a second instructor to maintain quality and safety standards. In addition, growth in participant numbers requires more frequent investment in equipment due to increased wear and tear.

33. Fees have been static since 2011/12 when they were increased from £3.00 to £3.50. A light touch consultation was recently undertaken with approximately 40 service users and the majority were comfortable with the proposed increase in fees.

34. The increase in class fees, as outlined in Appendix C has been proposed to offset these additional costs. Despite the proposed increase, the fees take into consideration market rates and are considered very competitive in comparison.

35. It is anticipated the proposals above will generate an additional £2k income in 2017/18 based on 25% of customers paying the More card rate.

36. Cemeteries

37. In 2015/16 the net cost of the Cemeteries service was £263,155 (includes Closed Churchyards £55,765). The net cost of Cemeteries in Elmbridge is higher than many other Surrey authorities due to the large number of cemeteries and also the absence of a crematoria which tend to offset the running costs of more traditional cemeteries.

38. In recent years the number of internments has increased slightly, as can be shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Burials</th>
<th>Cremated remains</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39. In order to reduce the net cost of the service, proposals for a 1.5% and 3% increase to the fees and charges have been put forward. Comparisons have been undertaken with neighbouring Cemeteries and are detailed at Appendix F.

40. The proposed fees and charges detailed at Appendix E take into consideration market rates and have been set mindful of the current economic conditions.

41. There are no inflationary increases to the Green Spaces contract which covers the grounds maintenance for the Cemeteries.

42. It is anticipated the proposals above will generate an additional £15k (3%) or £7.5k (1.5%) income in 2017/18.
43. Tennis Courts

44. A detailed proposal and rationale to re-introduce recreational fees & charges at the Borough’s public tennis courts is included on this Cabinet agenda for consideration and approval.

45. It is anticipated the proposals above will generate an additional £22k income in 2017/18.

46. Boot camps

47. A fee for Bootcamps and Personal Trainers was introduced during 2013/14 in response to the increase use of the open spaces for organised activity classes.

48. This continues to be a popular activity and while there has been little resistance to the original charging scheme some elements have caused confusion and as a result would benefit from simplifying, removing the need to clarify the size of class.

49. Whilst still a relatively new market, there is the opportunity to increase the charge for this area to be more consistent with some of our near neighbours (see appendix G). The current charges in Elmbridge equate to £3 a week in some cases, and whilst recognising the physical activity benefits for local residents, these are being run commercially and a more appropriate charging policy is needed. In order to allow instructors to suitably plan for the future a 3 year stepped increase is proposed at Appendix E to bring the charges in line with other Councils.

50. It is anticipated the the proposals above will generate and additional £10k income in 2017\18

51. Planning pre advice landscaping

52. Elmbridge Borough Council, along with many other Planning Authorities now offer an additional paid pre-planning application service. As an additional service, it is proposed that the Council commence charging a fee for providing a landscape guidance services to developers on large scale complex sites where a new public open space is being provided.

53. In recent times this has involved some complex sites including Drakes Park, Churchfields Meadow and Hurst Lane. This has taken a high level of officer time and as EBC have not taken on the management all of these sites, there has been no return for the Council in this investment.

54. Examples of other authorities which successfully offer similar services are Warwickshire County Council, which offer an even broader service than currently being proposed here and Stratford on Avon District Council, which offer landscaping advice as part of their pre-application service.
55. The fee would be added to the Council’s current annual fees and charges report which will be presented to members each year. The fee proposed is based upon Stratford-on-Avon’s model for landscape advice with a minimum charge of £300. Bespoke quotes would be provided for queries that require more than 5 hours work. A customer promise would be drafted to give clarity to the timescales by which a response would be provided by.

56. It is anticipated that the proposals above will generate an additional £3k income in 2017\18.

57. **Other services**

58. All other fees and charges in Leisure and Cultural Services, including sports pitches, public halls, Xcel and Hurst Swimming pool will be increased by the 1.9% RPIX inflationary figure, and will be circulated to members by way of an Information Bulletin in the new year. This inflationary uplift is fixed until the end of the current Leisure Facilities contract in 2021. It is not proposed to increase the Museum Services or Royston Pike lecture series tickets this year.

**Financial implications:**

The estimated additional income generated by the increased fees & charges is £50,500 in 2017/18 and is summarised below;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Additional Income (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHOUT! Holiday Scheme</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP Exercise Referral</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boot Camps</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning pre-advice – landscaping</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries @1.5%</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a 3% increase in cemetery fees and charges is agreed the total additional income in 2017/18 will be £56,500

**Environmental/Sustainability Implications:**
None – administrative report.

**Legal implications:**
None – administrative report.

**Equality Implications:**
None – administrative report.
Risk Implications:
None – administrative report.

Community Safety Implications:
None – administrative report.

Principal Consultees:
None – administrative report

Background papers:
None – administrative report

Enclosures/Appendices:
Appendix A – Synthetic Turf price comparisons
Appendix B – Xcel 3G proposals
Appendix C – Shout\ Exercise Referrals proposal
Appendix D – Shout comparisons
Appendix E – Green spaces proposals
Appendix F – Cemeteries Comparisons
Appendix G – Green Spaces comparisons

Contact details:

Ian Burrows
Head of Leisure and Cultural Services
iburrows@elmbridge.gov.uk
01372 474572

Liz Taylor
Leisure Facilities Manager
ltaylor@Elmbridge.gov.uk
01372 474580

Ian Gayton
Green Spaces Manager
igayton@elmbridge.gov.uk
01372 474571

Kate Wilson
Leisure Development Manager
kwilson@elmbridge.gov.uk
01372 474583