

APPENDIX 8a: FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION REPORT

MTFP: BALANCING THE COST OF SERVICES – THE COUNCIL’S APPROACH TO FEES AND CHARGES CONSULTATION REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The consultation focussed on the Council’s approach to Fees and Charges.

The public were provided with an overview of the proposed approach to Fees and Charges including a list of the eleven principles in the Policy.

The public were asked “Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which Stockport Council could generate income?”

There have been 27 responses to the consultation to date, but only 22 of these provided suggestions in relation to the question above.

This report presents a summary of all the responses received.

2. Consultation Methodology

The consultation was undertaken between 26th November 2018 and 6th January 2019.

The method of consultation was an online public survey on the Council website.

The purpose of the consultation was to communicate the Council’s approach to fees and charges and to seek suggestions for any other ways in which the Council could generate income.

The public were asked “Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which Stockport Council could generate income?”

Social media messages were sent out via the Council’s platforms containing a link to the consultation.

3. Background

The Council has developed a Fairer Charging Policy which outlines our aims and principles for a fair approach to contributions made by individuals, groups or businesses accessing Council-provided services.

The principles of the approach are to ensure that fees are set appropriately in order for us to recover our costs, whilst also delivering value to the public, at a price that is reasonable for the service.

One of the key principles of the policy is that where it is appropriate to charge for a service, we should ensure that we are making enough money from charging to

cover the costs of delivering this service and if we cannot cover our costs we should consider stopping the service.

There are some services which we currently provide at no additional cost, or for a 'contribution'. For some of these services we will consider whether we could either introduce a charge or increase the charge to cover the cost of providing the service.

4. Results

In total 27 responses were received to the consultation. Of the 27 responses, there were 22 responses to the question and 5 blank responses.

The following is a summary of the 22 comments received in response to the question "Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which Stockport Council could generate income?"

General Council Income and Expenditure

- Increase Council Tax by the maximum 3.99%
- Raise Council Tax by £5 per household per month
- Raise Council Tax by £10 per household
- Review Council Tax bandings based on energy efficiency
- Hire of council owned rooms
- Generate income from Council owned space/offices
- Corporate sponsorship
- Sell space for advertising eg A-Boards
- Increase business rates for larger businesses
- Lower business rates to stores in the Town Centre
- Charge for businesses operating in parks e.g. personal trainers
- Stop wasting money
- Stop borrowing money for schemes

Parking and Roads

- Speed cameras
- Sell car park spaces to residents to stop them parking on highways
- Increase parking patrols and fines issued
- Charge for residents parking
- Fine people for damage to grass verges, pavements caused by parking vehicles
- Make the A6 a toll road from Heaton Chapel to the Blossoms pub
- Turn off the motorway lights at night
- Turn off every other street light or use LED lighting

Council Staff

- Annual purchase scheme for staff
- Increase council staff volunteering to support the community
- Cut the number of Councillors
- Cut the number of Managers

- Review Council leader's salaries with a view to reducing them by a minimum of 10%.

All other suggestions

- Assess care packages differently
- Remove eligibility for free childcare parents based on level of income
- Use empty shop space better e.g. pop up shops fee
- Charge full costs for street signs
- Charge full cost for pest control
- Fines for littering
- Charge full cost for bin replacement
- Charge more for bulky waste collection
- Charge for placing and emptying bins near takeaways
- Encourage more people to go to work
- Charge for using computers in libraries
- Increase Fixed Penalty Notices for fly tipping and parking illegally
- Increase the £80 fine for breaches of S46 of the Environmental Protection Act
- Charge developers more in S106 agreements
- Increase council owned advertising locations and engage with local business to drive revenue through advertising sales.
- Include a marketing portal on Stockport website to assist local business and increase revenue.
- Review council property and lease out office space etc. to increase rental income. Even purchase some property that would drive rental income.
- Close some more libraries.
- School community days to pick litter and keep the borough tidy.
- Cut subsidies to businesses (produce hall etc.)
- Charge utility companies severe financial penalties when they are late or cause undue delay in completing work on the highway

A full list of all the responses received can be found in Annex A.

5. Demographics

The following is a summary of the demographic information of the people who responded to the consultation.

Question: What best describes your gender?

Option	Total	Percent
Male	8	29.63%
Female	17	62.96%
Prefer to self-describe	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	2	7.41%
Not Answered	0	0%

Question: What is your age?

Option	Total	Percent
0 - 17	0	0%
18 - 24	0	0%
25 - 34	2	7.41%
35 - 44	8	29.63%
45 - 54	7	25.93%
55 - 64	6	22.22%
65 - 74	3	11.11%
75 - 84	0	0%
85+	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	1	3.70%
Not Answered	0	0%

Question: Do you consider yourself to have an impairment, disability or long term health condition?

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	4	14.81%
No	20	74.07%
Prefer not to answer	2	7.41%
Not Answered	1	3.70%

Question: How would you define your ethnic group?

Option	Total	Percent
White- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	16	59.26%
White- Irish	3	11.11%
White- Gypsy or Irish Traveler	0	0%
White- any other White background, please specify	1	3.70%
Mixed- White and Black Caribbean	0	0%
Mixed- White and Black African	0	0%
Mixed- White and Asian	0	0%
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, please	1	3.70%
Asian or Asian British-Indian	0	0%
Asian or Asian British- Pakistani	0	0%
Asian or Asian British-Bangladeshi	0	0%
Asian or Asian British- Chinese	0	0%
Any other Asian background, please specify	0	0%
Black or Black British- African	0	0%
Black or Black British- Caribbean	0	0%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please specify	0	0%
Other ethnic group- Arab	0	0%
Any other ethnic group, please specify	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	3	11.11%
Not Answered	3	11.11%

Question: How would you define your religion or belief?

Option	Total	Percent
No religion	5	18.52%
Christian	15	55.56%
Muslim	0	0%
Hindu	0	0%
Buddhist	0	0%
Jewish	0	0%
Sikh	0	0%
Other	1	3.70%
Prefer not to answer	6	22.22%
Not Answered	0	0%

Question: Are you?

Option	Total	Percent
Employed Full Time	13	48.15%
Employed Part Time	3	11.11%
Self-Employed	1	3.70%
Unemployed	0	0%
Long-Term Sick/Disabled	1	3.70%
Retired	3	11.11%
Home-maker/Care-giver	2	7.41%
Student	0	0%
Other	1	3.70%
Prefer not to answer	3	11.11%
Not Answered	0	0%

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Scrutiny Members are asked to note the results of the consultation.

7. Annexes

Annex A – All responses to the question “Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which Stockport Council could generate income?”

Annex A – Unedited Free Text Comments Received

Response	Question: Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which Stockport Council could generate income?
1.	Hire out rooms in school buildings, hire out rooms in libraries,, hire out rooms in the town hall, speed cameras.
2.	Annual purchase scheme for staff it has worked in Manchester Creating volunteer work within every department for people with mental health/ ASD/ADHD to boost interactions improve confidence whilst reducing anxiety- value everyone make Our Stockport better Look at assessing care packages differently looking at everyone abilities rather inabilities and concentrating on completing skills assessments over a number of weeks evaluating and appropriate reductions tried and tested by myself in Manchester in six months we as seen over 100,000 in savings in long term provision in funding significantly reduce in long term requirements in complex cases
3.	increase parking patrols and generate more through fines - poss out of hours e.g. outside pubs and restaurants where cars do not park appropriately.
4.	Parents who earn £199.000 between them do not need help with childcare fees .they can afford them and should not qualify for 30 hours funded childcare . This is a joke and parents are having the last laugh !!
5.	Higher Buisness rates for bigger buisnesses Corporate sponsorship Better use of council space/offices to generate income Empty shop space used better- encourage pop up shops for fee.
6.	Charge all streets with residents parking for the privilege Make a greater effort to sell parking spaces in the carparks to local residents to keep them off the highway. More parking enforcement sell space for advertising - including A board use Charge a appropriate cost for filming in parks and on the highway its cheap Make sure that businesses using parks have to pay for that inc. Dog walkers and fitness gurus Charge full cost including planning and design for any signs that are requested to direct people to a location including schools, churches, charity's etc. Charge for and enforce on seats/goods on highway. charge full cost for pest control charge damages for people driving on verge/ parking on verge charge full cost of any damage done by vehicles mounting the pavement to get on driveways that do not have proper crossings and any bollards needed to stop them if they cannot or refuse to have a proper crossing put in. Littering fines bin replacements to cost full price and cost of delivery charge more to collect large waste/christmas trees etc. Charge a yearly fee for the placement of bins and their emptying near takeaways/cafes etc.
7.	Raise council tax by £10 per household. Increase rents on social housing and cut back on councillors spending.
8.	

Response	Question: Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which Stockport Council could generate income?
9.	<p>Put up council tax by maximum allowed. (3.99)</p> <p>Large numbers of householders in this borough could afford to pay this and would prefer not to see front line services cut.</p> <p>If Council tax discount is not cut for the disabled or for single occupants then there is some protection for these groups if the rate of tax increases.</p> <p>I have, incidentally, just read the Cabinet overview document at the beginning of this consultation and despite having a degree I cannot understand much of it. I don't think it would cost anything to write it using plain English, so that the public could understand it. There are numerous examples of gobbledegook, eg para 2.1 "volatility underpinning" . There are meaningless acronyms too.</p> <p>Whatever you do in the area of "modernising citizen journeys" (whatever that is - presumably nothing to do with buses or trains??) people in Stockport are not going to engage with consultation if you write screeds of stuff that is incomprehensible.</p>
10.	
11.	
12.	Increase the council tax payments by revising the banding of properties based on their energy efficiencies.
13.	If you implement these proposals people will suffer and people will die Instead. cut some of the councillors & cut some of the managers, stop wasting the money and resources the council already has and stop borrowing vast amounts of money for useless schemes
14.	It would be an absolute disgrace to cut off free school travel for those going to faith schools when this is their designated school but happens to be further away.Surely environmentally we need to encourage more children on school buses to reduce the traffic.
15.	Reinstate the A6 as a Toll Road from Heaton Chapel to Blossom's
16.	Yes, encourage more people to go to work. As a working mother of two children who both attend a faith school the free bus passes they receive may not seem a lot to some people but to a working mum this is important to me. Times are exceptionally hard for working families and I feel penalised for sending my children to a faith school which is the closest one to us but still quite a distance away.
17.	charge for using computers in our libraries - this happens in all the other adjoining authorities
18.	Raise council tax by £5 per household per month.
19.	<p>Increase Fixed Penalty Notices for Flytipping, Parking illegally and breaches of s46 of Environmental Protection Act. £80 is too low for businesses that breach conditions when they have a great amount of responsibility. We need to go beyond Government guidance.</p> <p>Charging large developers much more in s106 fees and contributions and planning fees are essential.</p>
20.	
21.	lower the rates to the stores in the town center so more shops will open ... turn of the motorway light at nite or turn of every other light change all street lighting to led light...

Response	Question: Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which Stockport Council could generate income?
22.	<p>Increase number of council owned advertising spots and engage with local business to drive revenue through advertising sales.</p> <p>Include a marketing portal on Stockport website to assist local business and increase revenue.</p> <p>Review council property and lease out office space etc to increase rental income. Even purchase some property that would drive rental income.</p>
23.	<p>More traffic enforcement officers to patrol double yellow line infringements, pedestrian crossing and other infringements in and around Bramhall. New double yellow lines were painted on Fir Road but they are flouted on a daily basis causing danger for road users and issues for wheelchair pavement users as cars are often parked on the roads.</p> <p>Close some more libraries.</p> <p>Do not increase our council tax yet again.</p> <p>School community days to pick litter and keep the borough tidy.</p> <p>Fine litter louts and use the parking enforcement officers to police this.</p> <p>Review Council leaders salaries with a view to reducing then by a minimum of 10%.</p>
24.	Cut subsidies to businesses (produce hall etc).
25.	The government should contribute
26.	
27.	<p>Be far more effective in enforcing parking violations.</p> <p>Hit utility companies with severe financial penalties when they are late or cause undue delay in completing work on the highway</p>