

FEES AND CHARGES REPORT

APPENDIX 8 - LAND CHARGES SERVICES

1. Service Description

The provision of a public register in the Local Land Charges service is a statutory requirement that provides an income to the authority on a cost recovery basis. The service is a key part of the wider conveyancing process used to buy, sell re-mortgage etc. land and property within England and Wales.

Conveyancers request standard information. This is split into two parts, information that is held within the register (statutory element) and information that forms part of the CON29, which refers to the contract that the Law Society and Local Authorities work under when requesting and providing this information.

There is a proposal within the new Infrastructure Act, to centralise the statutory element of the Local Land Charges search and make Land Registry responsible for administering the register. The Local Authority will retain liability and responsibility for information provided from the register.

2. Prior years analysis, current financial year projections

The table below illustrates the volumes of searches over the last three financial years (please note 2020-21 is an estimate) and the levels of income achieved month by month.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Searches Received	2,591	2,681	2,489	2,273
Income Received	£116k	£103k	£93k	£100k

Total income received previous three financial years against budget (2020-21 estimated)

	Total £	Budget £	Under/(over) £
Income received 2017/18	115,788	117,400	1,612
Income received 2018/19	103,438	121,500	18,062
Income received 2019/20	92,973	125,600	32,627
Income received 2020/21 (Forecast)	100,000	135,700	35,700

3. Covid Impact

Due to the pandemic, we have been unable to provide a face-to-face service for personal search companies, therefore we have had to undertake the searches that these companies usually do themselves. This has put on immense pressure to the team as additional workload that cannot be charged for under these current circumstances. This along with an increase in searches generally has led to our turnaround times increasing dramatically over the last few months as we are undertaking work we normally wouldn't do (this currently equates to 1 persons full time hours). Agency staff have been employed to help to clear the backlog.

4. Pricing

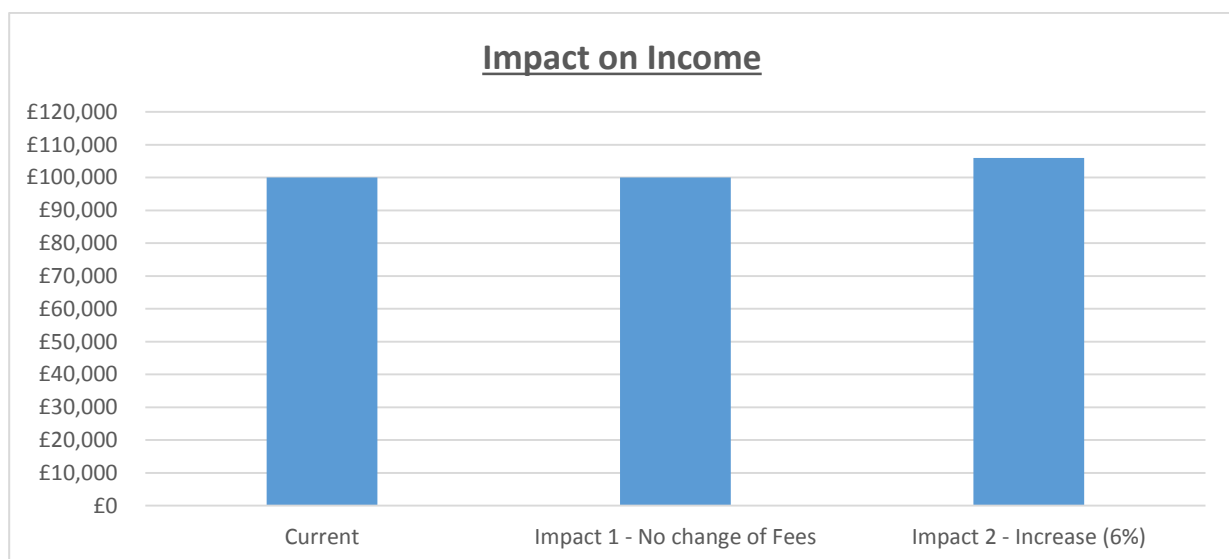
The service has proposed an increase of 6% across all fees and charges within the service area. The resulting charges are consistent with benchmarking data for neighbouring Authorities.

Impact on income of options for fees and charges;

Current budget 2021/22	£110,300
Impact 1 - No change of Fees	£110,300
Impact 2 - Increase (6%)	£116,800
<i>Increase of:</i>	<i>£6,500</i>

Based on 2020/21 estimated volume.

Therefore, we are proposing to increase fees by 6% for 2021/22.



5. Understanding Customers and Markets

The Local Land Charges service (LLC), over the years has achieved a reputation across the district as being a quality and accurate service. This reputation has been built, primarily, by one person, who has led the service with professionalism, attention to detail and a huge, in depth knowledge of this statutory provision.

A core group of customers have remained loyal to the service because of this, however there has been no formal attempt by the service to increase its market share due to the lack of resilience in service due to the antiquated process and procedures created by the paper-based systems.

6. Proposed Charges

For non-statutory charges the Land Charges Service proposes to apply an increase of 6%.

7. Recommendation

Members are requested to recommend to Council the charges for 2021/22 as illustrated in the schedule below.

Prosperous Communities Committee

Land Charges

		2020/21	2020/21	Proposed		2021/22	VAT	2021/22	VAT Rate
		Excl. VAT	Inc. VAT	Increase/decrease		£	Amount	Charge Inc. VAT	
		£	£	% Type	or £	£	£	£	
Access to data	Access to information not held on public registers (includes £5 admin fee)	£22.50	£22.50	6%	£1.50	£24.00	£0.00	£24.00	OS
	Cancellation Fee	£6.00	£6.00	8%	£0.50	£6.50	£0.00	£6.50	OS
LLC1:	Any one part of the register	£7.50	£7.50	7%	£0.50	£8.00	£0.00	£8.00	OS
	Whole of the register	£22.50	£22.50	6%	£1.50	£24.00	£0.00	£24.00	OS
	Per additional parcel (maximum of £16)	£1.00	£1.00	50%	£0.50	£1.50	£0.00	£1.50	OS
CON 29R	One parcel	£71.00	£85.20	6%	£4.50	£75.50	£15.10	£90.60	S
	Each additional parcel	£16.00	£19.20	6%	£1.00	£17.00	£3.40	£20.40	S
	Lincolnshire County Council Fee	£23.10	£27.72	0%	£0.00	£23.10	£4.62	£27.72	S
CON 29O									
	submitted with CON29R or LLC1	£17.50	£21.00	6%	£1.00	£18.50	£3.70	£22.20	S
	submitted on its own	£17.50	£21.00	6%	£1.00	£18.50	£3.70	£22.20	S
Administration Fee		£12.50	£15.00	6%	£1.00	£13.50	£2.70	£16.20	S
Additional Enquiries *	Per additional enquiry	£30.00	£36.00	6%	£2.00	£32.00	£6.40	£38.40	S/O
Filing a definitive certificate of the Lands Tribunal		£3.00	£3.00	17%	£0.50	£3.50	£0.00	£3.50	OS
Office copy of any entry in the register (not including a copy or extract of any plan or document filed pursuant to these rules)	Fee set according to time and work involved								S

* The VAT treatment of this supply will follow the treatment of the initial search (e.g. if CON29 it will be taxable, but if LLC1 it will be outside the scope)