

deliver chargeable services, like the investment in Sustainable Development and Wildlife Licensing delivery this year."

4. Charging will put off customers

In the article giving your two pennies' worth, **REDACTED** explain why charging didn't deter their customers.

REDACTED recently worked up a contract for an electricity company: "It struck me that the developers weren't daunted by the cost at all – they are used to paying people for their services, especially for environmental advice, so they just saw it as part of their usual job."

REDACTED says charging increased the value the developer put on their engagement with NE: "I was surprised at how appreciative the developer was. It sounds expensive to us but was real value for money for them. They took it very seriously and sent their heads of department – we sometimes undersell what we know and underestimate what we can do."

Down on the Kent NNRs, **REDACTED** first charged for school visits two years ago: "We went from offering guided school visits for free with a transport grant to charging for visits and schools paying their own transport, yet we were still fully booked and had fewer cancellations even with the increased cost."

5. We are competing with consultants, and we charge too much

REDACTED explains how charge rates were decided upon: "As a public body, we are expected to carry a high level of overhead, for example in our science, evidence, legal and governance functions, and this is reflected in our rate, which also includes preparation and administrative costs." On a comparison with consultants, **REDACTED** says "We are seeking to complement, not compete with, their offer."

6. It's ok to charge developers, but not our partner organisations / farmers / charities

While it might seem desirable to have flexibility, treasury guidelines restrict us from charging different rates to different customers where the service level is the same. However, when we have partnership agreements, we may choose to make a charging exemption to partly or wholly subsidise the cost of our input. In effect, our advice then becomes an "in-kind" contribution to the project or partnership.

REDACTED again explains more "we will only offer chargeable services where we feel it is reasonable to do so. We should avoid the introduction of charges where we feel that this would bring a serious risk of detrimental impact for our work or on our customers."

7. There's no opportunity for charging in my area of work

To reach our income generation target of 12 million by 2020, we need to look at all our work areas to consider where charging might be appropriate. This doesn't mean charging for everything – even with this high target, the majority of our income will still come from government funding. However, we need to look at income generation in all areas from Marine to Wildlife Licensing to NNRs, and for different types of work, such as training workshops (as in this article here)

Other public sector bodies such as the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation are already charging for statutory as well as discretionary advice. Over the next few months we will be rolling out new chargeable services. We hope you will bring ideas and join in discussions on our new Chargeable Services Sharepoint.

For more information please contact **REDACTED**