



**REPORT of  
CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

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to  
**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

**DISCRETIONARY FEES AND CHARGES POLICIES 2025 / 26**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to review the proposed 2025 / 26 fees and charges policies set out at **APPENDIX 1** prior to approval of the 2025 / 26 budget and updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.2 The detailed schedule of Fees and Charges will be updated based on these policies. The Strategy and Resources Committee will consider the detailed schedule of 2025/26 Fees and Charges at a future meeting before recommending these to the Council for approval.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To the Council:

- (i) That the 2025 / 26 discretionary Fees and Charges policies at **APPENDIX 1** be approved,
- (ii) That the revised 2024 / 25 Fees and Charges schedule for Building Control at **APPENDIX 2** be approved,

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

**3.1 Discretionary Fees and Charges – Policy Considerations**

3.1.1 When setting discretionary fees and charges, the following factors need to be considered:

- Seeking full cost recovery, to make services self-financing where appropriate;
- Corporate and service objectives / priorities;
- The level of charges levied by commercial competitors and other local authorities;
- The introduction of new charges, where appropriate;
- Whether concessions in fees and charges for specific users of the service(s) would apply or, where they already apply, should they continue to apply.

### 3.2 2025 / 26 Policy Updates

3.2.1 The policies for all discretionary fee and charges are set out in **APPENDIX 1**, including any new or amended proposed policies (shown in red), and any proposed concessions.

### 3.3 Summary of proposed changes to Fees and Charge Policies 2025 / 26

Type of Change	Policy	Proposed Change 2025/26
New Policy and Concession	Burnham-on-Crouch Pontoon	<u>Policy</u> : Charge for commercial use of the Burnham on Crouch Pontoon to ensure as a minimum full cost recovery.  <u>Concession</u> : Free use by public accessing the pontoon on foot.
New Policy	Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Property Purchase Advice	To start charging for providing heritage advice to prospective purchasers of Listed Buildings in the District.
New Policy	Planning Enforcement Conveyancing Support	Charge for written confirmation that Planning Enforcement action has been closed / resolved to support property conveyancing activities.
Amend Existing Policy	Section 106	To charge a monitoring fee based on the time expected to be spent on monitoring and reporting on the pre-commencement and development whole development lifecycle until all clauses are discharged.
Amend Existing Concession	Environmental and Anti-Social Behaviour offences - Fixed Penalty Notices	Concession for early payment up to maximum permitted by legislation.

### 3.4 Update to 2024/25 Building Control Discretionary Fees and Charges

3.4.1 2024 / 25 Building Control fees were agreed by the Council in December 2023, however these were calculated on an incorrect 2023 / 24 baseline (2023 / 24 original fees agreed by the Council in December 2022 were superseded by the Council in July 2023). The proposed revised fees for the remainder of 2024 / 25 are shown at **APPENDIX 2**. These will in turn will form the baseline for the 2025 / 26 Building Control Fees and Charges to be considered by the Committee in November 2024.

## 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The fees and charges policies will inform the setting of the 2025 / 26 fees and charges, which will be brought to a subsequent Committee.

## 5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

### 5.1 Smarter finances

- 5.1.1 Setting fair fees and charges contributes towards a sustainable financial position for the Council.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The fees and charges are for services and therefore impact on service users.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – The implementation of the fees and charges policies is a contributing factor to setting robust Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- (iv) **Impact on resources (financial)** – Fees and Charges are an important part of the Council's income.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Staff resource has been considered for each of the policies in terms of implementation, monitoring and enforcement.

Background Papers: None.

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