

## Cabinet

### **Briefing Note: Fees and Charges Policy and Schedule 2025/26 – Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Comments and Recommendations**

**Purpose of the briefing note:** To inform Cabinet of the discussions and recommendations agreed by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Fees and Charges Policy and Schedule 2025/26.

- 1.1 This report was considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The following comments and questions were raised:
  - 1.1.1 Members welcomed the approach as previously the process for setting fees and charges had taken considerable time and resource. Members felt the new policy ensured fees and charges were more focussed and benchmarking had been undertaken.
  - 1.1.2 Members questioned if Commissioners had commented on the report.
    - a. Commissioners were happy with the backstop principle but requested additional data relating to debt.
  - 1.1.3 Members questioned if officers had reviewed all services and activities to ensure all areas had the necessary fees and charges.
    - a. Officers had reviewed all activities and were charging for services as much as possible.
  - 1.1.4 Members questioned the fees and charges related to burial costs, as the right of burial for traditional and Muslim graves had increased by £325 (14.94%), which could be a large increase for families suffering bereavement, and often local communities had to fundraise to cover costs.
    - a. Officers had based the increase on benchmarking data to ensure Thurrock was not an outlier, but officers and the Cabinet Member for Resources would review in more detail and respond to the Committee.
- 1.2 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the recommendations:
  1. Members noted and commented on the Fees and Charges Policy and Schedule 2025/26.
  2. No additional recommendations were made by the Committee.

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