

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Note: Fees and Charges Policy and Schedule – Cabinet Discussion/Recommendations

Purpose of the briefing note: To update the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee on the Cabinet discussions and recommendations regarding the Fees and Charges Policy and Schedule.

- 1.1 At the Corporate O&S Committee meeting held on 14th January 2025, Members received a report regarding the Fees and Charges Policy and Schedule. Members asked detailed questions and made numerous comments on this report.
- 1.2 These questions and comments were summarised into a briefing note, published, and presented to Cabinet along with the Fees and Charges Policy and Schedule on 22nd January 2025. A follow-up briefing note regarding the fee for community events on Council land was also circulated to Cabinet Members ahead of the meeting.
- 1.3 This briefing note summarises the discussion and recommendations of Cabinet, so Corporate O&S Members can see the outcome of their contributions into the approved document.
- 1.4 Cabinet made the following points:
 - a. Cabinet highlighted that some fees were set externally such as planning and control fees, but discretionary charges could be set by the Council such as car parking charges.
 - b. Cabinet was proposing a different approach for setting discretionary fees applying a backstop rate. All fees and charges would be raised by this rate with some exceptions, and fees had been benchmarked with other Local Authorities.
 - c. Cabinet thanked the Corporate O&S Committee for the input and their support with the backstop rate. Some concerns had been raised regarding the increased burial fees, and the Portfolio Holder had discussed this further with officers and confirmed that a benchmarking exercise had been undertaken and burial fees were lower than neighbouring local authorities. Ten neighbouring authorities had been considered and average fees were £2451 for 2024, rising to around £2500 in 2025 in line with inflation.
 - d. Cabinet noted that concerns had also been raised regarding the fee for events held on Council land. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that if the

event was not-for-profit, then there would not be a fee. If community events held groups that would make a profit, there would be a 50% reduction on fees.

- e. The Leader asked that officers write to Members of the Corporate O&S Committee to clarify the fee for events on community land. Cllr Watson requested that the fee was made clear to community groups, forums, and small local charities.

1.5 Cabinet agreed the recommendations as follows:

‘2.1. Cabinet agreed the proposed discretionary fees and charges to be levied by the Council with effect from 1 April 2025, as detailed in Appendix 1.

2.2. Cabinet noted the statutory fees and charges to be levied by the Council with effect from 1 April 2025 as detailed in Appendix 1.

2.3. Cabinet agreed the Thurrock Council Fees and Charges Policy 2025 as attached at Appendix 3.

2.4. Cabinet agreed that any changes required during the 2025/26 year are delegated to the Chief Finance Officer (s151) in conjunction with the Lead Member Resources and the relevant Portfolio Holder.’

For any questions regarding this briefing note, please contact:

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