

Report for: Cabinet 5th December 2023

Title: Fees and Charges 2024-25

Report authorised by : **Jon Warlow, Finance Director**

Lead Officer: **Frances Palopoli, Head of Corporate Financial Strategy & Monitoring**

Ward(s) affected: ALL

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** **Key**

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. The income generated by many councils' fees and charges represents an increasingly significant proportion of their income, and therefore decisions on future charges have an increasingly greater effect on the sustainability of their services covered by those charges.
- 1.2. This Council's income policy requires an annual review of the level of the fees and charges to be met by service users, with the emphasis being on full recovery of costs, though it recognises that in some circumstances this is not possible.
- 1.3. This report sets out the Fees and Charges (F&Cs) proposed from the start of the financial year 2024/25, proposing increases in line with inflation to offset the costs increases associated with those service, or alternatives where circumstances indicate this is more appropriate.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

- 2.1. In order to protect the Council's ability to provide the services needed or enjoyed by many, we need to ensure that we can continue to cover the costs of their provision. While I very much recognise the pressure that the cost of living crisis is putting on households, we have little choice other than to look to ensure that we maintain our income in real terms so we will continue with our policy of annual increases linked to CPI inflation rates.
- 2.2. Taking all relevant factors into account I believe that the increases in fees and charges proposed in this report are necessary and appropriate. I therefore commend this report to the Cabinet.

3. Recommendations

3.1. The Cabinet is asked:

- a) To **agree** the proposed non-statutory fees and charges to be levied by the Council with effect from 1 April 2024, unless otherwise stated, and as detailed in Section 8 and Appendices I, and III – XIII taking into account the findings of any equalities assessments as set out in section 11 of the report.
- b) To **note** the statutory fees and charges to be levied by the Council with effect from 1 April 2024.
- c) To **note** that the Council's draft 2024/25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25-2028/29 assumes that the changes to Fees and Charges set out in this report are agreed.
- d) To **authorise** officers to proceed to statutory notification and / or consultation of increases to existing parking fees and charges as set out in Appendix II and to note that the proposed charges may only be implemented subject to the outcome of any required notification and or consultation procedures as may be prescribed in legislation.

4. Reasons for Decision

4.1. Under the Council's Income Policy, it is a requirement to review fees and charges as a minimum annually. Given the ongoing challenges facing the Council, this is even more appropriate.

5. Alternative options considered

5.1. This report summarises the conclusions after consideration of a range of alternative approaches dependent on particular services and relevant factors. As such a range of alternative options ranging from no increase to differentiated rates of increases or decreases have been considered and reflected in this report.

6. Background information

6.1. The Council's External Income Policy requires that:

- Service managers should review the level of fees and charges, as a minimum annually, usually as part of the budget setting process;
- Charges should generally increase by inflation (based on the rate in September prior to the new year) as a minimum where permissible and also seek to maximise allowable income;
- A full list of proposed charges should be presented to Cabinet for approval by the end of March each year.

6.2. The setting of fees and charges, along with raising essential financial resources, can contribute to meeting the Council's objectives. Through the pricing mechanism and wider market forces, outcomes can be achieved, and services can be promoted through variable charging policies and proactive use

of fees to promote or dissuade certain behaviours. In the main, fees and charges should be set at a level where the full cost of provision is recovered through the price structure. However, in some circumstances those charges are at a lower level, with service provision in effect subsidised by the Council to meet broader Council priorities.

- 6.3. This report meets the requirements of the Council's external income policy for the 2024/25 financial year and as such contains details of the current and proposed levels of fees and charges to take effect as set out during 2024/25.

7. Review of Fees & Charges

- 7.1. Some fees and charges are governed by statute and cannot be changed through this process, such as the amount charged for a Marriage or Civil Partnership ceremony or for a Birth Certificate. Many fees and charges, for example residential care or Building Control, can only recover relevant costs. The level of other fees and charges are at the discretion of the Council or are restricted to cost recovery.
- 7.2. The Council also has a set of strategic and policy objectives, and fees and charges should be set in accordance with such objectives.
- 7.3. The general principles underpinning the Council's external income policy are that all fees and charges are reviewed as a minimum annually and that income is maximised within current service and policy objectives. The competitiveness of the market in which the service operates and the effect of price on demand and overall income yield should be considered.
- 7.4. The income policy assumes fees and charges increase by a minimum of Consumer Price Index (CPI) at September of the preceding year unless there is a good reason not to, which must be explained. In order to proceed with the development of the Fees and Charges for 2024/25 ahead of the publication of the actual September CPI inflation figure, the financial planning process assumed an estimated inflationary uplift figure of 7%, which is in line with the actual September figure.
- 7.5. In some cases, where a % increase would give a very small cost increase and/or result in a charging rate that would be difficult to administer e.g., a resultant 36p charge might require disproportionate effort of maintaining change floats etc. Services have been asked to take account of factors such as the last time a rise was approved (i.e., an assessment of the compounded inflationary rate) and make appropriate proposals; the proposed rate can be seen in the appendices.
- 7.6. A number of fees and charges cannot be set by the Cabinet. Regulation 2(6)(d) and (e) of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 provides that charges for certain approvals, consents, permits and licenses (e.g. fees payable under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005) may not be made by the Executive (Cabinet). These fees are set by the Council's Licensing Committee.
- 7.7. As part of the annual review, consideration is given to the Council's equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) and as such proposed fee changes set out within this report have been subject to equalities screening. Where the

screening process has identified a potential disproportionate impact for protected groups a full EqlA has been completed.

8. Service Specific information

- 8.1. The Appendices I – XIII detail the services' fees and charges, showing the 2022/23 rate, 2023/24 rate and the proposed 2024/25 rate with the uplift, if any, applied. Each service proposal is also summarised below. Policy or equalities impact of any proposal are covered in Section 12.

Adult Services (See Appendix I)

- 8.2. Under Section 14 of the Care Act 2014, the Council has the power to charge for meeting care and support needs for adults and carers. The charges are means tested and take into account both income and assets possessed by the individual. This may or may not include an individual's residential home depending on whether the individual is receiving residential or community care. Charges are limited to cost recovery only. The principle of full cost recovery for all care and support services is set out in the Council's Fairer Contributions Policy and should be applied to all services. All charges are proposed to increase by 7% in line with inflation.

Highways and Parking (Operations) (See Appendix II)

- 8.3. The Council's authority to operate and set parking-related charges is defined by the Road Traffic Regulation Act (RTRA), 1984. It is important to note that on-street parking charges cannot be set purely and intentionally as a means to raise revenue and charges must be proportionate and have regard to the costs of administration and enforcement.
- 8.4. Section 122 of the RTRA places a duty upon the Council to "secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway". The council meets that duty through a range of measures, including the setting of parking and highways fees and charges at a level that restrains parking demand, enables a more efficient road network and brings environmental benefits.
- 8.5. In addition to that above, the review of fees and charges also considered pricing in other neighbouring and comparable boroughs and sought to ensure that Haringey's charges remained reasonably in line with most of them.
- 8.6. The Council must have due regard to implementation, maintenance and operating costs of any scheme introduced to facilitate the delivery of its duty referred to in point 8.4 above, and attempt to ensure that this is discharged following a cost recovery principle in respect of the setting of fees and charges.
- 8.7. The Council is mindful of the current cost of living crisis and offers a comprehensive support package to mitigate the increase proposed to charges for at-risk and low-income residents. This includes:

- Blue badge holders may park in resident permit, shared use and paybyphone parking bays (as well as disabled bays) free of charge for an unlimited period.
- A free virtual disabled residential parking permit available to Blue Badge Holders.
- A free 'Care at Home' parking permit for those being cared for in their own homes.
- Discounted visitor permits for residents who are registered disabled or aged 65 years or older.
- Options to purchase a 6 month permit rather than pay an annual charge.

Libraries (See Appendix IIIa)

- 8.8. The Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991 stipulate the items and services that may be charged for. Charges are at the discretion of the authority, and the authority may make different provision for different cases including different provision in relation to different persons, circumstances or localities. There can be no charge for the loan of written material (section 8 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964).
- 8.9. Library Service fees and charges fall into two categories:
- 1: An incentive to return items promptly, to take care of them and return them in good condition for the next Library member to borrow. This ensures that value for money is achieved for monies spent on library resources as they are available for loan for the majority of their lifetime. The charges that fall into this category are fines and charges for lost or damaged items.
 - 2: Income generation charges which includes loan fees for audio visual materials, printing and room hire.
- 8.10. Demand for certain services such as printing, photocopying and loan of DVD/CDs has been falling for some time due to alternatives available to users. No price increase is therefore proposed for these.
- 8.11. Room hire charges have increased by 10%. These changes are largely due to benchmarking against local businesses and neighbouring local authorities.
- 8.12. Charges for reservations of items in stock and lost ticket replacements which were both deleted in 2021/2022 have been reintroduced for 2024/25 due to benchmarking undertaken against other authorities which are part of The Libraries Consortium.
- 8.13. Small advertisements per 3 weeks have increased by 16.67% and overdue book charges per day for under and over 65s have increased by 20% and 13.33% respectively. All of which are due to benchmarking undertaken against other authorities which are part of The Libraries Consortium.
- 8.14. The new default price per book is £10 if the Recommended Retail Price (RRP) is not listed on library management system.
- 8.15. All other charges have been increased by 10% due to benchmarking undertaken against other authorities which are part of The Libraries Consortium, and/or as a stream of new income.

Cultural Services (See Appendix IIIb)

- 8.16. Most charges have increased to reflect current market rates with an uplift varying from 5% to 20% and an average increase across all fees and charges of 12.5%. The only exception to this is the fees for digital scan by archive staff which has increased by 38.46%. This is one of the most used services and has increased in line with the market, but it attempts to be as attractive and accessible as possible. Community rate room hire charges have only been increased 5-8% to maintain affordability.

Garage Rents (See Appendix IV)

- 8.17. The level of garage rent is based on demand, location and size and the income contributes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) rather than the General Fund (GF).
- 8.18. To ensure the garage rents do not impact disproportionately on vulnerable customers a specific concessionary rate is in place for elderly and disabled Haringey residents to ensure they can access the service.
- 8.19. The service has reviewed its pricing strategy for 2024/25 and is proposing a 7% in line with inflation across the board.

Corporate Landlord (Asset Management) (Appendix V)

- 8.20. Most rents for commercial properties are set through commercial negotiations with the tenant as part of the initial lease and subsequent rent reviews. The rents are set using nationally agreed RICS formulae taking into account variables such as location, size and condition of the property. The rent payable at the time of entering into a lease is very much dependent on market forces driving best consideration and once agreed is usually fixed for periods of up to 5 years before review. Commercial rent amounts are therefore not included for approval in this report.
- 8.21. Staff car parking provision will be reviewed as part of the corporate landlord Full Business Case review in conjunction with workforce planning over the next 6-12 months. We will be reintroducing staff car parking charges however, due to available parking spaces and hybrid working it is highly unlikely we can achieve the current income target. Options to mitigate as far as possible are currently being explored.
- 8.22. There are currently no room hire charges in the Civic Centre and River Park House as they are currently closed for refurbishment. As such no changes are proposed at the current time.
- 8.23. Charges for room hire at the Neighbourhood Resource Centre were not collected during the Covid pandemic period. The council intends to reinstate charges, as part of wider work to revitalise the community offer provided by NRC.
- 8.24. The Council has not provided a paid-for Schools FM offer in recent years, with funding for support to schools being paid for as part of the schools' capital

programme. The council is reviewing this position to look at service level model with full cost recovery, as a means of strengthening the delivery of FM in the schools estate.

Court Costs (See Appendix VI)

- 8.25. Legislation under the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 and the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) Regulations 1989 defines that the cost of summons and a liability order is reasonably incurred. The cost of summons and liability orders is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fair and reasonable.
- 8.26. The council can legally only recover costs relating to administration. The Authority's court costs are audited and are deemed to reflect the true cost in pursuing non-payers and defaulters.

Waste (See Appendix VII)

- 8.27. Household bulk bin hire and bulky waste collection has not changed as benchmarking suggests the borough's pricing is already in line with other London authorities who offer similar provisions.
- 8.28. Other household charges are proposed to increase at around inflation, predominantly based on benchmarking and rounding of prices.
- 8.29. Commercial waste pricing is determined by market conditions rather than corporately advised inflationary uplifts
- 8.30. Under section 46, Environmental Protection Act 1990, the council can designate certain receptacles for certain materials, such as communal recycling bins being only for specific recyclable material. The council is not obliged to collect household waste that is placed for collection in contravention of such a requirement. A new charge has been introduced to allow the council to empty contaminated communal bulk recycling bins (those deemed in contravention of the requirement), upon prior agreement from the waste holder (housing managers) to accept the charge.

Parks Services (See Appendix VIII a)

- 8.31. In general, Parks services have broadly kept in line with the inflation rate when proposing new charges.
- 8.32. Most charges have experienced around a 7% increase, aligning with market rates or aimed at partial cost recovery, with a handful at full cost recovery.
- 8.33. Notably, three new sponsorships have been introduced, offering Bat Box, Bird Box, and Bug Hotel sponsorships at full cost recovery. However, the most substantial increase of 62.74% has been applied to the "Memorial bench," described as the New Eastgate Anti-Vandal steel 1.8m bench with steel slats (or timber slats in nature conservation areas), which now sits on a new hard base.

- 8.34. Fees for annual and monthly memberships for the Gym, Group Exercise, and Athletics remain unchanged. Additionally, individuals over 65 attending these activities from 9 am to 5 pm on weekdays are still exempt from charges, like previous years.
- 8.35. Pay and Play cards are not being charged and the cost of a replacement card has increased from £1.10 to £1.20.

Parks Events (See Appendix VIII b)

- 8.36. All charges are proposed to increase by 7% in line with inflation.

Registrars (See Appendix IX)

- 8.37. Most fees for the register office are statutory and are set by the General Register Office and Treasury and cannot be changed by the Council. Statutory fees were last revised in October 2017 and include those for the registration of Births, Deaths, Notice of Marriage and Notice of Civil Partnership, issuing of certificates and corrections and the payment for each citizen attending a citizenship ceremony. The fees for all but statutory fee marriage and civil partnership ceremonies are set by the council and the majority of ceremonies fall into the non-statutory fee category.
- 8.38. Charges for services in the "Earlham Room", "Woodside Room" and "Westbury Room" at George Meehan House have shown some variation depending on anticipated demand with some fees increasing significantly. Some weekend charges have been reduced to stimulate demand and subsequently increase income. There are also new fees proposed for personalised time slots and exclusive ground floor hires which will help the service to compete including with independent celebrants. The General Register Office has asked that wedding and civil partnership ceremony fees are charged net of the certificate fee. The statutory certificate fee is £11 and has been removed from past and proposed ceremony fees for easier comparison. 100% of customers expect a certificate and removing the fee will not negatively impact on income but will assist with increasing the number of certificates sold at each ceremony.
- 8.39. Most non-statutory fees including for the core services used the most such as Monday to Thursday and Saturday ceremonies have increased in line with inflation, however some of these charges have experienced substantial increases (between 91-167%) which is based on market testing.
- 8.40. A new incentive and discount scheme is being proposed to stimulate demand for ceremonies at George Meehan House. Fee reductions will be applied in the following circumstances:
- Incentives to book at promotional events such as open days
 - Discounts to incentivise people to switch venues and price match
 - Discounts when there is low demand or excess capacity which is not likely to sell at full price
- 8.41. Postage fees have been prudently reduced by 16-19% by aligning them with Royal Mail Special Delivery stamp prices, a move aimed at avoiding VAT while ensuring cost-effectiveness.

Regulatory Services (See Appendix X)

- 8.42. These charges relate to Pest Control, Environmental Health Mortuary, Environmental permits and Local Authority Pollution Prevention Control (LAPPC) mobile plant charges. Fees are permissible by Acts of parliament. Environmental Permit fees are set by statute.
- 8.43. In total, 9 charges have been removed. Among the eliminated charges, 3 were associated with services such as drain maintenance, which are no longer provided by the council. The remaining 6 charges were deleted due to the revocation of the "Health Protection Regulations 2020."
- 8.44. Most of the proposed charge increases fall within the range of 7% to 11%, except for Pest Control: Fleas – Domestic, which is set to experience a significant increase of 26.62%. This notable rise in the latter charge is attributed market conditions and benchmarking, indicating that adjustments are being made to align with external factors influencing the cost of this specific pest control service.
- 8.45. A new charge of £250 has been introduced for obtaining an emergency copy of a food health certificate. This addition is in response to heightened demand for such documents and has been benchmarked against fees imposed by other local authorities.
- 8.46. The Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) have been temporarily increased in line with the maximum statutory charge, whilst consultation will be undertaken on whether to adopt this maximum statutory increase permanently. An early payment discount of 50% is still applicable to all FPNs.
- 8.47. The remaining charges have remained unchanged for various reasons. Some are established by regulations, while others are statutory, or government mandated. This leaves no room for alteration.

Property Licensing (See Appendix Xb)

- 8.48. Mandatory HMO (Houses in Multiple Occupation) Licensing is a non-discretionary scheme introduced by Government which came into effect in 2006. The fee for a Mandatory Licence was set at £208.00 per habitable unit with discounts attached for certain aspects of the licensing process. It applies to all HMO occupied by 5 or more persons across the whole borough.
- 8.49. A borough wide additional HMO licensing scheme to complement the borough wide Mandatory licensing scheme was implemented in 2019/20. The fee was set at £1,100 per unit based on an average 5 bed let. An increase of 10% in line with inflation was added in 2023 resulting in a charge of £1210. A recommended increase of 7% in line with inflation is proposed for 2024/25, resulting in a charge of £1,295.
- 8.50. The Selective Property Licensing Scheme introduced in 2022/23 saw no increase in 2023/24, however the charge for 2024/25 will increase by 7% in line with inflation to £642.

- 8.51. A £50 discount off the licencing fee is offered as a concession to landlords who have received training and are accredited to a landlord association. Housing with an EPC (C grade and above only) will also receive a £50 discount, the same as previous years. No increase in the discount has been proposed for 2024/25
- 8.52. All licensing fee money is ring fenced to be used for the purposes of operating the schemes.

Building Control, Local Land Charges and Street Naming & Numbering (See Appendix XIa)

- 8.53. Charges are required to be set so that the Building Regulations service breaks even over a 3-year period.
- 8.54. Building control charges are scheduled to increase by an average of 7.58%, mainly influenced by benchmarking and market knowledge. It's important to note that most of these charges are eligible for a 100% concessionary discount, but this is only applicable when the charges are related to disabled adaptation.
- 8.55. In the 2022/23 fiscal year, the responsibility for LLC1 Local Land Charges were transferred to HLMR (Her Majesty's Land Registry), relieving the council of this duty. However, the council continues to hold responsibility for certain aspects of local land charges, specifically "Local Enquiries Form CON29R only," "Additional Parcel fees (each)" and "Individual Enquires CON90 (per question)". These 3 charges have increased in line with the market at 7-8%.
- 8.56. Street Naming & Numbering charges for 2024/25 have been determined as statutory, resulting in an average increase of 8.81%.

Development Management (Planning / Development Control Services) (see Appendix XIb)

- 8.57. Most charges have been proposed to increase by 7% in line with inflation or keeping in line with the current market trend.
- 8.58. 7 new charges have been introduced for 2024/25, this includes a £10,500 charge for the large development sites above the current threshold of 50 residential units and above and a £1000 charge under general enquiries for 1 new residential unit. The other 5 charges range from £400 - £800.
- 8.59. £100 charge for general enquires will be introduced with a concession for residents with disabilities who require advice on small alterations to meet their access requirements. Householder express written advice has been reduced by 8.51% to avoid pricing customers out of the market when new statutory fees are in place next year. Quality Review Panel (QRP) charges have updated £1650 - £4950 which are paid to a 3rd party provider.

Childcare (see Appendix XII)

Children's Centres and Nurseries

- 8.60. All charges are proposed to increase by 1-3%. If charges were increased by inflation there is significant risk of being priced out of the market.

Children's Contact Centre

- 8.61. The Maya Angelou Family Centre is currently working on a proposal to develop a new in-house parent and child residential facility that will offer a bespoke support package. The aim will be to generate income for the authority and ensure high quality family assessments are undertaken to meet Haringey's statutory duties.
- 8.62. The Maya Angelou Family Centre does not intend to modify its current charging rate. This decision is grounded on the strategic goal of fostering the expansion of traded contact business. Raising charges may deter potential clients and impede the establishment and future growth of the service.

Legal External Fees (see Appendix XIII).

- 8.63. The legal charges are set to secure that, taking one financial year with another, the income from the charges applied to work paid for by third parties achieves full cost recovery for provision of the legal work carried out. In relation to commercial property charges the client department (Property Services) has the ability to waive some or all the fees if they wish to cover some or all these fees from their legal budget. The same principle applies to the Planning Services department in respect of section 106 agreements and to Highways Services in respect of s278, s38 or other highways agreements.
- 8.64. All charges have been calculated with a view to achieving full cost recovery resulting in increases of between 7-14%, with the majority at the 7% mark.
- 8.65. A new commercial hourly rate has been introduced for work carried out at Senior Lawyer level at £305 per hour, which is a 7% increase on the previous Principal Lawyer rate. The Principal Lawyer rate has been increased by 14%. For granting of new commercial leases and renewal of commercial leases not within the Act, new fixed rates have been established (and hourly rates removed), in order to provide certainty at the outset of the full legal cost.
- 8.66. Charges to the Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), noted as 'Other legal charging arrangements', are set out in separate Service Level Agreements. The rates are set to be beneficial to the CCG whilst recovering the cost of provision of the Legal support. They are currently set at a level to be competitive and maximise the use of the services provided.

9. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes'?

Maximising the Council's resources, particularly in the current financial climate, is a key part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. In addition, the review of fees and charges has taken into account the Council's strategy and policies regarding that particular service.

10. Carbon and Climate Change

Some of the proposed recommendations should have a positive impact on carbon emissions, energy usage or climate change adaptation.

11. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

Finance

The proposed changes to Fees & Charges outlined in this report and appendices have been considered in the Council's proposed 2024/25 budget.

Procurement

Strategic Procurement notes the contents of this report.

Head of Legal & Governance

The Head of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and makes the following comments.

Certain fees for services provided by the Council are prescribed in statute. Accordingly, confirmation is given that in such instances the Council has no discretion as to the level of the charge. However, there are a further range of services where specific legislative provisions allow the Council to decide whether to charge and how much. One such service area is leisure and recreational facilities, where section 19(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits the Council to charge for these facilities beyond cost recovery limitations.

In addition, section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) - and guidance issued in 2006 pursuant to section 96(3) of the Act - empowers the Council to charge for discretionary services. A discretionary service is defined in the guidance as being one where the Council has the power to provide it, but is not obliged to do so. However, this power cannot be used where the Council is under a duty to provide the service, or where charging is prohibited or where a specific legislative charging regime applies.

The Council must have regard to the guidance when charging for discretionary services under the Act. Accordingly, for each discretionary service which a charge is made, there is duty to secure that, taking one year with another, the income from charges for that service does not exceed the costs of provision. Any over or under recovery that results in a surplus or deficit of income in relation to costs in one period should be addressed by the Council when setting its charges for future periods so that over time income equates to costs.

In addition, Section 93 of the Act permits the Council to charge only some persons for providing a discretionary service and to charge different persons different amounts for providing a service.

The Council also has power under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals generally may do, subject to restrictions and limitations

imposed by other statutes. The general power of competence extends to charging for a discretionary service where there is no other power to charge for the service, including the power in section 93 of the Act. Similarly, under this provision, the Council may not recover more than the cost of providing that service.

In reviewing fees and charges, the Council need to have due regard to the overarching Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In so saying, it is noted that equality screening tools have been used as appropriate.

In light of the above, coupled with the stated equalities-based intention to keep initiatives under review and to make modifications as issues arise, there is no legal reason why Cabinet cannot adopt the Recommendations contained in this report.

Equality

The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

The majority of fees and charges increases are in line with inflation and are not deemed to have significant or disproportionate equalities impacts.

Where fees and charges have increased this is generally to achieve the aims of cost recovery for service delivery and is done in line with benchmarking against comparative boroughs and market rates.

All parking permit holders will be impacted by the proposed charge increase in that area. This is likely to impact those on low incomes, but there are discretionary schemes in place to mitigate negative impacts, with particular benefits to disabled and residents over 65. The proposed charges are proportionate and justified because the costs of administering and enforcing the service have increased and we need to increase charges to recover those costs. This is in line with other neighbouring boroughs' charging policy. In addition to the need to ensure sufficient revenue to cover administration costs, evidence suggests parking pricing policy encourages the use of sustainable transport options. We therefore expect increases in parking charges to encourage sustainable transport which will improve air quality, which disproportionately negatively impacts residents of lower socioeconomic status. An EQIA has been produced that explores potential impacts and mitigations in more detail.

Most waste charges are proposed to increase slightly over inflation at an average of 9%, this is predominantly due to benchmarking and market conditions. This is not expected to have disproportionate equalities impacts.

In addition, a two-year trial charge will apply to contaminated communal bulk recycling receptacles for housing managers who wish to use the council's service. There is a potential negative impact from the introduction of this charge if housing managers pass down the cost to tenants, however if the scheme works as intended, the total of all likely charges will be negligible when distributed across many residents. As an alternative, housing managers, can, if they choose, remedy the contamination themselves by other, possibly more financially advantageous means, e.g. removing non-recyclable material. An EQIA has been produced to ensure potential impacts are reviewed and mitigated.

Charges relating to pest control mostly fall within the range of 7% to 11%, except for Pest Control: Fleas – Domestic, which is set to experience a significant increase of 26.62%. This notable rise in the latter charge is attributed market conditions and benchmarking, indicating that adjustments are being made to align with external factors influencing the cost of this specific pest control service. Concession rates will remain in place, mitigating negative impacts on people with protected characteristics.

Staff car parking provision will be reviewed as part of the corporate landlord Full Business Case review in conjunction with workforce planning over the next 6-12 months. It is likely that staff car parking charges will be reinstated and options are currently being explored. Equalities impacts on staff will be considered as part of that decision.

All other proposed charges are set to rise at or near inflation and/or have sufficient mitigations (such as concession rates) against negative impacts for protected groups.

12. Use of Appendices

12.1 Fees & Charges Schedules

Appendix I	Adults' Services
Appendix II	Highways and Parking
Appendix III a	Libraries Charges
Appendix III b	Cultural Services Charges
Appendix IV	Garage Rents
Appendix V	Asset Management
Appendix VI	Court Summons
Appendix VII	Waste Services
Appendix VIII a	Parks Services
Appendix VIII b	Parks Events
Appendix IX	Registrars
Appendix X a	Regulatory Services (excl. Licenses etc. set by Licensing. Committee)
Appendix X b	Property Licensing
Appendix XI a	Building Control and Local Land Charges
Appendix XI b	Development Management
Appendix XII	Childcare and Children's Services
Appendix XIII	Legal Commercial External Fees

13. Background papers

None