



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	6 February 2025
Subject	2025/26 FEES AND CHARGES
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: Mike.Evely@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	The purpose of this report is to present a revised schedule of fees and charges for 2025/26. The report also describes the rationale for the revised charges compared to current charges for 2024/25. Revised charges are presented at Annex A alongside current charges for 2024/25
Annexes	Annex A – Schedule of Fees and Charges
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Endorse the rationale for revising fees and charges as set out in the report; and2. Approves the implementation of revised fees and charges for 2025/26 as detailed in Annex A from 1 April 2025.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivering Good Services• Supporting Communities• Supporting the Economy
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/	The Fees and Charges schedule for 2025/26 has been developed in



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Consultation	consultation with the Council's statutory officers, Publica management, Ubico management, and members of the Cabinet. Consultation has been carried out with members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee and with the District's residents, businesses and community organisations.
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to present a revised schedule of fees and charges for 2025/26. The report also describes the rationale for the revised charges compared to current charges for 2024/25. Revised charges are presented at Annex A alongside current charges for 2024/25.
- 1.2** With effect from 1 April 2025, it is recommended that many charges are increased by the Bank of England's inflation target (2%) to keep pace with general price inflation as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). This ensures that chargeable services continue to raise additional revenue so as not to place further pressure on the 2025/26 revenue budget.
- 1.3** All proposed charges disclosed in this report are rounded to the nearest 50p, £1, or £5 as appropriate. All charges are also inclusive of VAT where applicable to show the actual price to be paid by the service user.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Discretionary Fees and charges are reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process. The charges presented in this report are reflected in the estimates presented as part of the budget and medium-term financial strategy proposed by Cabinet (see report elsewhere on the agenda) and determined by Full Council on 24 February 2025.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1** It is recommended that the following services increase fees and charges by 2% with effect from 1 April 2025. Some individual charges will be slightly higher or lower than 2% due to rounding (see paragraph 1.3):

- Waste and Recycling – Bulky Waste Collection.
- Street Naming and Numbering of Properties.
- Local Land Charges.
- Legal Services.
- Legal and Estates (Property Transactions).
- Caravan, Campsite and HMO Fees.
- Animal Warden – Admin charge.



- Food Health and Safety.
- Private Water Supply Testing.
- Cemeteries.

3.2 The following services are either freezing charges at 2024/25 levels or proposing an alternative to a 2% increase:

- Waste and Recycling – A £5 increase for the Garden Waste Annual Subscription is recommended alongside no change in charges for refuse sacks and recycling containers.
- Planning - Pre-Application Fees and Other Discretionary Charges remain unchanged pending the outcome of a Planning Advisory Service review.
- Building Control – Charges have been reviewed and updated following a benchmarking exercise comparing charges to other local authorities as well as a review of the extent to which costs are recovered through service charges.
- Section 106 Agreements – Charges will be indexed in line with the BCIS CIL Index (2.6% for 2025) as set out in the report approved by Cabinet on 13 March 2023.
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Monitoring Fees – Charges remain unchanged as they were only recently introduced during the 2024/25 financial year.
- High Hedge Complaints – Increased by £300 to help recover costs associated with service delivery. Charges have previously remained unchanged for several years.
- Licensing (Excluding Caravan, Campsite and HMO Fees) – Charges are increasing by an average of 7.5% to fund the provision of additional staffing resources to support service delivery.
- Car Parking – Charges for 2025/26 are considered in a separate report (elsewhere on the agenda).
- Public Conveniences – Charges are frozen at 2024/25 levels (40p) although they will eventually be extended to all sites across the district; some of which are currently free.



Fees and Charges Limited by Statute

3.3 Some fees and charges are set or capped by Central Government and are therefore outside of the scope of this report. These include:

- Statutory Planning Application Fees.
- Alcohol and Entertainment Licences.
- Charges relating to the Regulation of Pollution from Industrial Sources.
- Charges set out in the Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016).

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 An alternative option to that presented in this report would be to freeze all fees and charges at 2024/25 levels. However, this option is not recommended for the following reasons:

- Chargeable services would recover a smaller proportion of their costs from service income and would require additional financial support from General Fund resources.
- Alternative savings proposals would be needed to replace the income to be generated from increased charges and balance the 2025/26 revenue budget (see reports elsewhere on the agenda).

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 This report recommends that most chargeable services increase their fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2025. As well as ensuring chargeable services continue to recover a significant proportion of their costs from sales, fees and charges income, the additional revenue that will be generated will make a significant contribution towards balancing the revenue budget for 2025/26.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

1.1. The proposals set out in this report are estimated to generate an additional £176,000 per annum in income from sales, fees and charges (excluding Car Parking income



which is covered in a separate report elsewhere on the agenda). It is proposed that the revised charges are implemented from 1 April 2025 meaning this additional revenue is fully reflected in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget Estimates for 2025/26 (see report elsewhere on the agenda).

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Section 93 Local Government Act 2003 gives the local authority a power to charge for discretionary services if the recipient of the service has agreed to provision of that service. This extends to charging for enhancements to a mandatory service. The aim of the power is to recover the costs of a service. Under section 93(3), the local authority is under a duty to secure that from one financial year, the income from charges for services does not exceed the costs of provision. Under Section 93(6), the local authority must have regard to the statutory guidance *“General Power for Best Value Authorities to Charge for Discretionary Services – Guidance on the Power in the Local Government Act 2003”*.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 The income estimates presented in this report and included within the 2025/26 revenue budget estimates (elsewhere on the agenda) are based on the fees and charges schedule included at Annex A. The estimates assume the proposed increases will not have a material adverse impact on demand. However, should demand be affected by the proposed increases, there is a risk that the proposals set out in this report will not generate income to match the estimates included within the 2025/26 revenue budget.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1 With regard to the proposals set out in this report (subject to approval), the Equalities Impact has been considered by Members and Officers participating in the development and decision-making process. Potential impacts on those with protected characteristics alongside other groups that experience discrimination have been given due consideration.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no climate change or ecological emergencies implications.



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11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

- None.

(END)