

TITLE OF REPORT: Fees and Charges 2024/25

REPORT OF: Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

Purpose of the report

1. The review of fees and charges is an integral part of the annual budget process. The purpose of this report is to request Cabinet to agree to recommend to Council the level of fees and charges across all Council services for 2024/25.

Background

2. The Council reviews its fees and charges annually with revised and new charges implemented from 1 April each year. As part of the annual review, all fees and charges have been considered. The review of fees and charges has been undertaken in the context of guidance indicating a general uplift where appropriate of 6.7% to reflect the inflationary increase for the year (12-month CPI 'Consumer Price Index' rate was 6.7% in September 2023).
3. In the Council's Constitution under delegations to individual managers, the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital has delegated authority to:
 - Amend statutory fees and charges and those tied to service level agreements or charged annually;
 - Approve commercially sensitive traded fees and charges in consultation with the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council;
 - Amend fees and charges during the financial year for any changes in legislation, changes to statutory fees or any changes to the rate of VAT.
4. There are fees and charges for Adult Social Services that are to be confirmed as they are aligned to commissioned rates paid to providers which are still subject to negotiation with care providers. Delegation is requested to agree these charges in consultation with the Strategic Director, Integrated Adults and Social Care Services, and Adult Social Care Portfolio Holder.
5. The projected outturn from Fees and Charges for 2023/24 is £27.936m (£0.563m less than the £28.499m budget).

Proposal

6. A summary of the recommended changes to fees and charges for Gateshead Council in 2024/25 is presented in Appendix 1 and the full listing is presented in Appendix 2.

7. The overall impact of additional income generated as a result of proposed fees and charges increases is currently to increase income base budgets by £0.257m in 2024/25.

Recommendations

8. Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council:

- (i) The fees and charges as set out for 2024/25 in Appendix 2.
- (ii) Authorisation for the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital to make any necessary adjustments to correct any errors in the schedule of Fees and Charges.
- (ii) Fees and charges for Adult Social Services are subject to provider fee uplifts being agreed. Delegation is requested for the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital to set these revised charges in consultation with the Strategic Director, Integrated Adults and Social Care Services and the Adult Social Care Portfolio Holder.

For the following reasons:

- To ensure that Fees and Charges are set in accordance with Council priorities.
- To support the delivery of the Council's budget and the strategic approach to making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.

CONTACT: Alastair Jobe

Extension: 3573

Policy Context

1. The proposals in this report are consistent with the Council's strategic approach 'Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives'. The Council recognises there are huge financial pressures on not just Council resources, but those of partners, local businesses and residents. This means that the Council's decision making, including the setting of fees and charges to support the budget, will be policy and priority led and driven.
2. In the Council's Constitution under delegations to individual managers, the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital has delegated authority to:
 - Amend statutory fees and charges and those tied to service level agreements or charged annually;
 - Approve commercially sensitive traded fees and charges in consultation with the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council;
 - Amend fees and charges during the financial year for any changes in legislation, changes to statutory fees or any changes to the rate of VAT.
3. The Council has explored the potential for new fees and charges for discretionary services afforded to it under its trading and charging powers.

Background

4. A review of fees and charges has taken place and the outcome of this review has informed the changes to fees and charges for 2024/25.
5. As part of the annual review, all fees and charges have been considered.
6. Proposals have been made to increase 36% of charges by 6.7%, to increase 2% of charges at a rate lower than 6.7% and a further 21% by above this level. In doing so it's judged that demand and delivery of Council objectives will not be adversely affected.
7. 26% of charges remain unchanged, 5% are new charges, 1% are proposed to decrease and 9% are to be removed as the Council no longer offer the service, changes to service delivery are proposed or charges have been consolidated.

Changes to Fees and Charges

8. The main changes to proposed fees and charges are listed below and the full listing of all fees and charges for 2024/25 is attached at Appendix 2.

Increases by Inflation

It is proposed that 38% of charges will increase by inflation or below. Proposals are:

- a. **Adult Social Services:** The proposal is to increase the majority of charges by September 2023 CPI of 6.7%. The Supporting Independence Service hourly rate

proposed increase is slightly lower than CPI at 5.6%, rising to £18.85 (this includes all staffs pay awards).

- b. **Business Centres:** Below CPI inflation (below 2%) increases in prices are proposed to be applied for the occupancy per square foot at Gateshead International Business Centre, Northern Design Centre, Baltimore House and PROTO, in order to maintain 90% occupancy levels and the amount being charged being similar to the market rate. Below CPI inflation price increases for occupiers to contribute to overheads of 3.23% is proposed. The day rate to hire PROTO Dedicated Desk will increase by CPI inflation. Some rates to hire meeting rooms at Gateshead International Business Centre, Northern Design Centre and Blaydon Business Centre are proposed to increase by CPI inflation and others below CPI inflation, based on market conditions and the aim of maximising occupancy levels.
- c. **Car Parking:** CPI inflation is proposed to be applied to the majority of car parks with some rises slightly above the CPI rate due to the rounding of prices. CPI inflation increases are proposed to be applied for different seasonal permits at Regent Court car park ranging from 5.1% to 6.08% (the range is due to roundings).
- d. **Cemeteries and Crematoria:** The pricing for the majority of services is proposed to be increased by 6.7% (subject to price roundings) in line with neighbouring authorities.
- e. **Children's Services:** Below CPI inflation price increases are proposed to be applied for the Early Years Childcare Training Service, instead of using CPI, Grade H staff pay award inflation of 5.7% is to be applied.
- f. **Corporate Services:** Charges for funeral and protection of property arrangements, charges for appointeeship cases, identity cards and electoral services (street index and conformation of entry on electoral register) are to remain frozen. Enhanced and Standard DBS checks charges are proposed to be increased by below CPI inflation at 1.61% and 2.67% respectively, the amount charged is made up of statutory charges advised by Government which are to be frozen, and the administration fee included in the charges for these checks. The administration fee included in these overall below CPI inflation increases have actually increased by 6.89% (by CPI inflation when adjusted for roundings).
- g. **Compliance and Regulatory Services:** Apart from the majority of charges which are statutory and have remained unchanged, all other charges are proposed to increase in line with CPI inflation, except for hackney carriage and private hire licences where prices are to remain as 2023/24 until a cost recovery exercise and consultation is completed.
- h. **Highways and Transport:** Most prices are proposed to be increased by CPI inflation.
- i. **Housing Related Charges and Licensing:** It is proposed to apply the recommended inflationary increase to the charges relating to the Baltic Road Gypsy and Travellers' site, Housing Act 2004 Actions, Mandatory and Renewal of Mandatory HMO Licencing, Immigration Inspections, caution charges for housing or anti-social behaviour related offences and requesting a paper copy of the

public register. In respect of the Baltic Road and Travellers' site, this could potentially close before April 2024, if this is the case it will be removed from the 2024/25 Agreed Fees and Charges Booklet.

- j. **Property and Land:** All charges for property transactions, copying charges for all legal documents, copy extract of covenants, drafting and negotiating Section 106 and 278 agreements are proposed to be increased by inflation.
- k. **Recreation:** All charges except the rental of allotments (allotment prices are reviewed every three years, the next review will be for the three years 2025/26 to 2027/28) are proposed to have the recommended inflationary increase applied.
- l. **Registrars:** The proposed charges to hire the Ravensworth and Tyne Suites are to increase by CPI inflation (subject to rounding's to keep the price in multiples of £10). The intended price increase to attend an approved premise for a Civil marriage and Civil Partnership are below CPI inflation on Monday to Thursday (1.01%) and Friday and Saturday (4.42%) due to market conditions with a similar to CPI inflation increase of 7.09% on Sunday, Bank Holidays, Christmas and New Years Eve.

CPI inflation increases are proposed for re-affirmation of vows and child naming ceremonies at Ravensworth Suite, with both CPI inflation and below inflation increases being proposed at an Outside Venue (rates depend on days, prices and rounded to the nearest £5 or £10).

- m. **Planning:** Charges for pre-planning advice are proposed to increase in line with CPI inflation (subject to roundings), the same applies to planning history searches. S106 monitoring charges are to increase in line with September 2023 CPI inflation.
- n. **Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance:** The charge for bagged rock salt and rodent control is proposed to be increased by CPI inflation.

Increases Above inflation:

21% of charges are proposed to increase by more than inflation. Proposals are:

- a. **Business Centres:** Some above CPI inflation price increases are proposed for certain rooms and periods at Gateshead International Business Centre, Northern Design Centre, Greensfield Business Centre, Blaydon Business Centre and Baltimore House, this is in addition to some rooms and time periods at these centres proposing price increases below inflation based on market conditions. The price to photocopy and print in black and white in A3 is proposed to be increased by 40% as currently in 2023/24 the price for A3 and A4 printing and photocopying charged is the same despite there being higher costs for printing on A3.
- b. **Car Parking:** The daily suspension of a car park or bay is proposed to increase slightly above inflation by an increase of £10 to the flat fee resulting in a flat fee of £120, in addition to a per bay per day charge. Charges for parking at Coach Park are proposed to be increased above CPI inflation (ranging from 7.14% to 13.33%). Proposed charges for different periods of parking at Cross Keys Lane are to increase between 16.67% and 25% (prices haven't increased since 2019),

similarly the rates for Lowrey's Lane are to increase by 25% (again prices haven't increased since 2019).

The six-month seasonal permit at Pipewellgate Car Park is proposed to increase by 13.9%, all permit types at Quarryfield Road Car Park are intended to increase between 7.47% and 7.87%. The six month and twelve months permit at Whickham Shopping Centre is proposed to rise in price by 25% and 16.67% to £100 and £175 respectively. This is the first price increase since 2019 for the twelve-month permit.

Per hour and daily rates for parking in Whickham Shopping Centre are proposed to be increased by 25% (10p an hour and 50p a day) as prices were last increased in 2019.

The on-street parking hourly rate at Mulgrave Terrace is proposed to increase by 20% (10 pence), there was no price rise in 2023/24. The price for the first annual permit in a residential zone is proposed to increase by £5 (20%), there was no price rise in 2023/24.

Charging for replacement permits are proposed to be increased by 10% (£5), there was no price rise in 2023/24.

The pricing for the administration fee for refunds on all types of parking permits is proposed to increase by 36.36% (£4) for BACS payments and 13.64% (£3) for cheque payments as previous years charges did not reflect the cost to the Council.

- c. **Children's Services:** The charge for the replacement of lost bus passes for children is proposed to increase by 7.43% (Grade F staff pay increase) to £7.95.
- d. **Compliance and Regulatory Services:** To act as a greater deterrent and to increase the probability of debt recovery, the charge for the removal of unlawful advertising is proposed to increase by 725% from £30.30 to £250 per item. The cost of storing unlawful advertising will rise from £6.10 to £10 per day (64%).
- e. **Building Control:** Increase in charges above inflation are proposed for over 139 lines within the Fees and Charges booklet. A large number of increases are between 10% and 12% in relation to services such as planning, inspection and regularisation charges for new build houses and also extensions, alterations or conversions to buildings.
- f. **Hire of Facilities:** Charges for the hire of a room at Caedmon Hall Library are proposed to increase by 12% for a half day. The hourly rate to hire the Wailes Room at the Central Library is proposed to increase by 25% from £20 to £25.
- g. **Highways and Transport:** Site visits for temporary traffic signals are to increase by 9.09% to £120 for the first hour and 8.33% to £60 for each subsequent hour. The cost of charging Electric Vehicles at charging posts is to increase by 116.67% from 30 pence per kWh for the car user to 65 pence per kWh, this is to cover the increased costs of electricity usage.
- h. **Planning:** Charges for outline planning applications for site areas over 0.5 hectares will increase by 35%, a maximum charge of £202,500 will apply, this was previously £150,000. The statutory charge for a full planning application for the erection or creation of a dwelling is to increase by 25.11% (for up to 10 dwellings created) and 35% for the creation of over 50 dwellings in a building. A

new charge is to be created for between 10 and 50 dwellings being created in a building (previously there was a charge per dwelling for 50 or fewer dwellings). A maximum charge of £405,000 applies per building, this was previously £300,000. Above average (between 25.21% and 35.06% depending on floor space area) inflation is proposed to be applied for full application charges for the erection of a non-dwelling building development, again a maximum charge of £405,000 applies (previously £300,000). The same maximum charge of £405,000 also applies to the erection of buildings to be used for agricultural purposes and the erection, alteration or replacement of Plant and Machinery, again the previous maximum charge allowed was £300,000. Charges for the erection of buildings to be used for agricultural land are to increase by 25% to 35.06% and 25.11% to 35% for the erection, alteration or replacement of Plant and Machinery. Statutory planning application charges for the erection of glass houses on agricultural land will increase by 25% to 35% (depends on the gross floor space area). Many statutory charges set by the government are to increase by amounts greater than CPI inflation.

- i. **Property and Land:** Fees and charges for property searches have not increased for four years due to market competition. However, to ensure cost recovery, all search fees are proposed to be increased by 10%.
- j. **Registrars:** The charge for copies of a marriage certificate (collection within 15 working days) are proposed to be increased by £1 (9.09%) to £12 (including VAT), in order that the price remains a whole pound amount, there was no price increase in 2023/24. The charge for changing the time or date of a wedding is proposed to increase by 9.09% from £22 to £24 (including VAT).

Slightly above CPI inflation increases are proposed for the re-affirmation of vows and child naming ceremony at the Tyne Suite of 8% to 10.53% with there being different prices depending on day and time.

The proposed charge for a personal private individual British citizenship ceremony at the Civic Centre is to increase by 17.65% (£170 to £200), the increase is in part compensated by the removal of a booking fee for a Citizenship ceremony.

No Change

26% of charges are proposed not to change. Proposals are:

- a. **Business Centres:** The following charges are proposed to be frozen based on pricing being comparable with the local market and to maintain occupancy levels:
 - Charges for occupancy per square foot at Blaydon Business Centre and Greenesfield Business Centre.
 - The hourly rate to hire the twelve and also the six-person meeting room at Baltimore House.
 - The charge for Business Support Services (Business Development Consultancy and Business Planning Support).

Prices are also proposed to remain frozen for the Virtual Office Service and Dedicated Desk (NDC).

The price to have sponsorship of boardrooms at Business Centres is proposed to remain frozen at £3,500, based on market conditions.

The charge for photocopying and printing in black and white in A4 is proposed to remain frozen, based on market conditions and the fact that the income currently covers costs, similar reasons support the proposed freeze in price for replacement keys and fobs.

- b. **Children's Services:** It is proposed not to increase most of the charges to ensure the Council continues to balance affordability with cost recovery.
- c. **Car Parking:** The minimum and maximum on and off-street penalty charges are statutory amounts set and remain frozen, including Bus Lane enforcement. Charges at some car parks are to remain frozen to stimulate demand (back of Regent Terrace and Walker Street Car Park and Gateshead High Street (where charges were increased by 14.29% in 2023/24)). Charges for over 4 hours parking and seasonal permits at Church Street are also to remain frozen. The Saturday, Sunday and bank holiday fixed daily charge is proposed to remain frozen at Civic Centre Car Park A due to it being underused on these days. Council annual staff parking permits at various locations are to remain frozen as a review of permits is pending.

The Sunday fixed daily charge at Felling and Heworth South Metro Car Parks, Swinburne Street and Town Hall Car Park's are proposed to remain frozen due to them currently being underused.

On street parking charges at Peterborough Close are to remain frozen as the price was increased by 16.67% in 2023/24.

Due to underusage, on-street parking charges on Bensham Road are proposed to be frozen.

Second and third resident zone annual permit charges are to remain frozen due to the first permit charge increasing by 20% and there being low demand for more than two permits.

- d. **Corporate Services:** Statutory charges relating to Electoral Services and copies of the marked register are frozen.
- e. **Compliance and Regulatory Services:** Many charges are not proposed to change and they are set by statute, including application fees. The majority of charges for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences are proposed to remain at 2023/24 prices until a cost recovery exercise and consultation is completed.
- f. **Highways and Transport:** Charges for temporary traffic regulation orders are proposed to be frozen at 2023/24 rates as they will be reviewed next year after the move to an online process in 2024/25.
- g. **Hire of Facilities:** There are no proposed increases in the daily rate to hire Caedmon Hall library, however the half day rate is proposed to be increased by 12%. The hourly rate to hire the Dodds Room at the Central Library is proposed to be frozen at £20.

- h. **Housing Related Charges and Licensing:** No proposed change to the Selective Landlord Licensing fees. The charge for Licence Variations is proposed to remain unchanged. The majority of charges such as for phased payment plans are to remain frozen. Penalty charges for Redress schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management are proposed to remain frozen.
- i. **Libraries:** No change is proposed for most Library charges, this includes charges for photocopying to ensure the Council remains competitive. Similarly with the Fax Service, increasing charges would result in a further decline in income for this service. The charge for the hire of DVDs is proposed to be frozen at the 2023/24 rate due to low demand.
- j. **Recreation:** Allotments prices are set every three years. 2024/25 is the third year of the three-year cycle so prices are to remain unchanged.
- k. **Registrars:** The majority of Statutory charges will remain the same as they have been for the previous two years. It's proposed to keep the price to hire the Angel Room on Monday to Thursday at the same rate of £80, this will be reviewed in 2025/26, this room hire only became available in 2023/24. The proposed charge for the registration of premises for marriage and civil partnership and also the three-year renewal of registration of premises for marriage and civil partnerships is proposed to be frozen so that the Council can remain competitive with other local authorities and also to support local businesses.
- l. **Sport and Leisure:** The administration fee for an annual membership is proposed to remain frozen. To encourage health and wellbeing and to increase income from charging for various activities, the prices for different ranges of Gateshead GO cards are proposed to remain frozen at 2023/24 levels.
- m. **Waste Services and Ground Maintenance:** Most MOT test fees are not changing as they are currently set at the maximum statutory level which has not changed, except for those relating to hackney carriages which are non-statutory, a cost recovery exercise and consultation will be completed for this area in March 2024 which will be subject to a separate report on the outcome. The charge for supply and delivery of replacement and new bins is proposed to be frozen, along with bulky waste disposal to help residents cost of living. Also, to help with the cost of living, special collection charges for bulky waste disposal are to remain frozen.

Reduced Charges

1% of charges are proposed to be reduced in 2024/25. Proposals are:

- a. **Hire of Facilities:** There are cancellation fees if room bookings are not cancelled within a certain notice period. In 2023/24, if bookings for rooms at the Central Library were cancelled between two and four weeks prior to the room booking, the fee was 50% of the hire charge, it's proposed this is reduced to 25% of the hire charge. For 2024/25 it is proposed that customers must give more than four weeks' notice to avoid cancellation fees, they will be required to give eight weeks' notice.
- b. **Libraries:** There is very limited demand for CDs, the cost of hiring them is proposed to be reduced by 50% to 50p.

- c. **Compliance and Regulatory Services:** The standard process and petroleum vapour recovery part of annual subsistence charges have changed from non-statutory to statutory charges where the price to charge is set by the government, these charges have reduced by between 15.04% and 17.52%. Charges for vehicle refinishers have also changed from non-statutory to statutory, the pricing has reduced from between 15.51% and 16.18% (different prices for different risk levels). The statutory charge for low-risk mobile screening and crushing is proposed to reduce by 3.1% as advised by DEFRA.

New Charges

The following charges are to be included in 2024/25:

- a. **Adult Social Services:** New charges for assisted independent supported living are proposed (including different rates depending on complexity). Shared Lives charges have been added to the booklet, this is a care service matching people aged 16 and above with an approved Shared Lives carer to assist them to live independently in their community. The value of these proposed charges are to be confirmed as they aligned to commissioned rates paid to providers which are still subject to negotiation with care providers. There is also a proposed charge for the Shared Lives client contribution.
- b. **Building Control:** New charges are proposed to be introduced for plan, inspection, building notice and regularisation charges for both single storey and two storey floor extensions exceeding 40m² but not greater than 100m² and 200m² respectively.
- c. **Business Centres:** The option to print and photocopy in colour is to be introduced in 2024/25 and is therefore to be included in the fees and charges booklet. Previously Telephone Headset Rental was priced at POA (price on application), this has now been changed to £13.80. New hourly rates to hire the Collaboration Room and Bleachers Room are proposed, previously only half day and daily rates were available.
- d. **Car Parking:** Currently, there is only an annual staff permit at Hilda House Car Park. As this car park is underused a new seasonal permit for the general public is to be introduced. New time periods to book for e.g., up to 20 minutes are now available at Ely Street and Worcester Green access road.
- e. **Cemeteries and Crematoria:** a new surcharge is proposed to be introduced for non-residents for direct cremations.
- f. **Compliance and Regulatory Services:** a new late payment fee of £52 is proposed. A transfer and surrender statutory charge of £78 for a 'new operator at low risk' reduced fee activity extra one-off subsistence charge is proposed to be introduced. New Environmental Health Enforcement Advice charges for 'Safer Food Better Business' packs and diary packs are proposed. A new Pavement Licensing (Business and Planning Act 2020) statutory charge replacing the non-statutory charge is to be introduced. A new storage administration fee of £72 is to be introduced for the removal of unlawfully parked advertising trailers, Large A

Boards, this is in addition to the already existing charges for the removal of the items and the daily storage fee.

- g. **Hire of Facilities:** At the Central Library, a new hourly rate for the Headworks Room is proposed.
- h. **Planning:** A new statutory charge for outline applications for sites less than or equal to 0.5 hectares in size is to be introduced at £578 for each 0.1 hectares. Previously, there was a charge for each 0.1 hectares for the initial 2.5 hectares, this is now to be replaced with 0.5 to 2.5 hectares after the addition of the up to 0.5 hectares charge. There will be new statutory outline application charges for the erection of non-dwelling buildings. The previous charge per dwelling for a full building planning application for 0 to 50 dwellings will be replaced with different rates for 0 to 10 dwellings and 10 to 50 dwellings.

There will also be new statutory planning application charges for different area sized buildings to be erected for agricultural purposes and also for glass houses to be erected on agricultural land, as well as for the erection, alteration or replacement of Plant and Machinery. In previous years, there was a one-off charge (£462 in 2023/24) to change the use of a building or land. This has now been replaced with new charges for each dwelling in a building that is applying for a change of use. There will be a separate standalone charge for any other change of use of a building or land.

Thirteen new statutory charges are to be added for prior approval planning applications.

Previously, planning application charges for the erection of glass houses on agricultural land were split depending on the floor space area between those that are less than 465 square metres and those that exceeded 465 square metres. This has now changed to three different bands, 1) less than 465 square metres which was also a previous band and two new bands 2) between 465 and 1,000 square metres and 3) over 1,000 square metres.

Removals

The following charges are proposed to be removed from the 2024/25 brochure:

- a. **Business Centres:** Currently the charge for A4 single and double-sided printing and photocopying is the same, it's proposed the separate charge for double sided printing and photocopying is removed.
- b. **Car Parking:** new parking pricing periods are to be introduced at Ely Street and Worcester Green access road, with up to 15, 30, 45, 75, 90 and 105 minute offerings to be removed and replaced with different periods for on-street parking.
- c. **Compliance and Regulatory Services:** Charges to weigh vehicles are to be removed from the fees and charges booklet as it's the Tyne and Wear Metrology Lab that determines pricing rather than Gateshead Council. The statutory additional charge if subsistence payments are made by quarterly instalments is to

be removed for 'Reduced fee activities' and 'Local Authority Integrated Pollution, Prevention and Control'. Charges for hoarding on Highways is to be removed. Reduced charges for extra sites for Crane Oversailing are to be removed. Permit Licensing (Business and Planning Act 2020) non-statutory charge is to be removed and replaced with a statutory charge.

- d. **Hire of Facilities:** St Mary's Heritage Centre closed in 2023/24 so hire of this centre will be removed from the fees and charges booklet. The hire of the Training room and Saltwell Towers (evening 7pm until midnight) at Saltwell Park is no longer available so will also be removed from the published charges. The hire of Bewicks A and B rooms at the Civic Centre is now no longer available for hire. The hire of Dryden Centre is no longer available as it has now closed, staff have transferred to other locations.
- e. **Libraries:** In prior years there was a charge to adults for books that were on loan or on order, this service is now free, along with reservations for books on shelves to encourage adult reading. There is no longer a requirement for the Fax Service, therefore all Fax service charges will be removed. Due to limited Central Library space and also a lack of demand there will no longer be an Exhibition Services so charges for this will be removed.
- f. **Registrars:** The charge of a non-refundable booking fee for a citizenship ceremony is to be removed.
- g. **Sport and Leisure:** The ability to hire courts to play squash is no longer available. GO Bears Den and Clip n Climb are also no longer available, this along with the closure of the Flow Rider has resulted in the removal of the offer of a GO Kids 0-7 years GO Unlimited Membership (12-month contract). Birtley Swimming Centre is no longer operated by Gateshead Council.

Consultation

- 9. Council services have engaged with portfolio holders on proposed changes as part of the budget setting process. Where there is a change to existing fees and charges these will be communicated to services users.

Alternative Options

- 10. There are no alternative options proposed.

Implications of Recommended Option

11. Resources

a. Financial Implications – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital, confirms that the financial implications are detailed in the attached appendices and that the full financial implications of this report are included in Council's Budget and Council Tax Level 2024/25 report presented elsewhere on the agenda. The overall impact of additional income generated as a result of proposed fees and charges increases is currently to increase income base budgets by £0.257m in 2024/25.

b. Human Resources Implications – There are no direct human resource implications as a consequence of this report.

- c. Property Implications** – There are no direct property implications as a consequence of this report.
12. **Risk Management Implications** - The risks associated with the impact on demand for services have been assessed when considering increases in fees and charges.
 13. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - These are reflected in the proposed fees and charges, which also consider where appropriate the individual's ability to pay. Integrated impact Assessments have been completed for any of the new or significantly increased fees and charges within the report and will be used to evaluate and take action, if necessary, to mitigate the effects of any equality and diversity implications.
 14. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no immediate crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
 15. **Climate and Sustainability Implications** – There are no immediate climate emergency and sustainability implications arising from this report.
 16. **Health Implications** - There are no immediate health implications arising from this report.
 17. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no immediate Human Rights implications arising from this report.
 18. **Ward Implications** – The recommendations apply to all wards.