

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 12 March 2026

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director of Finance

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Review of Councilwide Fees and Charges - Markets

**WARDS:** Borough Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 A report was presented to Executive Board on 12 February 2026 proposing councilwide fees and charges for 2026/27. At that time the proposed charges relating to the Markets were not available, details of which are now included in the Appendix.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 as set out in the Appendix, be approved.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 A review of councilwide fees and charges has been carried out as part of the budget preparations for 2026/27.

3.2 The general aim in setting fees and charges is to ensure the full recovery of costs incurred in providing a service. Establishing the cost base for providing a service draws upon the past year and forecast increases for next year. However, this has become more difficult given the impact of inflation uncertainty, wage increases and the unpredictable nature of utility costs.

3.3 Recovering the full cost of services throughout the year is also dependent on a number of other factors outside the agreed charge, including:

- Demand – this will change year on year and could be determined by a number of drivers such as weather, economy, regional and national events, demographics etc. Demand had further been complicated over the last three years due to the impact of Covid and increases in the cost of living.
- Competition – there are a number of services the Council provides, for which there is a strong competitive market. Costs within the private sector are generally lower than in the public sector, for example employee terms and conditions.
- Statutory Elements – some charges are outside the control of the Council with there being no discretion as to what can be charged.

3.4 Fees and charges budgeted income targets for the new financial year, have been set by the inflation level highlighted in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, at an increase of 3% on 2025/26 budgeted targets.

- 3.5 As part of the in-year budget monitoring process, actual income from fees and charges is regularly reviewed against budgeted income. Supporting narrative will be provided within monitoring reports to highlight areas where the Council has not fully recovered the cost of providing a service.
- 3.6 When the previous report was presented to the Board on 12 February 2026 setting out the councilwide review of fees and charges, the proposed charges relating to the Markets were not available, details of which are now included in the Appendix.
- 3.7 All proposed charges are exclusive of VAT. Where applicable, VAT will be added to the charges set out in the Appendix.
- 3.8 The schedule in the Appendix includes guidance on the charge being a discretionary or statutory fee. Statutory fees may result in changes throughout the year and therefore the relevant fees will be amended accordingly.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The effects of the proposed changes to fees and charges have been incorporated where possible into budgets for 2026/27. As per the Medium Term Financial Strategy budgeted income for 2026/27 has been increased by 3%, except where additional increases have been proposed as saving items, statutory fee increases apply, or where income targets have been reduced to reflect the actual recovery rate. Individual fees and charges have been reviewed and increases proposed by service managers which also reflect the particular circumstances of each area.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The financial implications are as presented in the report and appendix.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
- 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
- 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
- 6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**
- 6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**
- 6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

There are no direct implications, however, the revenue budget supports the delivery and achievement of all the Council's priorities above.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 In order to avoid the risk of fees and charges not being paid and debt accruing, wherever possible fees and charges should be received before the service is provided.
- 7.2 The Council's budget assumes an increase in fees and charges income in line with those proposed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. If increases are not approved it may lead to a shortfall in budgeted income targets.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 None

## **10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

- 10.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

**APPENDIX**

**MARKETS**

	2025/26	2026/27	Statutory/Discretionary Charge (S/D)
Indoor Stalls Monthly Rent	Various fees	As per 2025/26 with 3% uplift	D
Storage Rent	Various fees	As per 2025/26 with 3% uplift	D
Outdoor Casual (Monday)	17.00	17.50	D
Outdoor Flea & Collectables	20.00	20.00	D
Outdoor Thursday (Casual)	15.00	15.50	D
Outdoor Friday (Casual)	23.00	23.75	D
Outdoor Casual (Saturday)	26.00	26.75	D
Full Outdoor Market Hire – Sunday	0.00	1240.00	D
Indoor Pop-up	25.00	25.00	D
Trader Promotions	10.00	10.00	D