

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S**

**REPORT TO**

**FINANCE, ASSETS AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**15 January 2026**

**Report Title:** **Scale of Fees and Charges 2026/27**

**Submitted by:** **Service Director for Finance (Section 151 Officer)**

**Portfolios:** **Finance, Town Centres and Growth**

**Ward(s) affected:** **All**

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	<b>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b>	<b>No <input type="checkbox"/></b>
To enable the Committee to scrutinise the scale of fees and charges to apply from 1 April 2026.			
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>			
<p><b>That Committee:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Note the fees and charges proposed to apply from 1 April 2026, as set out in Appendix 1 and 3.</b></li> </ol>			
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>			
It is necessary to review the fees and charges which the Council makes in order to keep them in line with the cost of service provision, ensure compliance with the Charging Policy and to establish the amounts to be included in the 2026/27 budget.			

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Cabinet is asked annually to consider proposals for the fees and charges to be applied during the following financial year. It is proposed that the new fees and charges set out at Appendix 1 should take effect from 1 April 2026 and remain in force until 31 March 2027.
- 1.2 The Council has an approved Charging Policy, which is followed when fees and charges are proposed and agreed. This sets out the criteria that should be taken into consideration when establishing the amounts to be charged.

## **2. Issues**

- 2.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy, reviewed by Cabinet on 2 December 2025, assumes an overall 3.8% increase in the amount of income raised from fees and charges in 2026/27.

**2.2** The proposals made vary between minimal decreases, increase, and freezes to the fees and charges for the year. When these proposals are applied to the appropriate income budgets, they fall broadly in line with the assumed overall 3.8% increase.

**2.3** Most of the fees and charges are inclusive of VAT but in some cases no VAT is chargeable, or VAT is added to the fee or charge. The VAT status of individual fees and charges is shown in Appendix 1.

**2.4** When considering the level of fees and charges the principles contained in the Charging Policy should be followed. In drawing up the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 these have been considered by Service Directors who were provided with a copy of the Charging Policy and were requested to ensure that their charges were set in accordance with the Policy, considering:

- The cost of providing the service;
- How much income it is desired to generate and why;
- Comparison of charges made by other Councils or providers of similar services;
- Whose use of services it is desired to subsidise and by how much;
- Whose behaviour it is desired to influence and in what ways;
- How will charges help to improve value for money, equity and access to services;
- Will the cost of collecting the income outweigh the income likely to be collected; and
- Any other relevant factors.

**2.5** It is acceptable for charges to be set at a level where costs are not fully recovered. There may be reasons for doing so, such as a desire to encourage take up of a service by specified groups, for example the unemployed, benefits recipients, the elderly, disabled persons or children, or to influence particular forms or patterns of behaviour

**2.6** The decision to charge less than cost ought to be a conscious one, taken by members and justified by reference to the reasons for setting charges at less than cost as set out in the charging principles contained in the Charging Policy.

**2.7** For 2026/27 a number of fees compared to previous years have remained frozen due to the ongoing current cost of living challenges and the negative impact this may have on service uptake. This has been factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy assumptions.

**2.8** Alongside the review of the Council's fees and charges, work is continually undertaken to benchmark fees alongside those of other Authorities nationwide. This work is then used as a basis to challenge officers' first fee proposals.

**2.9** The Scale of Fees and Charges (Appendix 1) shows the current and proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 and indicates those which have been frozen at current levels. There are several new charges proposed for 2026/27. The table below shows these:

Revised Charges - Description of Charge	Fee / Charge 2026/27 (£)
<b>CAR PARKS</b> <b>Buckmaster</b> Up to 3 hours Up to 4 hours Up to 24 hours Season ticket - quarterly	Free 4.70 6.60 178.60
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</b> <b>Environmental Health Licences</b> Dangerous wild animals - first licence completion fee Dangerous wild animals' renewal completion fee Selling animals as Pets - Grant new licence completion fee Selling animals as Pets - Renew licence completion fee Animal Boarding - Grant new licence completion fee Animal Boarding - Renew licence completion fee Hiring out Horses - Grant new licence (exc. Vet Fee) completion fee Hiring out horses - Renew licence exc. vet fee completion fee Breeding dogs - grant new licence completion fee Breeding Dogs - renew licence completion fee Primates - Grant new licence application fee Primates - Grant new licence completion fee Primates - renew licence application fee Primates - renew licence completion fee Primates - licence variation Primates - licence variation with inspection Primates - new licence vet fee	175.00 175.00 175.00 175.00 175.00 175.00 175.00 175.00 175.00 175.00 300.00 175.00 300.00 175.00 114.00 250.00 On Application
<b>LEISURE CHARGES</b> <b>Jubilee 2</b> External NPLQ Training (2 hours) Active-life Programme Initial Twelve Weeks	13.50 32.05
<b>MARKETS</b> Fundraising in Street Trading Area	75.00
<b>PLANNING</b> Invalid planning applications, information not submitted within 28 days: - Householder applications - Non-major applications - Major applications	50.00 150.00 250.00

Revised Charges - Description of Charge	Fee / Charge 2026/27 (£)
<i>Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring - Low Distinctiveness:</i>	
- Less than 0.5 hectare	969.00
- Small site, up to 1 hectares	2,169.00
- Small / Medium site, up to 5 hectares	4,338.00
- Medium site, up to 10 hectares	6,338.00
- Large site, up to 20 hectares	8,507.00
- Very large site, over 20 hectares	10,676.00
<i>Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring - Moderate Distinctiveness:</i>	
- Less than 0.5 hectare	1,369.00
- Small site, up to 1 hectares	2,569.00
- Small / Medium site, up to 5 hectares	5,138.00
- Medium site, up to 10 hectares	7,138.00
- Large site, up to 20 hectares	9,307.00
- Very large site, over 20 hectares	11,476.00
<i>Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring - High Distinctiveness:</i>	
- Less than 0.5 hectare	1,769.00
- Small site, up to 1 hectares	2,969.00
- Small / Medium site, up to 5 hectares	5,938.00
- Medium site, up to 10 hectares	7,938.00
- Large site, up to 20 hectares	10,107.00
- Very large site, over 20 hectares	12,276.00

**2.10** Several fees and charges approved for 2025/26 have been deleted from the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 relating to services no longer provided or superseded. The table below shows these:

Deleted Charges - Description of Charge	Fee / Charge 2025/26 (£)
<b>CAR PARKS</b>	
<b>Construction permit (max of 1 week permit)</b>	
Initial day rate	17.00
Additional days	7.50
<b>Bankside</b>	
Season ticket - per quarter	172.00
Each additional permit for the same numbered bay - per quarter	27.00
Overnight quarterly permit - 6pm to 7am	65.00
<b>Barracks Road/School Street (Zone B)</b>	
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	68.00

Deleted Charges - Description of Charge	Fee / Charge 2025/26 (£)
<b>Blackfriars (Zone C)</b>	
Up to 1 hour	1.20
Up to 2 hours	1.70
Up to 3 hours	2.20
Up to 4 hours	2.70
Up to 6 hours	3.40
6 hours to 24 hours	3.80
Season ticket - per quarter	172.00
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00
Overnight quarterly permit - 8pm to 8am	68.00
Bank Holiday	1.10
Event Parking	1.10
<b>Fogg Street East (Zone A)</b>	
Each additional permit for the same numbered bay - per quarter	27.00
<b>Hassell Street (Zone B) (Bandings Subject to Review)</b>	
4 hours to 24 hours	5.80
Evening charge - 1pm to 8am	1.00
<b>High Street (Rear of)</b>	
Each additional permit for the same numbered bay - per quarter	27.00
<b>Silverdale Road (Zone C)</b>	
Resident permit - per quarter	68.00
<b>Windsor Street (Zone B)</b>	
Season ticket - after school (30 minutes)	32.00
<b>LEISURE CHARGES</b>	
<i>Pool Courses</i>	
National lifesaving Academy/Rookies (per 2-hour session) - Lyme Card	12.80
Rookies	8.00
<b>MARKETS</b>	
Farmers market - stall (per day)	23.00
Small Stalls (adjacent to Guildhall)	11.00
Craft fair (bric-a-brac) - stall (per day)	6.00
Craft fair (bric-a-brac) - second stall (per day)	3.00
Electricity Charge for pitches on AFG licensed markets	8.00
Record Fair	11.00

**2.11** Due to the commercial sensitivity of the proposed charges for the trade waste service, these are not included on part 1 of the agenda and are exempt from publication by reasons of paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12a of the Local

Government Act 1972. The proposed charges can be found in part 2 of the agenda.

### **3. Recommendation**

**3.1** That Committee notes the fees and charges proposed to apply from 1 April 2026, as set out in Appendix 1.

### **4. Reasons**

**4.1** Applying selective increases to fees and charges enables economic activity to be promoted within the Borough. It also contributes to the delivery of a sustainable budget for 2026/27 and later years and ensures compliance with the Charging Policy.

### **5. Options Considered**

**5.1** The decision to charge less than cost recovery ought to be a conscious one, taken by members and justified by reference to the reasons for setting charges at less than cost as set out in the charging principles contained in the Charging Policy.

### **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

**6.1** Statutory charges are included in the scale of fees and charges and are noted as such. These are set by the government rather than by the Council. Land Charges and Licensing fees are set in accordance with a statutory requirement to balance income with expenditure. All other charges may be set by the Council in accordance with its Charging Policy

### **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

**7.1** Local authorities have a responsibility to meet the Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010. The Act gives people the right not to be treated less favourably due to protected characteristics. It is important to consider the potential impact on such groups and individuals when designing fees and charges.

### **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

**8.1** The approved levels of fees and charges will be incorporated in the General Fund Budget for 2026/27. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) assumes increased income of £364,000 from an average increase of 3.8% across the existing range of fees and charges and the introduction of a number of new fees and charges.

**8.2** The proposals made vary between minimal decreases to increases. When these proposals are applied to the appropriate income budgets, they fall broadly in line with the assumed overall 3.8% increase.

## 9. Major Risks & Mitigation

9.1 A major risk is that a depressed economic situation leads to less demand from users of Council services, resulting in significant loss of income. The level of charges will in some cases influence this demand.

## 10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

10.1 In shaping detailed fees and charges proposals consideration will be given to:



## 11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

*We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.*

One Digital Council

*We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.*

One Sustainable Council

*We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle.*

11.1 Consideration of these factors has been given by Portfolio Holders and Service Directors in the determining of fees and charges.

## 12. Key Decision Information

12.1 Approval of the fees and charges is a key decision.

## 13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31 (Cabinet 02 September 2025).

13.2 Revenue and Capital Budgets 2026/27 – First Draft Savings Plans (Cabinet 2 December 2025).

## 14. List of Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 – Proposed charges from 1 April 2026

14.2 Appendix 2 – Charging Policy

**APPENDIX 1 - SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27**

ALLOTMENTS	1
BULKY RECYCLING	1
BUS DEPARTURE CHARGES	1
CAR PARKS	1
CEMETERIES	3
CIRCUSES & FAIRS	4
COVENANT CONSENTS	4
CREMATORIUM	5
DOG WARDEN SERVICE	6
ELECTIONS	6
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	7
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT	9
GARDEN WASTE RECYCLING	9
LAND CHARGES	9
LEISURE CHARGES	10
LICENCES	12
MARKETS	15
MOT	15
MUSEUM & ART GALLERY	15
NAMING/ NUMBERING OF STREETS/ PROPERTIES	16
PEST CONTROL	16
PLANNING SERVICES	17
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING	19
REMOVAL OF DOMESTIC ANIMAL CARCASSES	19
SALE OF SANDBAGS	19
STREET TRADING	19
TOWN CENTRE DISPLAYS	19
TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS	19
WASTE & RECYCLING BINS/ RECEPTACLES	19