

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING AND CHAIRMAN OF HUMAN RESOURCES &  
COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE**

**14 MARCH 2023**

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PARTNERSHIPS**

**A.1 Proposed Fees and Charges for 2023/24 - Partnerships**

(Report prepared by Assistant Director, Partnerships and Head of Customer and Commercial Services)

**PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To seek the Portfolio Holder's concurrence to the proposed schedule of fees and charges 2023/24 for Partnerships.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 for Partnerships. They continue to be considered against a number of key principles that form part of the long term financial forecast approach which are summarised later on in this report.
- Any amendments to income budgets that are required to reflect changes to fees and charges will be included in the detailed budget proposals for 2023/24 that will be considered by Cabinet / Full Council next year.
- In respect of Full Council next year, the individual decisions agreeing fees and charges will be collated and presented as part of the overall budget setting process for 2023/24.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That the Schedule of Fees and Charges 2023/24 for Partnerships set out in Appendix A and B be agreed.**

**REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

To enable the implementation of a revised fees and charges schedule for 2023/24.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Please see the considerations / reasons behind the proposed fees and charges later on in this report.

**PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

**DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

The forecasting and budget setting process, including fees and charges, will have direct implications for the Council's ability to deliver on its objectives and priorities. At its heart, the 10

year approach to the forecast seeks to establish a sound and sustainable budget year on year through maximising income, including income raised from fees and charges, whilst limiting reductions in services provided to residents, businesses and visitors.

**OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

N/A

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)**

Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)	No	If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant effect on two or more wards <input type="checkbox"/> Involves £100,000 expenditure/income <input type="checkbox"/> Is otherwise significant for the service budget
		And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)	N/A

The arrangements for setting and agreeing a budget and for the setting and collection of council tax are defined in the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The previous legislation defining the arrangements for charging, collecting and pooling of Business Rates was contained within the Local Government Finance Act 1988. These have both been amended as appropriate to reflect the introduction of the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

The power to charge are set out in the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970 and the Local Government Act 2003 – Section 93 respectively. The latter also requires that charges for discretionary services should be on a cost recovery basis.

Under Para 4.4.1 (8) Part 3.4 of the Council's Constitution, all Assistant Directors, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, Management Team Member and the Assistant Director (Finance & IT), are authorised to decide the level of the annual discretionary fees and charges for their service (including any in-year changes that may be required) for inclusion within the Council's corporate schedule of fees and charges. Following the above consultation, an Officer decision must be published.

**The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

It is important that these fees and charges are on a recovery only basis if relying on Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003, trading for a profit is prohibited unless the Council does so through a separate company.

The Section 93 power works on the basis that, if it wishes, a local authority can charge for a

discretionary service but individuals cannot be required to pay for a service they do not wish to receive or use. Anyone who requires the service agrees to take it up on those terms. To ensure fees can be recovered evidence of such an agreement is required and advice has previously been given to the service to ensure this documentation is in place and robust.

## **FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Finance and other resources**

Fees and Charges have been reviewed against the key principles that underpin the long term forecast, which includes the generation of income whilst balancing strategic and external market conditions.

Given the significant Financial challenges faced by the Council in 2022/23 and 2023/24, a key underlying principle is to consider inflationary increases wherever possible to support corresponding increases in the Council's own costs in delivering the associated service(s). The current rate of inflation (RPI) is 12%, with predictions of further increases going into 2023. With such a high rate of inflation it may not necessarily be practical / possible to 'translate' such an increase into the actual fee increase proposed. Therefore, set against this inflationary context, any proposed increases in fees and charges must be balanced against other considerations / market conditions, whilst also recognising the restrictions placed on local authorities in terms of setting fees and charges on a cost recovery basis. Further details relating to any proposed increases to fees and charges is set out below.

Any changes to income budgets resulting from any changes in the level of fees and charges agreed, will form part of the detailed budget setting process for 2023/24.

<b>X</b>	<b>The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:</b>
----------	---

Although there are no further comments over and above those set out elsewhere in the report, it is important to highlight that the demand / volumes used to calculate the estimated total income figures included within this report are based on those held by the Service

## **USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services.	Please see relevant comments elsewhere in this report.
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks.	
C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.	

## **MILESTONES AND DELIVERY**

Fees and Charges for 2023/24 form part of the wider budget setting process, which culminates in the detailed estimates being presented to Full Council in February 2023. Fees and Charges must therefore be approved in advance of this date.

<b>ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION</b>	
<p>There are potential risks associated with fee increases in that the service might become too expensive, however the increases are in line with inflation, other providers are on the whole more expensive, and if costs are not increased there is a risk that the service longer term would be unsustainable. Early conversations to 'sound out' corporate customers indicates that they are expecting fee increases and are unsurprised that I had contacted them.</p>	
<b>EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<p>There are no implications with regards the increase to Print Unit, CCTV and People, Performance and Projects fees.</p> <p>Careline delivers a service to mostly elderly and vulnerable people. This group often have the least amount of disposable income so their welfare has been considered in the setting of Careline fees. The service is inclusive and available to all residents of Tendring.</p>	
<b>SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
<p>The Council's Careline service offers a vital service to some of the most vulnerable residents in the District. Although there is a cost for the service, they are below the fees of the majority of other providers and in some areas of the country it is now proving difficult for residents to access similar services. The offering from Careline not only delivers call handling provision but in Tendring also a response service which gives peace of mind to the customers and their family and friends, particularly at a time when ambulance waits can be 20 hours.</p>	
<b>IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2030</b>	
<p>As the Careline vehicles come up for renewal the use of electric or hybrid vehicles will be explored.</p>	
<b>OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<p><b>Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.</b></p>	
<p><b>Crime and Disorder</b></p>	<p>The aim of Careline is to allow people to live safely in their own homes for longer. The service is delivered mostly to elderly and vulnerable people, many of whom have health conditions but often have the least amount of disposable income. Their welfare has been considered in the setting of Careline fees.</p>
<p><b>Health Inequalities</b></p>	
<p><b>Area or Ward affected</b></p>	

### **PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
<p>Income from fees and charges form an important element of the budget and the financial sustainability of the Council as set out in the long term forecast.</p> <p>Similarly to previous years, Departments have been asked to review their fees and charges on an individual basis as changes may need to be made to meet specific aims or strategic objectives or in some cases in response to external factors such as market forces.</p>

The review of fees and charges has been set against the following key principles:

- general inflationary increases where possible or lower where appropriate / justified
- amounts rounded for ease of application, which may result in a slightly above inflation increase.
- on a cost recovery basis as necessary
- reflect statutory requirements.
- increases where market conditions allow
- to meet specific priorities or service delivery aims / objectives

As highlighted earlier in this report, the Council faces a number of significant financial challenges in 2023/24 and beyond. It is therefore important that fees and charges are considered against this context and to maximise income opportunities where possible, albeit whilst balancing the various issues highlighted above.

Income budgets included in the detailed estimates will reflect any required changes from the proposed fees and charges set out in this report.

## **PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2023/24 - PARTNERSHIPS**

### Careline

Set against the current fees and charges for 2022/23, **Appendix A** includes the schedule of fees and charges proposed for 2023/24, which have been developed by applying the key principles highlighted above.

A financial options appraisal for Careline was discussed by Cabinet in June 2022 at which time a recovery plan for the service was agreed. Within this recovery plan it was noted that as fees had been increased in both July 2021 and May 2022 it would not be prudent to increase fees again for Tendring residents in April 2023, particularly in light of the cost of living crisis. However, as stated above, RPI is currently running at 12%. Salary budgets make up circa 72% of all Careline costs and with the pay award of £1925 for every member of staff recently agreed (an increase of 9% for a Careline Operator or Responder), running cost for Careline are escalating. The service has also seen an increase of 12% from its telephony provider and the call handling platform charges are likely to increase by a similar amount. The Careline contingency fund of £221,000 will be used to cover any shortfall in income over the financial year 2022/23. An extra £100,000 has also been set aside for 2023/24.

The recovery plan suggested that this net loss would be mitigated in 2023/24 by a sustainable increase in the number of Careline customers. Future fees and charges will be reviewed as part of the on-going business plan process and will take into account the recent staff pay award and also the impact of the increase in other input costs, such as Diesel. Since April 2022, Careline has increased its customer base but the impact of the cost of TEC equipment and other input costs must be considered.

It should be noted that at some point there is likely to be a cost pressure of the analogue to digital switch, the funding of which should be looked at as a separate issue.

The proposal for Careline fees and charges are:

No change in the level of fees for private payers and any corporate contracts within Tendring, as per the recovery plan, although this should be examined during the corporate review of budgets in May/June 2023 when the outturn for 2022/23 is known and an assessment of

service user numbers is taken at the end of the financial year.

Your Stride is the single largest external contract that Careline has with 3,100 customers being monitored. Careline has been their monitoring centre of choice since June 2018 and their fees were last increased in June 2021. An agreement has been sought to increase charges by 10% = this will generate in excess of £9,500 per year in extra income.

The proposal is also to increase fees and charges for other corporate contracts where the service users are outside of Tendring (such as Almshouse Charities, Sheltered Housing providers, local authorities) by circa 10%.

#### Print Unit

An increase in Print Unit fees, generally in line with inflation, is proposed to ensure costs are covered for an external work. These were last increased in April 2018.

#### CCTV

It is also proposed to increase the CCTV fee for third party image retrieval (excluding police) to account for increased overheads. This fee was last increased in April 2018.

Fee increases will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

#### People, Performance and Projects

**Appendix B** includes the schedule of fees and charges proposed for 2023/24 for People, Performance and Projects.

### **PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS**

Cabinet 17 June 2022 – Tendring Careline Financial Options Appraisal

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL**

N/A

### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A – Detailed fees and charges 2023/24 for Careline, CCTV and the Print Unit**  
**Appendix B - Detailed fees and charges 2023/24 for People, Performance and Projects Unit**

### **REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Anastasia Simpson and Mark Westall</b>
<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Assistant Director, Partnerships and Head of Customer and Commercial Services</b>
<b>Email/Telephone</b>	<a href="mailto:asimpson@tendringdc.gov.uk">asimpson@tendringdc.gov.uk</a> 01255 686324 <a href="mailto:mwestall@tendringdc.gov.uk">mwestall@tendringdc.gov.uk</a> 01255 686484

## Appendix A

New charge applicable from 1st April 2023			current	Current	new	new
		last change	fee net	fee inc	charge	charge
			vat	vat	net vat	inc vat
<b>PHOTOCOPIING (EXCLUDING POSTAGE)</b>						
	For extraction of document	Apr-17	10.00	12.00	11.50	13.80
	Charge per Photocopying (all sizes)	Apr-17	1.00	1.20	1.15	1.38
<b>PRINT UNIT (NON-COUNCIL WORK)</b>						
	Minimum charge for all print work	Apr-18	5.00	6.00	6.00	7.20
	Charge for printing & photocopying (80g):					
	Mono Printing A4/A3 per side on uncoated paper	Apr-18	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.07
	Mono Printing A4/A3 per side on top coated silk and card	Apr-18	0.08	0.10	0.09	0.11
	<b>Colour Copies:</b>					
	Colour Printing A4/A3 per side on uncoated paper	Apr-18	0.10	0.12	0.11	0.13
	Colour Printing A4/A3 per side on top coated silk and card	Apr-18	0.15	0.18	0.17	0.20
	<b>Laminating:</b>					
	A4/A3 (printing not included)	Apr-18	0.15	0.18	0.17	0.20
	Combining per binder	Apr-18	0.10	0.12	0.11	0.13
	<b>Artwork</b>					
	Fee per hour - minimum charge 30 minutes (excluding VAT)	Apr-18	16.00	19.20	17.50	21.00
<b>CARELINE</b>						
	<b>Service Monthly Charges:</b>					
	Individual Lifeline customers monitoring & response (Teaching analogue)	May-22	23.82	28.58	23.82	28.58
	Individual Lifeline customers monitoring only (Teaching analogue)	May-22	16.22	19.46	16.22	19.46
	Individual Lifeline customers monitoring & response (Teaching digital)	May-22	30.55	36.66	30.55	36.66
	Individual Lifeline customers monitoring only (Teaching digital)	May-22	22.95	27.54	22.95	27.54
	Other digital devices	May-22	Upon request		Upon request	
	Corporate Customers	May-22	By negotiation		By negotiation	
	<i>For disabled customers there is no VAT payable on the above fees.</i>					
	<b>Other Services:</b>					
	<b>Wristband</b>					
	Initial charge customers	Aug-13	10.00	12.00	10.00	12.00
	Initial charge disabled customers	Aug-13	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
	Annual charge customers	Aug-13	5.00	6.00	5.00	6.00
	<b>Key Safe</b>					
	Key Safe (Careline customers)	Apr-22	87.00	87.00	87.00	87.00
	Key Safe (Non-Careline customers)	New			87.00	104.40
<b>CCTV</b>						
	3rd Party Image Retrieval (Excluding Police)	Apr-18	50.00	60.00	70.00	84.00



## Appendix B

### Partnerships Directorate - People, Performance and Projects Scale of Charges 2023/24

Effective from	Date last revised	Charge Exclusive of VAT	Charge Inclusive of VAT where applicable @ 20%	Charge Exclusive of VAT	Charge Inclusive of VAT where applicable @ 20%	VAT Ind
		01/04/2022 £	01/04/2023 £	01/04/2023 £	01/04/2024 £	
<b>PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE &amp; PROJECTS</b>						
	Apr-20	£200 - £500 per candidate		£200 - £500 per candidate		V
	Apr-20	500.00	600.00	500.00	600.00	V
<b>Career Track</b>						
	Apr-18	To be determined by Assistant Director for Partnerships in relation to the Government Apprenticeship arrangements		To be determined by Assistant Director for Partnerships in relation to the Government Apprenticeship arrangements		V
	Apr-18	Customer Service - Levy employers (ESFA funded)		Customer Service - Levy employers (ESFA funded)		V