JOINT REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE AND THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Management Team
23 December 2025

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - PEOPLE

A.1 PEOPLE FUNCTIONS - Proposed Fees and Charges for 2026/27
(Report prepared by Katie Wilkins)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT
To seek the Portfolio Holder's concurrence to the proposed schedule of fees and charges 2026/27 for the People function.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
• This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 for the People function. 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. • No amendments to budgets are required due to the minimal changes proposed.

RECOMMENDATION(S)
That the Schedule of Fees and Charges 2026/27 for the People function set out in Appendix A be agreed.

REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)
To enable the implementation of a revised fees and charges schedule for 2026/27.

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 approach to the forecast seeks to establish a sound and sustainable budget year on year where maximising income, including income raised from fees and charges, will continue to be an important element of this approach.
OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT
Career Track

The general power to charge is 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. Trading powers can only be exercised through a separate company and are not relied upon for the purposes of this report,

Under Schedule 3 of the Council's Constitution - Responsibility For Executive Functions - Para 4.4: Delegation of Executive Functions to Officers - General Responsibilities Delegated To Officers 4.4.1 (8) Part 3.45 of the Council's Constitution, all Assistant Directors, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, Management Team Member and the 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 following table sets out the power being relied upon for each proposed charge:

Fee and Charge	Legislative Power Being Relied Upon
Career Track Apprenticeships	It is considered that Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970 power which enables local authorities to provide administrative, professional and technical services can be relied upon for services to local authorities and public bodies. Any payment terms must be set out in a written agreement. The impact of this power is that the commissioning authority may need to go through a procurement process depending upon their constitution and requirements, which could explain the use of procurement frameworks in future arrangements. The 1970 Act is the bedrock of trading within the public sector and there is a substantial experience of its operation however, it is limited in scope, for example, it does not allow trading with the private sector or the public at large. Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 introduced powers which enable local authorities to charge in function related activities provided the authority is not under a duty to provide the function. Under the Act, Councils can decide to charge for any discretionary services, which includes those provided on the basis of the general power of competence. The Act does not apply to services which a local authority is mandated or has a duty to provide. Also, the recipient of the discretionary service must have agreed to its provision and to pay for it. The 2003 Act power cannot be used where charging is prohibited or where another specific charging regime applies. Charging is limited to cost recovery. Local authorities wishing to engage in commercial activity with the private sector in their discretionary services will need to rely on other powers such as the trading powers under section 95 of the 2003 Act. It is understood that no additional fee is being charged and the payment of the services being provided is restricted to the national Apprenticeship Levy Reform arrangements. The General Power of Competence was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 and gives local councils the ability and flexibility to make

YES	**The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

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/estimated 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 2026/27 form part of the wider budget setting process, and should be approved in advance of the relevant year they relate or in advance of the charges being levied during the year.

ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION

Career Track

There is a slight risk that fees regarding apprenticeships that are not completed may deter Local Authority employers from signing up with Career Track, but the charges are in line with sector best practice, so this risk is considered to be low. The fees and charges are minimal and detailed in the Tendring District Council (Career Track) Contract for Services.

People

No significant risks have been identified. Minimum fee increases have been applied to the Print Unit charges to reflect increased inflationary market costs for goods and services.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS

All fees and charges are set to be as low as possible to cover cost recuperation only.

IMPLICATIONS RELATED TO DEVOLUTION AND / OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

As set out within earlier reports, the Council's financial position will need to be considered within an interim period before new / successor Unitary Councils are established from the current expected date of 1 April 2028.

The development of fees and charges proposals therefore need to be undertaken within this context whilst acknowledging the future consideration / harmonisation of financial forecasting

In finalising the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27, the table below sets out a summary of the associated review:

Print Unit

Element of This Year's Review	Comments
1. Background to the annual review process and reasoning behind the fees and charges proposed.	
The fees and charges for the Print Unit were last revised in Apr 2018/19, the proposed changes are to reflect the increased costs of inputs identified following a service review.	
2. Is the Associated Service Subsidised in 2025/26. (i.e. is there a budgeted deficit for the service the fee and charge relates to)	
The cost to the Council of operating an internal print service is £175k, the income raised from external charges is budgeted at £1k and is used to offset this cost.	
3. Expected impact of the proposed fees and charges on the budgeted income position.	
Any increases in income from increased fees and charges is expected to be minimal and therefore it is not proposed to adjust the budget.	
4. Is it proposed to use of any additional income raised?	
N/A	
5. Impact on the Net Budget	

Budget Line	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Expenditure	217,590	217,590
Income – Internal	(42,630)	(42,630)
Income – External	(1,170)	(1,170)
Net Position	**£173,790**	**£173,790**

6. Other important issues to highlight.	
N/A	

Career Track

Element of This Year's Review	Comments
1. Background to the annual review process and reasoning behind the fees and charges proposed.	
The fees remain unchanged at a cost recovery level in order to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation as outlined elsewhere in this report.	
2. Is the Associated Service Subsidised in 2025/26. (i.e. is there a budgeted deficit for the service the fee and charge relates to)	
No – as above.	
3. Expected impact of the proposed fees and charges on the budgeted income position.	
No material impact.	
4. Is it proposed to use of any additional income raised?	
No.	
5. Impact on the Net Budget	
N/A	
6. Other important issues to highlight.	
N/A	

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS
Report Template Part A (includes the proposed schedule for 2024/25) Partnerships Fees and Charges Report 2024/25 (TDC)

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL
Career Track Report

APPENDICES
Attached – Detailed fees and charges 2026/27 for the People function.