

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER	Cllr Manda Rigby, Cabinet Member for Communications and Community	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	On or after 14th April 2026	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3700
TITLE:	Increase to ceremony fees and increases in line with market forces and inflation	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 - Benchmarking fees 2025-2028		

1 THE ISSUE

The purpose of the report is to obtain agreement to the ceremony fees for legal and discretionary ceremonies provided by the Registration Service to be reviewed annually.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet member is asked to;

- 2.1 Approve the fees for registration service ceremonies as set out in Appendix 1 for Bath and North East Somerset for 2027/28.
- 2.2 Agree that these fees will be reviewed annually by the Head of the Registration Service and the Proper Officer for Registration Services who will continue to review in light of the UK Consumer Price Index, (CPI) cost recovery and market forces for a period of five years from the end of the financial year 2027/28.

3 THE REPORT

- 1.1 Unlike statutory fees and charges Local Authorities are not constrained in how they calculate and apply fees and charges for discretionary services they provide. This means that they can include the full cost of all aspects of service provision. The Service last reviewed its fees and charges in April 2025. In light of the ongoing

financial pressures facing the Council, the Service intends to increase fees in line with CPI, cost recovery and market forces, and review these annually on an upwards basis. The annual review allows for comparable and competitive fee setting – see Appendix 1.

- 1.2 The current forecasted average rate of CPI for the UK is calculated at 3.5-4%. In 2025-2026 fees were increased below the CPI and market forces by an average of 2.25%. The proposed increases for 2027-2028 and going forward reflect the relevant CPI, market forces and cost recovery. Benchmarking of fees against similar and relevant district will be considered.
- 1.3 Bath and North East Council offers a smaller ceremony in the Guildhall for six people at a fee of £270 which will be reviewed annually. This provides further options for couples.
- 1.4 The Service income remains dependent upon ceremony fees and associated fees.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Section 93 of the local Government Act 2003 gives Local Government the power to charge for services for which they have a power but not a duty to provide. The level of income is restricted to the amount it costs to provide the services.
- 4.2 The charges proposed in Appendix 1 are set so that they reflect actual cost recovery including corporate overheads and service specific expenditure.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 This is an update to fees for existing services; no additional resources are required to implement the recommendations. This review is needed to reflect the cost of the services provided and to support existing revenue budgets. Any marked economic and/or budgetary change negatively impacting on service fees and changes will be reported back to the relevant cabinet member.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

7 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 7.1 Providing local ceremony venues for local people minimises the travel to ceremonies. The main location of the Guildhall is a sustainable location with many public transport routes.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Not increasing fees has budget implications.

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 This report has been cleared by the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer

Contact person	Jacqueline Bennett – Head of Registration Services Tel: 01225 477897
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	