



# EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Environment & Communities
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Strategic Director of Environment & Operations
<b>DATE:</b>	Friday, 29 November 2024

**PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:** Environment and Communities

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** (All Wards);

**SUBJECT:** Increase in charges for burials and cremations

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council reviews fees and charges on an annual basis for those services which can make a charge. Fees and Charges for burials and cremations are usually reviewed and increased each year. This report sets out the proposed increases in fees and charges to be implemented with effect from 1 January 2025 and also provides benchmarking information for surrounding local authorities which provide burials and cremations within their borough boundary

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Member:

- Approves the proposed increases in charges for burials and cremations to be implemented from 1 January 2025.

## 3. BACKGROUND

The costs associated with the provision of burials and cremations have increased in the past year due to the increasing costs of utilities and the increasing costs of goods and services.

Fees and charges income makes a valuable contribution to the running costs of cemeteries and crematoria services, enabling these important services to be sustained and provided.

The Council normally reviews fees and charges on an annual basis, any increases have taken place on 1 January each year for the majority of services.

The following increases in fees and charges are proposed for burials and cremations:

	<b>2024 Current</b>	<b>2025 Proposed</b>	<b>Percentage Increase</b>
Grave purchase	£1,540	£1,625	5.52%
Burial – 1 space	£630	£650	3.17%
Burial - 2 spaces	£680	£700	2.94%
Burial – 3 spaces	£800	£830	3.75%
Cremation Adult	£980	£1,050	7.14%

As part of the process of proposing increases in fees and charges, a benchmarking exercise has been conducted with other surrounding local authorities to compare fees and charges for burials and cremations. The results of the benchmarking exercise are detailed in the table below.

It should be noted that the other local authorities in the surrounding area may also decide to increase their fees and charges for burials and cremations in 2025.

	<b>BwD Charges 2025</b>	Hyndburn Charges 2024	Pendle Charges 2024	Burnley Charges 2024	Bolton Charges 2024	Preston Charges 2024	Blackpool Charges 2024	Charnock Richards Charges 2024
Grave purchase	£1,625	£875	£1462.50	£1446	£1080	£1115	£1825	N/A
Burial – 1 space	£650	£825	£768	£1299	£804	N/A	N/A	N/A
Burial - 2 spaces	£700	£825	£861	£1299	£898	£576	N/A	N/A
Burial – 3 spaces	£830	N/A	N/A	N/A	£1010	N/A	N/A	N/A
Re-open Fee	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£815	N/A
Cremation Adult	£1,050	£935	N/A	£873	£980	£792	£892	£1150
Cremation w/end	N/A	N/A	N/A	£1108	£1314	£1078	N/A	£1534

The Council will continue to provide public health funerals for people who have passed away in the Borough and have no next of kin, or whose next of kin, relatives or friends are unable to make the necessary arrangements for a funeral to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their circumstances

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

The costs of delivering services at the cemeteries and crematoria have increased in the past year. The Council reviews fees and charges on an annual basis; in recent years, the increase in fees and charges has taken place on 1 January each year for the majority of services.

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The increase in charges for burials and cremations and the additional income generated aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan and the supporting mission to tackle the budget challenge.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The increases in fees and charges for burials and cremations will generate an additional £120,000 income in 2025/26 based on the average number of burials and cremations conducted each year.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Acting in its legal capacity as a burial authority, the Council has authority to set charges for the burial and cremation services it provides.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None – this is an existing well-established service and all resources to deliver the services are in place.

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1  Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2  In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA link here*)

Option 3  In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA attachment*)

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded and published if applicable.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Martin Eden</b>
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<b>DATE:</b>	11 November 2024
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	
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