

Addendum: Council, Fees and Charges 2024-2025

Update: Results of the Fees and Charges Consultation and subsequent required updates regarding equalities.

This addendum provides an update on the consultation findings referenced at paragraph 7.3 to 7.8 and subsequent updates to the equalities section in paragraphs in section 8 of the committee report.

The updates reflect the results of the consultation findings which closed on 3rd October after the paper was sent for internal clearance.

Consultation and Engagement (update for paragraph 7.3 to 7.8)

Fees and Charges 2024/25 Consultation findings

1.1.1 The council performed a consultation on the proposed Fees and Charges from 6th September 2023 to 3rd October 2023.

Consultation approach

- The consultation was published on Engage Barnet.
- The consultation asked for views on all the proposed fees and charges set out in Appendix A.
- Respondent's views were gathered via an online questionnaire.
- The questionnaire also included questions on protected characteristics to help inform the EqIA.
- Paper copies and other alternative formats of the consultation were made available on request.
- The consultation was promoted via the council's residents e-newsletter, Communities Together Network Newsletter and on Twitter.

Response to the consultation

1.1.2 A total of fourteen (14) questionnaires were completed – all were submitted online.

Profile of response

1.1.3 Table 1 show that all three responses were from Barnet residents.

Table 1: Profile of response

Stakeholder	Response	
	%	Base
A Barnet resident	100.00%	14
A person who works in the London Borough of Barnet area	0.00%	0
A Barnet business	0.00%	0
Representing a voluntary/community organisation	0.00%	0
Representing a public sector organisation	0.00%	0
Other	0.00%	0

If other (please specify)		0
Total	100%	14

Consultation results

1.1.4 Respondents were invited to write in their views on the proposed Fees and Charges. There were 12 responses to this question and are listed below:

- *Fees and charges, specifically service charges should be scrapped for freeholders. We have lost amenities like parking and parks, land from the estate has been sold to Notting Hill Gensis, yet free holders are asked to pay service charges when you want to turn the estate from public to private. Not to mention the office is now on the estate! Please do not increase parking charges.*
- *Council tax is high enough already. Don't agree with charges automatically being increased each year.*
- *Families are struggling enough without you increasing prices. I will have to move out of Barnet if you increase yet again as I won't be able to afford to stay in the Borough.*
- *The document is too long you need to summarise key changes.*
- *This will be an extra burden on the people of Barnet.*
- *They should definitely not be increased - why should people have to pay more at this time when the cost of living is so high.*
- *I would not like it to rise, as I believe my council tax is already high enough; despite this, potholes on roads in my area remain not fixed.*
- *I understand that prices are being raised but I think it's really expensive to have a green bin and think it should be less.*
- *I think that charges should be as low as possible. i don't think they should be increased due to cost of living crisis. i think some fees should be scrapped.*
- *They are driving out local businesses - need time to recover from Covid and Brexit - hold back on increases.*
- *In such a hard time financially for people, when they are struggling to purchase food for their children to survive I do not think it is the right time to increase charges for basic things.*
- *I do not think the fees and charges are proportionate to the services they provide, particularly with service charges and parking. Also planning authority management staffer charging hourly for their advice.*

Profile of response by protected characteristics

1.1.5 The council is required by law (the Equality Act 2010) to pay due regard to equalities in eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people from different groups.

1.1.6 The protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership.

1.1.7 To assist us in complying with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 we asked the respondents to provide equalities monitoring data and explained that collecting this information will help us understand the needs of our different communities and that all the information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be stored securely in accordance with our responsibilities under data protection legislation (such as the General Data Protection Regulation or the Data Protection Act 2018).

1.1.8 Table 2 below shows the profile of these who answered these questions. However, due to the small response it has not been possible to draw out any significant findings in terms of the protected characteristics and the consultation responses.

Table 2: Protected Characteristic, profile of those that completed the questionnaire

Protected Characteristic	Response	
	Number	%
Age		
16-17	0	0.00%
18-24	0	0.00%
25-34	1	7.14%
35-44	5	35.72%
45-54	3	21.43%
55-64	1	7.14%
65-74	0	0.00%
75+	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	3	21.43%
Not answered	1	7.14%
Total	14	100%

Sex		
Female	9	64.29%
Male	3	21.43%
If you prefer your own term	0	0%
Prefer not to say	2	14.29%
Not answered	0	0%
Total	14	100%

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?		
Yes, it's the same	11	78.57%
No, it's different	0	0%
Prefer not to say	3	21.43%
Not answered	0	0%

Protected Characteristic	Response	
	Number	%
Total	14	100%

Disability		
Yes	1	7.14%
No	11	78.57%
Prefer not to say	2	14.29%
Not answered	0	0%
Total	14	100%

Ethnicity		
Asian - Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Asian - Chinese	0	0.00%
Asian - Indian	2	14.29%
Asian - Pakistani	0	0.00%
Any other Asian background (please specify below)	0	0.00%
Black - African	0	0.00%
Black - British	1	7.14%
Black - Caribbean	0	0.00%
Any other Black / African / Caribbean background (please specify below)	0	0.00%
Mixed - White and Asian	0	0.00%
Mixed - White and Black African	0	0.00%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	0	0.00%
Mixed - any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background (please specify below)	0	0.00%
White - British	6	42.86%
White - Greek / Greek Cypriot	0	0.00%
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0	0.00%
White - Irish	0	0.00%
White - Turkish / Turkish Cypriot	0	0.00%
White - any other	2	14.29%
Prefer not to say	2	14.29%
Any other ethnic group (please specify)	1	7.14%
Not Answered	0	0.00%
Total	14	100%

Faith		
Buddhist	0	0.00%
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	3	21.43%
Hindu	1	7.14%
Jewish	3	21.43%
Muslim	1	7.14%

Protected Characteristic	Response	
	Number	%
Sikh	1	7.14%
No Religion	2	14.29%
Prefer not to say	3	21.43%
Other religion/belief (please specify)	0	0.00%
Not answered	0	0.00%
Total	14	100%

Pregnancy		
Pregnant	0	0.00%
Not Pregnant	8	57.13%
Prefer not to say	2	14.29%
Not answered	4	28.58%
Total	14	100%
Maternity leave		
I currently on maternity leave	0	0.00%
I'm not on maternity leave	8	57.14%
Prefer not to say	3	21.43%
Not Answered	3	21.43%
Total	14	100%

Sexual Orientation		
Straight or Heterosexual	11	78.58%
Gay or Lesbian	0	0.00%
Bisexual	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	2	14.28%
Other sexual orientation, please tick and type in:	0	0.00%
Not answered	1	7.14%
Total	14	100%

Marital Status		
Never married and never registered a civil partnership	3	21.43%
Married	6	42.86%
In a registered civil partnership	0	0.00%
Separated, but still legally married	0	0.00%
Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership	0	0.00%
Divorced	2	14.29%
Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	0	0.00%
Widowed	0	0.00%
Surviving partner from a registered civil partnership	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	3	21.43%
Not answered	0	0.00%
Total	14	100%

Equalities (update on paragraph 8.9)

- 1.1.9 The proposed fees and charges against the protected characteristics and incorporated into an EqIA, together with the consultation findings. For non-executive Fees and Charges, there are no EqIA's required.
- 1.1.10 Cabinet will receive the relevant EqIA's for the corresponding executive charges.
- 1.1.11 On reviewing the impact of the Fees and Charges, there is a possibility this proposal could contribute to a cumulative impact due to the current cost of living crisis. The Council has the Barnet Resident Support Fund, where residents can apply for financial support to help with the rising cost of living.