

Westmorland and Furness Council

Report Title:	Lake Fees and Charges 2024/25
Meeting:	Lake Administration Committee
Meeting Date:	Monday 8 Jan 2024
Report Author:	Director of Resources (S151)
Lead Cabinet Member(s):	Cabinet Member for Finance
Wards Affected?	All
PUBLIC, PART EXEMPT OR FULLY EXEMPT	Public
List of Appendices (if any)	Appendix 1 - Westmorland and Furness Council Fees and Charges Policy Appendix 2 - Draft Fees and charges 2024/25

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Committee has the responsibility to set the annual Fees and Charges for the Lakes Service area. When considering the Fees and Charges, the Committee need to take account of service demand, equity and value for money as well as the Council plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) requirements of Westmorland and Furness Council. The Committee is also required to ensure that the requirements of the Westmorland and Furness Council Fees and Charges Policy have been followed.

2. Recommendation

For the reasons set out in this report, it is recommended that – The Lake Administration Committee

- 2.1 **Approve the fees and charges as shown in Appendix 1 which shows an increase of 10% to all fees and charges where practical.**
- 2.2 **Approves the Section 151 Officer to build the fees and charges into the budget for Westmorland and Furness Council for 2024/25.**

3. Information: the Rationale and Evidence

- 3.1 The Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council agreed the Westmorland and Furness Council Fees and Charges Policy (Appendix 1) as part of the 2023/24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023-2028 (MTFP) which states under the general principles that

‘General changes to fees and charges in line with inflation, would be approved as part of the budget setting process. On an exception basis where, following review, changes are proposed other than in line with inflation then these would also be approved as part of the budget setting process.’

3.2 The September CPI rate announced was 6.7% and this rate is proposed to be applied to all discretionary fees and charges for the Council in 2024/25 (10.1% 2023/24). The proposed 10% uplift (rounded to the nearest 10p reflects, as a direct result of unprecedentedly high inflation during 2022/23 and in 2023/24.

3.3 The proposed increase of 10% ensures that we are able to meet the additional running costs as well as supporting the proposed additional lake wardens who will include support the effective collection of our existing income. This will minimise the impact of the additional running costs impacting on other services or falling to all Council tax payers.

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (People, Climate, Communities, Economy and Culture, Customers, Workforce)

4.1 Delivering a balanced community – encouraging a sustainable environment and inclusive economy, we will grow our green economy by making the best use of our parks, open spaces and lakes.

4.2 The fees and charges proposals form part of the Budget preparation process for Westmorland and Furness Council, who will take the final decision on the overall budget in February 2024.

5. Consultation Outcomes (with services, ward councillors & public consultation where required)

5.1 The Cabinet Member for Finance, has been consulted on the proposed fees and charges.

6. Alternative Options Considered

6.1 To not increase fees and charges.
This is not recommended and would not be in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan.

6.2 To increase the fees at a different rate to that proposed.
This is not recommended and would not be in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan

7. Financial Implications and risk

7.1 The financial implication of the recommendation within this report is to generate c£0.135m additional income for the Council, to support the operation of Lake Windermere and to ensure existing income is effectively collected.

7.2 Should the committee agree not to increase the fees and charges or increase them by a lower % than that recommended, there is a risk that the cost of the

Lake Service is not met by the income received. There is also a risk that the base budget level of income cannot be collected.

8. Legal & Governance Implications

- 8.1 Legal input will be required to prepare any licences, encroachment agreements as well as to deal with any challenges to the Encroachment areas and fee increases. Costs may be required to cover any legal action we decide to take. Our fees and charges are set by the Council.
- 8.2 Furthermore, legal input may be necessary to respond to any issues that might impact upon the effective operation of the service and the level of fees that can be charged.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 There are no Human Resource implications with this proposal.

10. Equality & Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty, Armed Forces Families, Care Leavers and Health inequalities implications)

- 10.1 A sustainability impact assessment: Not applicable
- 10.2 Equality impact analysis assessment :Not applicable

11. Background Information & Sources (used in preparation of this Report)

- 11.1 Westmorland and Furness Council Fees and Charges Policy