

ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

11 February 2008

The meeting commenced at 11.00am at the Avondale Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Ralph Harrison, Head of Public Protection
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

62. Revision of 2008/2009 Fees and Charges *(Head of Public Protection)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To consider the annual review of fees and charges in respect of services, licences and registrations undertaken by the Public Protection.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The level of fees and charges in respect of various licences, registrations and services were reviewed on an annual basis. Details of the suggested changes for 2008/09 were outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, with details of proposed charges for the Cemeteries and Crematorium Services outlined in Appendix 2.

Suggested changes in charges were based on either an average rise of 3%, a more accurate reflection of staff resources being utilised or bringing charges in line with other authorities. Charges for Burial and Crematorium Services had also been increased by an average of 3%.

The following issues were then raised by the Portfolio Holder

- Had the possibility of means testing on any of these charges been considered? The Head of Public Protection advised that it had not. The only area in which means testing had been seriously considered was in the area of pest control. However, members had determined

means testing to be inappropriate.

- What was a statement of fact? This was a charge made to solicitors when Council officers were asked to provide details and advice as to investigation of complaints/accidents etc in relation to civil matters being pursued by their clients. The suggested charges were probably insufficient in reality.
- Was there a limit on the number of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles? The Council had no power to limit the number of private hire vehicles. Regarding hackney carriage vehicles there was now a policy in place whereby any new vehicles must be disability-friendly. The cost of this tended to naturally limit the number of new vehicles on the road. The Portfolio Holder further queried if taxi firms from outside Hartlepool tended to come into town but was advised that this was not a big issue.
- Are there a lot of complaints about the fee charges? The Head of Public Protection indicated that the number of complaints was very low, tending to come mainly from taxi drivers and market traders.

The Portfolio Holder indicated his support for the proposed charges while asking that officers keep these amounts under review.

Decision

That the fees and charges for 2008/09 be agreed.

63. Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) – Monitoring Report *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report upon the impact of the raising of the threshold for care services with effect from 1st July 2007.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Access to statutory care services is given to an individual following an assessment of need. This assessment identifies their level of need in terms of an FACS banding and the authority decides which of the four national bands it will provide services to. In February 2007 Cabinet decided to raise the threshold from moderate to substantial needs. This was implemented in July with agreement that the impact of the change would be monitored and reported back after 6 months.

Details were given of the perceived impact on users and potential users of services, on services themselves and in financial terms. Officers concluded

that the impact of the change had been managed and any additional risks minimised. At this stage it was not possible to estimate any financial savings. A further update report would be submitted to the Portfolio Holder in July 2008, following a full year of the new arrangements being in place.

The Portfolio Holder queried the protection in place for those people on low level support who require the help of the Home Improvement Agency. The Director of Adult and Community Services reported that plans were in place to put home improvement agency work in-house. A register of tradesmen within Hartlepool was also being considered. If there was a chance that a person's needs would alter significantly in the future they were given access to statutory care services. If not they could be reassessed in the future following a new referral which might come from a number of areas such as GPs. If a person was not assessed as needing substantial care their case file would be closed but contact details given to themselves and their families in case their circumstances should change.

The Portfolio Holder further asked how day care services would be provided for, particularly in light of the current uncertainty regarding older people's day care. The Director acknowledged that although the Council had a block contract with day services some people did not want to use traditional building based services any more and many providers were reconsidering if they wished to provide services like this in the future.

Decision

That the effects of the change, as revealed through the monitoring process and reported at the meeting, be noted.

64. Adult and Community Services Departmental Plan 2007/2008 – 3rd Quarter Monitoring Report *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against the Adult and Community Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 in the first three quarters of the year.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the progress against the actions contained in the Adult and Community Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 and the third quarter outturns of key performance indicators. There were a total of 86 actions and 65 performance indicators, progress of which was summarised in Table 1 of the report. One action had been highlighted as not being on target relating to keeping financial outturn within budget, details of which were outlined in Table 2 of the report.

The Portfolio Holder was advised that 45 of the performance indicators had been highlighted as achieved or expected to hit the target. Eight indicators had been highlighted as not expected to achieve the year end target, details of which were set out in Table 3 of the report.

The Portfolio Holder commented on the overspending on social care services, saying that he did not see how this could be improved given the increased need for services. The Director of Adult and Community Services indicated that these issues had been flagged up regularly and it was hoped that individual budgets and increased efficiency would help to meet these needs.

Decision

That achievement on actions and indicators be noted.

65. Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 – 3rd Quarter Monitoring Report *(Director of Neighbourhood Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made against the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 to the end of the 3rd quarter of the year.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the progress against the actions contained in the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2007/08 and the third quarter outturns of key performance indicators. There were a total of 5 actions and 15 performance indicators, progress of which was summarised in Table 1 of the report. One action had been highlighted as not being on target relating to the creation of a 'healthy food standard' for food premises within the Borough. Although this had not been completed as anticipated by December 2007 it was still being progressed with a local development plan funding application submitted for approval. However the Head of Public Protection felt that given the success of recent award scheme in relation to hygiene of premises business owners may not want to subscribe to another initiative of this type.

The Portfolio Holder was advised that 10 of the performance indicators had been highlighted as achieved or expected to hit the target. Two indicators had been highlighted as not expected to achieve the year end target, details of which were set out in Table 3 of the report.

Decision

That achievement on actions and indicators be noted.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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