

ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

16th February 2009

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Director of Adult and Community Services
Sylvia Pinkney, Consumer Services Manager
Carl Bashford, Joint Strategic Commissioning Manager, Mental Health Services
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

26. Revision of 2009/10 Fees and Charges – Environmental Standards *(Head of Procurement, Property and Public Protection)*

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To consider the annual review of fees and charges in respect of services provided by the Environmental Standards Section of the Procurement, Property and Public Protection Division.

Issues for Consideration

The level of fees and charges in respect of various services offered by the Environmental Standards section were reviewed on an annual basis. Details of the suggested charges for 2009/10 were outlined in Appendix 1 of the report together with details of proposed charges for the Cemeteries and Crematorium Services outlined in Appendix 2.

The review had taken into account the Council's current financial position and the need to make efficiency savings. It was proposed that a flat fee charge of £25 be made for the currently free service of 'Public Health' pest control in domestic premises. The treatment of other pests at domestic premises would increase by 3.5% while

there would be a 4.5% rise for all pest control at business premises.

Attendance by stall-holders at open markets was an increasing problem, both nationally and locally. In an effort to halt this decline and still ensure a cost effective and sustainable future for the markets a number of measures were proposed as set out in the report which included a proposal to cease providing stalls for traders and move over to self erect on both markets, a practice that was common to most similar markets in the area.

Details of the financial considerations and risk implications were provided as set out in the report.

The Portfolio Holder stated that feedback from Thursday market traders had indicated their support for the self erect proposal and queried the level of savings in the event that this proposal was implemented for the Thursday traders and not Wednesday traders. The Consumer Services Manager advised that the potential savings were difficult to quantify, however, details of the estimated level of savings were provided.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted the importance of ensuring stallholders were not disadvantaged and suggested that the proposed changes be implemented in respect of the Thursday market, however, further consultation be undertaken with Wednesday traders and the options be re-examined.

A representative for the Wednesday market traders was in attendance and highlighted a number of options to reduce costs which included suggestions that traders removed their own rubbish and that only the required number of stalls be displayed.

In relation to the recommendation that fees for burials and cremations be increased by approximately 10% to address the efficiencies required by the Council for 2009/10 which was considered and agreed by Council on 12 February, the Portfolio Holder questioned the budget implications in the event that the recommendation was not agreed and highlighted that the timing of this report left the Portfolio Holder with little option but to agree the recommendations.

A query was also raised as to how the charges and increases compared with other local authorities charging policies to which the Consumer Services Manager advised that the proposed charges were comparable with neighbouring authorities, however, the detail of such charges were not available. In response to the Portfolio Holder's request for clarification, the Consumer Services Manager provided details of some fees and charges for the current financial year.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted the potential impact the introduction of pest control fees may have on the environment.

Decision

- (i) That the suggested charges be agreed in principle with further supporting information in relation to current charges for cemeteries and crematoriums together with details of fees and charges of other local authorities being provided.
- (ii) That the proposals in respect of Thursday market traders be agreed.
- (iii) In relation to Wednesday market traders, further consultation be undertaken and the options be re-examined, the outcome of which to be submitted for further consideration by the Portfolio Holder.

27. Revision of 2009/2010 Fees and Charges – Consumer Services *(Head of Procurement, Property and 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 Consumer Services section of the Procurement, Property and Public Protection Division.

Issues for Consideration

The level of fees and charges in respect of various services offered by the Consumer Services section were reviewed on an annual basis. Details of the suggested charges for 2009/10 were outlined in an appendix to the report. The review had taken into account the Council's current financial position and the need to make efficiency savings and charges made for similar services across the Tees Valley. Based on current service operation the increase in fees would achieve gross additional income of £13,500.

The Portfolio Holder was of the view that the proposed increase in charges for private hire operators licences appeared excessive. The Consumer Services Manager stated that the proposed costs had increased to reflect the amount of time spent on operational issues. In response to the Portfolio Holder's concerns regarding the impact the proposed charges to private hire operators per vehicle would

have on service users, it was reported that the figures had been calculated based on charges made by other local authorities for similar services and resources required.

Decision

- (i) That the proposed charges for 2009/10 as set out in Appendix 1 be implemented from 1 April 2009 with the exception of the private hire operators charges.
- (ii) Comparable information from other local authorities relating to fees and charges for private hire operators be provided.

28. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (Director of Adult and Community Services)

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Programme

Issues for Consideration by Portfolio Holder

There was a large pool of new national health funding that would follow the IAPT programme some of which would fund regionally agreed training programmes on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) as well as ensuring the provision of high intensity and low intensity Psychological Therapists. Nationally £170 million had been allocated over 3 years and in Hartlepool would result in a team of 17 staff (12 new staff) delivering interventions to improve anxiety and depression. Background information, the key aims of the programme and the benefits for people receiving the services were set out in the report. The importance of raising the profile of the scheme and the importance of strong partnership arrangements was highlighted.

The Portfolio Holder commented on the benefits of the scheme and queried the proportion of funding and resources that was likely to be allocated to Hartlepool. The Commissioning Manager indicated that £400,000 had been allocated to the PCT and PCTs would also have to find additional monies for key strategic priorities. The difficulties of recruitment, the links to complementary therapies and health services as well as voluntary organisations was discussed. In response to the Portfolio Holder's query regarding the proposals to promote the programme through the Health and Wellbeing Partnership, it was reported that regular progress reports would be

provided by the Project Manager once in post. The Portfolio Holder highlighted the importance of raising awareness of the scheme and the benefits of links with other service providers.

Decision

That the IAPT proposals be noted and promoted within the Council.

29. Primary Authority Scheme *(Head of Procurement, Property and Public Protection)*

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the introduction of the Primary Authority Scheme and of the potential impact on the Council's regulatory services.

Issues for Consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 (RESA) came into force in October 2008. Part 2 to establish the Primary Authority Scheme would come into force on 6 April 2009, the stated aim of which was to deliver consistency in local regulation. To deliver this any company trading across Council boundaries in the scheme would be guaranteed access to advice through the creation of legal partnerships with local regulators.

Currently businesses operating across more than one site could be subject to regulation and enforcement action by multiple Local Authorities which as a result has found that on occasions organisations could find themselves subject to enforcement using different approaches in different locations. Voluntary 'Home' and 'Lead' Authority Schemes had been established to address this issue whereby the Local Authority where the company head office was based would be the contact point for all other Authorities. However, some businesses had not been satisfied that these voluntary schemes were operating effectively and so pressed for the introduction of a statutory 'Primary Authority' scheme. This would mean that companies would have a legal right to form a statutory partnership with a single Local Authority which would provide advice on compliance to be taken into account by other Authorities.

A consultation on the Primary Authority Guidance was due to finish at the end of February. A copy of the consultation document was appended to the report as was a copy of the draft response by the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services.

During discussions reference was made to the potential impact the scheme may place on Council resources.

Decision

- (i) That the report on the Primary Authority Scheme, be noted.
- (ii) That the LACORS response to the consultation document be supported.

30. Food Standards Agency Audit (*Head of Procurement, Property and Public Protection*)

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To update the Portfolio Holder with regard to the actions taken since the Food Standards Agency's Audit of the Authority's Controls of Imported Food and Feed Law Enforcement Service, which was undertaken in March 2008.

Issues for Consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report outlined the Authority's progress in implementing the Action Plan relating to the audit of the Council's controls of imported feed/food and feed law enforcement carried out by the Food Standards Agency in 2008. A copy of the Action Plan which had been sent to the Food Standards Agency was appended to the report. Auditors would review this information and a further report on their findings would be presented to the Portfolio Holder at a future meeting.

Decision

That the report, be noted.

31. Winter Pressures (*Director of Adult and Community Services*)

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the increased and unprecedented activity and associated challenges relating to 'winter pressures' being experienced across health and social care services in

Hartlepool.

Issues for Consideration by Portfolio Holder

Intermediate Care Services had been established in Hartlepool since 1997 through co-operation between Hartlepool Borough Council, Hartlepool Primary Care Trust and North Tyneside and Hartlepool NHS Trust. The purpose of this was to deliver high quality and responsive health and social care convalescence, rehabilitation and care services. This would ensure a joint response to meeting statutory requirements and achievement of best practice regarding the prevention of inappropriate admission into hospital, residential and nursing care and facilitating timely and safe discharge from hospital.

In order to monitor supply and demand and understand capacity challenges across health and social care the service routinely analyses information relating to requests for services and the number of episodes of delivered intermediate care including rapid response nursing, short stay residential care placements and rehabilitation. Earlier in the year the operational framework had been re-modelled and aspects re-commissioned in preparation for the required expansion of services in the community to support the Momentum Pathways to Healthcare development. Despite this there had been a significant increase in discharge notifications from both the University of Hartlepool and North Tyneside hospitals. Additionally both hospitals had been on almost continuous red alert due to the impact of a variety of issues. There had also been problems with unplanned leave across health and social care services throughout December.

Details were given of the financial implications and risks associated with the winter pressures.

The Portfolio Holder requested further information regarding unplanned leave to which the Director of Adult and Community Services stated that the high levels of leave were as a result of family bereavements and influenza. The issue of absenteeism was discussed and the Portfolio Holder was pleased to note that despite the pressures on health services and social care over the winter months the levels of sickness had improved. This was an excellent example of how the Council managed resources in very difficult circumstances.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the difficulties in demand that were impacting on the whole health and social care system and further updates be awaited.

The meeting concluded at 11.45 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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