

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 September 2015

Report of the Management Team

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

To set out and agree the scope of the proposed review.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The aim of this review is to evaluate existing fees and charges currently levied for the provision of a range of services across Council departments. A value for money review will be undertaken along with an assessment to help guide the budget setting process for 2016/17.

1.2 Suggested Issues for Review

1.2.1 The fees and charges currently imposed fall into two main categories:

- 1) those which are set by statute and therefore the amount charged cannot be altered locally
- 2) those which are discretionary and are set locally by the Council

1.2.2 As the charges for services within (1) above cannot be altered, these will not be investigated as part of this review. The services provided that fall into the second category can be reviewed further. However it is important to note that many of the locally set fees have limits placed upon them. When setting these charges we can at most only recover the costs associated with providing the service. Examples of this include building control, land charges and licensing.

1.2.3 It is suggested that work is undertaken to list the charges which are set locally, splitting them into those which are cost recovery only and those where we have full discretion to set the level of charge. This may highlight some opportunities to increase future income to assist with the Council's overall budgetary position.

1.2.4 In addition to the above investigation, it is also suggested that work is undertaken across services to look at areas where there is the potential to charge, but we are currently not doing so. This could also generate additional future income.

1.2.5 Fees and charges associated with rental income for shops/land/industrial estates etc and those relating to the Leisure Trust, will not be investigated as part of this review, as legal agreements have already been set for these areas.

1.3 Suggested Review Process

1.3.1 It is suggested that this review be taken forward by an informal panel drawn from the membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. If the suggestions within this report are agreed, the details of all the different charges will be collated and split into the relevant categories to allow the Panel to consider options and make recommendations to the next full Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 January 2016.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 Any arising will be addressed as part of the review.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 As above.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 As above.

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.8 Recommendations

1.8.1 That the proposed scope of the review of Fees and Charges **BE ENDORSED**.

Background papers:

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Nil

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On behalf of the Management Team