

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

4 February 2014

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – REVIEW OF CONCESSIONARY FEES AND CHARGES FOR BENEFIT CLAIMANTS

To endorse the recommendations arising from the review.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken a review of concessionary fees and charges relating to benefit claimants. The recommendations of the review informal group established to undertake the review are set out below. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is due to meet on 28th January 2014 to formally consider and agree these recommendations. If there are any amendments made to these recommendations, a supplementary report will be tabled at the Cabinet meeting.

1.2 Review Recommendations

- 1.2.1 The review group has recommended the following:

- (a) the current 100% concession for pest control services should be retained;
- (b) the current 100% concession for bulky goods collections should be retained and additional marketing of the service and of the Saturday Household Waste Service should be undertaken;
- (c) a review of the discounts for leisure services/activities should be undertaken by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board to simplify the rates which apply;
- (d) the criteria which govern access to the Council's concessions should be made consistent across services and in future be based primarily on those eligible for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

- (e) To reflect the findings of the equalities impact assessment (EqIA) , it is recommended that disability/incapacity should be added to the qualifying criteria for all concessions.
- (f) eligibility for access to the concessions should be assessed and reviewed on an annual basis only in order to streamline administration of the concessions scheme;
- (g) the introduction of a single discount card covering all concessions is supported in principle but should be subject to further investigation taking into account examples of best practice;
- (h) additional marketing and promotion of the discount card scheme should be considered to encourage greater take up by those eligible.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 As dealt with by the review

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 n/a

1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

1.5.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.6 Recommendations

1.6.1 That the recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the review of concessionary fees and charges for benefit claimants **BE ENDORSED**.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	Any potential adverse impacts have been addressed via an EqIA.

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	It is recommended that concessions for bulky waste and pest control should now be made available for those claiming disability/incapacity benefit.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		-

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.