

### **Appendix 3 – Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

Provided below are the Feedback's from the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees meetings held during November and December 2017. These are extracts from the minutes in relation to the Fees and Charges item discussion's only.

#### **Cleaner, Greener and Safer (CGS)**

Item 6, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017 meeting

Provided below is the relevant extract from the meeting draft minutes

#### **Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2018/19**

Beau Stanford-Francis, Environmental Protection and Contracted Services Manager, presented the report that had set out the charges in relation to the services within the remit of the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee with any new charges taking effect from the 1 April 2018 subject to approval from Cabinet. The report highlighted the key questions that had to be measured when considering the pricing strategy for 2018-19 and the target of £1.905 million that had to be secured through the increased fees and charges in 2018-19 for the cleaner, greener and safer services. Members were also referred to recommendation 1.2 that delegated authority would be sought through Cabinet.

Members were also referred to Appendices A and B to the report that highlighted the proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 and the fees and charges no longer applicable.

Councillor Collins questioned the Outdoor Sports and the Commercial Hire of Open Spaces as to whether there was any pressure to set up events to generate more income. Beau Stanford-Francis stated that applications for hiring spaces are received which included pitch-hire and music events and that each application would be considered on its own merits taking into account the objectives and meeting the needs of both the organiser and the Council.

Councillor Kent stated that the Appendices were too small and unreadable and would therefore not be able to agree to the recommendations as she had not had the opportunity to view the documents.

Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways, apologised for this and would resolve this for next year's report.

Councillor Collins asked what the time limit would be for Members to comment on the report and appendices. Julie Rogers stated that the final report would be presented to Council in February and that Members were being asked at this meeting to comment and agree the report.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That Councillors Cherry and Collins agreed to note the revised fees, including those no longer applicable, and that Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members comment on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this committee.**
- 2. That Councillors Cherry and Collins agreed to note that director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees & Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to legal, regulatory or commercial requirements.**

## **Planning, Transport and Regeneration (PTR)**

Item 18, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 meeting

Provided below is the relevant extract from the meeting draft minutes

### **Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2018/19**

The Corporate Director of Place introduced the report which specifically outlined the charges within the remit of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which would take effect from 1 April 2018. Members were advised that the full list of proposed charges could be found within the appendices to the report.

The Chair advised the Committee that she had sought clarification from officers, prior to the meeting, regarding the pricing for skip licences. She had assumed it would impact upon residential use but was assured that the new charge would only affect skip businesses. The Chair noted that the majority of fees and charges were proposed to remain the same with a few slight increases, which overall she considered to be very fair.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- 1. That Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the revised fees, including those no longer applicable, and the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this Committee.**
- 2. That Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee note that director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees & Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to legal, regulatory or commercial requirements.**

## **Childrens Services**

Item 12, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 meeting

Provided below is the relevant extract from the meeting draft minutes

### **Fees and Charges Pricing Strategy 2018 / 19**

The CDCS presented the report which set out the charges in relation to Children's Services. Not many fees fell under this service department but some of the fees included Grangewaters and nursery provisions.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Childrens Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the revised fees and charges proposals including those no longer applicable.**
- 2) That the Childrens Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this Committee.**
- 3) That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee note that it may be necessary to adjust the relevant fees and charges during the year to reflect a change to their cost recoverability calculation, as**
  - legally prescribed statutory fees and charges may be subject to prescribed variation during the year, and that**
  - discretionary services provided on a traded basis for profit may be subject to commercial operational considerations.**

## **Housing**

Item 8, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017 meeting

Provided below is the relevant extract from the meeting draft minutes

### **Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2018 / 19**

The report was presented by the ADH and outlined the charges in relation to the General Fund within the Housing Service. The charges would come into effect from 1 April 2018, these charges were listed in appendix 2 of the report. For traveller sites, the rent would be increased but the proposal was there to increase rent over two years. By setting the fees and charges appropriately, it will enable the Council to generate essential income to fund Council services and to be able to adapt to changing economic conditions.

The Chair sought clarification on the rent increase on traveller sites as Thurrock residents would be getting a 1% reduction in rent. The ADH confirmed this would be the case but the increase would be over a two year period and referred to site charges. The increase would be relatively low and this charge had not been in place before.

Councillor Potheary asked for a comparison on the rent costs of traveller sites on HRA land and rented council homes. The ADH confirmed that traveller site rents were based on plots of land. At the end of the two year rent increase from these, the sum would be equivalent to what some council tenants would pay for their rented homes.

The Chair expressed concern on the traveller sites rent increase as he felt it would be taking advantage of Housing Benefits. He did not think that the increase was even considered within general housing needs. The ADH said the yearly increase would be 5.8% which was due to begin in April 2018. Overall, the increase would not be so high. The Chair went on to ask if a consultation had taken place with the affected persons. The ADH confirmed that none had taken place and that a consultation would be progressed where there was a specific need to.

With the information given, the Chair felt he could not recommend an increase in rent unless a consultation had taken place. Travellers were still council tenants in some form and should be given the same due diligence as the usual council tenants. Councillor Potheary also agreed with this.

Questioning the traveller site of Gammon Fields, Councillor Redsell asked if there were site officers to maintain the site. The ADH confirmed there was a dedicated team comprising of a manager and an officer who managed the sites intensively with frequent visits.

The Vice-Chair asked whether the rent would be split and if there were any additional fees to pay. The ADH said the rent was split and included service charges of utilities such as electricity. These were paid for along with rents with a swipe card. Councillor Allen questioned whether the cost was similar to some council rents and if the plot had council tax bands. The ADH answered that there was no council tax charge as the caravan on the sites were not permanent structures.

The Committee went on to discuss the removal of waste from traveller sites. A few fly tipping cases were brought up by Councillor Allen and Councillor Redsell. There

was further discussion on the rent increase on traveller sites which Members felt needed more work to be done to show its feasibility. Officers agreed to address the issues brought up by the Committee and resolve before taking the report to the Cabinet Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the revised fees, including those that were no longer applicable and that the Committee comment on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 2) That the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted that director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees and Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to legal, regulatory or commercial requirements.**

## **Health and Wellbeing (HWB)**

Item 29, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017 meeting

Provided below is the relevant extract from the meeting draft minutes

### **Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2018/19**

Roger Harris, Corporate Director Adults, Housing and Health presented the report that had set out the charges in relation to the services within the remit of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee with any new charges taking effect from the 1 April 2018 subject to the approval from Cabinet.

Roger Harris referred Members to the Appendix to the report that highlighted the proposed fees and charges in detail. Roger Harris stated that no proposal to increase charges in 2018/19 would be made.

Councillor V Holloway questioned why there was an option in the Respite Adult Disability fees and charges. Roger Harris stated that it was for the Council to recommend that this option was not taken.

Neil Woodbridge questioned whether the fees and charges had now been maxed out with the level of responsibility and services available. Roger Harris stated that it was getting the right balance with most charges being for domiciliary care.

Councillor Gerrish questioned the “delegated authority” in recommendation 2. Roger Harris stated that this was a standard recommendation for all Fee and Charges Report that were being presented to all overview and scrutiny committees and confirmed that he could not see any requirement to change this mid-year.

Councillor Gerrish suggested a further recommendation be added so that “any changes referred to by Cabinet would be referred back to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment”. The Chair and Members agreed.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the revised fees and that Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this committee.**
- 2. That the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted that the Director delegated authority would be sought via Cabinet to allow the Fees and Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to legal, regulatory or commercial requirements.**
- 3. That any changes referred to by Cabinet would be referred back to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment.**