

Public Protection Partnership

Bracknell Forest
West Berkshire
Wokingham

A shared service provided by Bracknell Forest District Council, West Berkshire District Council
and Wokingham Borough Council

COST RECOVERY

Outline policy for establishing hourly rates and
business advice protocols.



2017-18

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1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

In the early phases of the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) it is accepted that there will be some variation in fees and charges set across the administrative boundaries. This document is seeking to identify a common understanding of how 'cost recovery' can be embedded into all aspects of the service and ensure that consistency is achieved as soon as possible.

The nature of fee setting in local authority financial cycles does mean that there will be a variety of decision making bodies to consult and/or notify. This document will complement the schedule of fees and charges which are published annually by each local authority and will be reviewed by the Joint Committee to inform the annual budget setting process.

2. ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE IN RECOMMENDING FEES AND CHARGES

As part of the budget setting process each partner authority has retained the responsibility of deciding fees and charges for the services they provide. The Committee has been tasked at Schedule 4 of Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) to specifically consider:

- The previous expenditure of the PPP and levels of service achieved;
- Any proposals for the development of the PPP of the services it offers;
- Development/impact of efficiencies that could lead to reduced costs and to consider any investment necessary to realize these efficiencies.

To fulfill this, in the context of fees and charges, it is important that the Committee understand what activities are chargeable, how much time is spent on these activities and the hourly rate which applies. With these factors established it is possible for the Committee to recommend a schedule of fees and charges which will ultimately influence the net budget of the PPP each year.

3. COST RECOVERY PROCESS

The PPP operates all of its functions and services on the understanding that it will recharge for costs incurred where legally permissible. The Joint Committee sets out the general scope of how the cost recovery process should be applied.

Each year there will be an evaluation of service activity to ensure that costs are properly identified and that any fees and charges passed onto residents and businesses are reasonable, accurate and up to date.

This process is dependent on accurate records being kept, specifically any time spent by officers in delivering the activities outlined in this guidance. Separate guidance is available to officers on time recording.

4. HOURLY RATE

Based on a series of calculations, using data from finance to assess internal recharges, officer salaries, administrative support and management overheads the following hourly rate has been established for the service:

£53 per hour

Unless specifically stated, this rate applies to all service activities. The Joint Management Board will consult with the relevant departments from time to time to establish internal support costs and ensure that the hourly rate is an accurate reflection of the cost incurred to deliver PPP activities. The Joint Committee delegates the responsibility of setting the hourly rate to the Joint Management Board.

5. GENERAL INFORMATION REQUESTS

There are a variety of reasons for residents and businesses to contact the PPP, this report outlines the functions and issues that will only be considered when a fee is paid. Any request for information which is not specifically listed in this guidance document will be considered by the Joint Management Team through the routine operating model process. This includes a large amount of information being published on the website and requests being automatically diverted to enable more self service.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS ADVICE

It is very important to support local businesses and the service will ensure that every request for advice from a local business is responded to, ensuring that they have access to the best available information about relevant legislation.

Option 1

Each local business with less than 5 employees will be limited to 30 minutes of free advice and, where appropriate, businesses will be encouraged to consider the primary authority partnership arrangements. The hourly rate will apply to all advice given beyond the first hour and payment will be taken in advance.

Option 2

Each local business with less than 5 employees will be limited to 1hr of free advice and, where appropriate, businesses will be encouraged to consider the primary authority partnership arrangements. The hourly rate will apply to all advice given beyond the first hour and payment will be taken in advance.

Option 3

Each local business with less than 5 employees will be limited to 2 hrs of free advice and, where appropriate, businesses will be encouraged to consider the primary authority partnership arrangements. The hourly rate will apply to all advice given beyond the first hour and payment will be taken in advance.

Each time a local business requires advice, information will be logged and the history of each business should be reviewed to determine whether the limit has been reached.

7. PRIMARY AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIPS (PAPs)

Any local business which operates within the areas covered by the PPP should be considered for their suitability under the primary authority scheme. This scheme formally recognises a commercial relationship and is approved by the relevant Secretary of State. All pricing matters relevant to PAPs are determined by a memorandum of understanding and

are approved by the Public Protection Managers. Any enquiries from new businesses should be directed to the Public Protection Managers and enquiries from existing PA businesses should be directed to their lead officer.

8. PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

All advice requested by residents and businesses to assist them in applying for any type of licence (includes registrations, permits and/or consents) incurs a fee. All pre-application advice will be offered to customers in 1 hour blocks, minimum of 1 hour charge and will be provided by the most appropriate team to ensure the best quality advice is given.

9. STATUTORY FEES

Where the PPP delivers a function or service which has a specified statutory fee this will be identified within a separate schedule of fees and charges which will be published in line with the specific requirements of each partner authority.

10. ANY OTHER PPP FUNCTION OR SERVICE

The hourly rate will apply to any other function or service provided by the PPP. The Joint Committee delegates the decision to vary the nature of the functions and services provided by the PPP to the Joint Management Board. A separate schedule of applicable fees and charges will be published in line with the specific requirements of each partner authority.