

## Appendix A

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### Public Protection Partnership Fees and Charges – Supporting Information

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#### 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1. The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) is a shared service between Bracknell Forest, Wokingham and West Berkshire Councils which commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 for a period of ten years. This followed a previous 5 year arrangement between West Berkshire and Wokingham. West Berkshire Council is the host authority.
- 1.2. The PPP governance arrangements require that strategic direction and key decisions are taken by the Joint Committee. The key decision in this case is the adoption of a policy which allows for the PPP to charge for a range of business and pre-application advice.

#### 2. Supporting Information

- 2.1. The report at Appendix B outlines the importance of incorporating cost recovery principles into the operation of the PPP.
- 2.2. The establishment of an hourly rate, in consultation with finance departments, provides an ability to produce a schedule of fees and charges for each partner authority to consider in line with their financial reporting cycles. This will be influential information in the budget setting process as it will impact on income generation.
- 2.3. The report at Appendix B establishes the principal of charging businesses for advice and those seeking to trade on the basis of a licence, consent or registration. This is an important measure in the PPP's approach towards demand management and income generation.
- 2.4. The PPP estimate that there are over 13,000 businesses operating in their administrative area, 3,500 of which are food businesses.
- 2.5. The PPP have over 2000 licensed premises, process over 3000 non premises based licenses and over 1000 taxi or private hire related licences in operation.
- 2.6. The PPP estimate that they receive over 21,000 requests for service and complaints.
- 2.7. These broad statistics indicate that there is a sizeable market which may require advice at some stage. This market is currently paying for a variety of services either directly to the council through existing fees and charges, or to private sector companies to assist them in some way.

2.8. Whilst no specific analysis has been carried out, the Joint Management Team believe that it is realistic to estimate that 5% of all contact to the PPP is asking for advice relevant to business start ups, existing business queries or assistance with applications for licences of some sort.

2.9. This equates to approximately 1000 potential enquiries per year or 20 per week. If the PPP was able to convert 10% of this business into a 1hr chargeable service, income of £5.3k should be possible.

### **3. Options for Consideration**

3.1. Keep free business advice for all.

- No ability to increase service income to meet PPP objectives.
- Local businesses and residents will have free access to a range of expertise when considering any regulatory matter.
- The overall demand for advice requires a significant amount of officer time.
- There is no restriction placed on business advice, leading to the possibility of using valuable officer resource helping companies who could resource it themselves.

3.2. Create a customised charging scheme based around type of business, scale of business, location of business etc.

- This enables better targeting of financial assistance to businesses.
- This creates more time consuming administrative processes and decision making around criteria and customer handling.
- Requires further evaluation of business need.

### **4. Proposals**

4.1. To agree the principles outlined in the Cost Recovery report.

4.2. To delegate the ability to vary the hourly rate to the Joint Management Board.

4.3. To agree the amount of free advice to be provided to small businesses employing 5 or less people.

### **5. Conclusion**

5.1. Operating the PPP on a cost recovery basis is the most sustainable way to maintain the option for residents and businesses to receive advisory services.

5.2. Putting cost recovery at the heart of all future decisions on fees and charges will ensure that the PPP concentrates on effective time management, enable it to interact with the private sector in a transparent way and deliver services/activities that residents and businesses demand.

## 6. Consultation and Engagement

6.1. The nature of the report does not merit external consultation at this stage however it may be beneficial to engage with local businesses over 2017-18 to evaluate the effects of charging different rates for advice.

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### PPP Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Public Protection Partnership aims as stated in the Inter Authority Agreement:

- 1 – Community Protection
- 2 – Protecting and Improving Health
- 3 – Protection of the Environment
- 4 – Supporting Prosperity and Economic Growth
- 5 – Effective and Improving Service Delivery

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## Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

**We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:**

*“(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:*

*(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*

*(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:*

*(i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;*

*(ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;*

*(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.*

*(2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.*

(3) *Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”*

**The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:**

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

**Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.**

<b>What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Committee to make:</b>	To agree a cost recovery process and explain how it will affect fees and charges in the future.
<b>Summary of relevant legislation:</b>	N/A
<b>Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the partnerships key objectives?</b>	No
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Steve Broughton
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	23/2/17

<b>Is this a:</b>		<b>Is this:</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	Yes	<b>New or proposed</b>	Yes
<b>Strategy</b>	No	<b>Already exists and is being reviewed</b>	No
<b>Function</b>	No	<b>Is changing</b>	No
<b>Service</b>	No		

<b>1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?</b>	
<b>Aims:</b>	To provide clear and transparent charges for residents and businesses who may wish to use PPP services.
<b>Objectives:</b>	Ensure the PPP achieves cost recovery wherever legally able to do so.
<b>Outcomes:</b>	Enable to PPP focus resources on its priorities whilst maintaining capacity to offer advice.
<b>Benefits:</b>	Improve the PPP’s ability to generate income or reduce

	demand, allowing it to focus on priorities.
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<p><b>2. Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.</b>                  (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)</p>		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	None	
Disability	None	
Gender Reassignment	None	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	none	
Pregnancy and Maternity	None	
Race	None	
Religion or Belief	None	
Sex	None	
Sexual Orientation	None	
<b>Further Comments relating to the item:</b>		

<b>3. Result</b>	
<b>Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b>	<b>No</b>
<p><b>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</b> This report does not target individuals in their personal lives, it is focussed on people and businesses looking to engage in business practices of some sort. The inclusion of specific exemptions for provision of free advice to small businesses is designed to reduce barriers to success and support economic growth.</p>	
<b>Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>	<b>No</b>
<p><b>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</b> Business and pre-application advice is a marketplace which both the PPP and the private sector can operate. There is a wide choice for potential customers and anyone looking to find out about such matters can access a wide base of information to guide their decisions.</p>	

**If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.**

**If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).**

<b>4. Identify next steps as appropriate:</b>	
<b>Stage Two required</b>	No
<b>Owner of Stage Two assessment:</b>	
<b>Timescale for Stage Two assessment:</b>	

**Name: Steve Broughton**

**Date: 3/3/17**

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