

Agenda Item 9

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Date	26 th November 2013

Ward (s) affected		Key Decision*	No
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* A key decision is one which is likely to result in expenditure or savings of at least £100,000 or have a significant impact on two or more Wards within the District.

Subject	Street Naming and Numbering
RECOMMENDATIONS	
The Executive is asked to:	
Approve the introduction of charges for naming and numbering new properties.	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council currently charges for changes to property names and street names but not for the naming or numbering of **new** developments.

It is recommended the Council introduces charges for the naming and numbering of new properties in order to recover more towards the £14,000 per annum it currently costs to deliver the service. The current charging model sees the Council recover approximately £1,200 per annum. Introducing a moderate charge for new developments will provide a more predictable income and better ensure the authority covers its costs for provision of this service.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Value for Money - Delivering quality, value for money services

If implemented, the revenue from the proposed charges will balance the cost of providing the street naming and numbering function and allow the council to maintain a high standard of customer service.

The Executive has the authority to determine the Recommendations

1.0 BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

In 1978 the Council resolved to adopt the provisions of sections 17, 18 and 19 of the Public Health Act 1925. This legislation was adopted in order to formalise the duties performed by the Council in regards to street naming and numbering for the whole of its district. This Act, together with the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847, require a local authority to prepare street naming and numbering schemes and to maintain a good standard of street nameplates, which are essential for the efficient functioning of the postal and emergency services and for the safety and convenience of the general public.

In 2010 the Council introduced charges for changing street and property names: -

	<u>Current Charge</u>
• Changing a property address	£31.50
• Changing the name of a block of flats	<i>£63.00 for the first property, then £6.30 per additional flat.</i>
• Changing a street name	<i>£189.00 for a street with up to 20 properties, £257.30 for a street with more than 20 properties</i>

These charges were introduced under the provisions of Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 whereby local authorities can charge for discretionary services where there is no statutory duty to provide that service and no specific charging powers. The charges can only be imposed on a cost recovery basis.

However, charges were not introduced for the naming and numbering of new properties in 2010. Under the same legislation, it is now recommended that the Council introduces the following additional administration charges for the creation or registering for new developments: -

	<u>Recommended Charge</u>
• Naming / Numbering a development 1st plot	£170
• Additional plots 2-50	£20 per plot
• Additional plots 51 and above	£10 per plot

The Public Health Act 1925 deals with the Council's duties and powers to object to a proposed street name, to alter a street name or assign a name to a street where no name has been given and to cause the name of a street to be displayed in a conspicuous position. Additionally, the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847, sections 64 and 65, deal with the Council's duties to cause houses and buildings to be marked with numbers, for street names to be conspicuously displayed and to require occupiers of houses and other buildings to display the numbers that the Council has approved. Neither of these pieces of legislation specifically impose a duty on the Council for the naming and numbering of new properties.

In Surrey 4 authorities levy fees for numbering new properties. Using their charging

models the fees for numbering a development of 5 properties range from £100 - £275.

As the original charges were required to be publically advertised before introduction, it might be considered prudent to similarly advertise the introduction of these new charges. The approximate cost of doing so in the Dorking/ Leatherhead Advertiser for 2 weeks will be £900 - £1000.

Legal Implications

The legal implications have been set out in the report.

Financial Implications

Performing the street naming and numbering function costs an estimated £14,000 per annum.

Mole Valley District Council's current street naming and numbering charges recover approximately £1200 per annum from the service.

If the Council had already introduced the proposed changes, our historic development activity indicates that the Council would have recovered an additional £7000 - £9,500 per annum.

The additional income from the predicted increase in new housing indicates that, with the additional charges being implemented, the cost of the provision of the service will be fully recovered in the future.

2.0 OPTIONS

Listed in order of recommendation:-

1. Approve the introduction of proposed charges contained in this report with effect from 1st April 2014. Advertise the new charges using the local press and the Council's website.
2. Retain the current situation; continue to charge only for services related to changing an existing naming or numbering scheme.

3.0 CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Monitoring Officer commentary

The relevant legal implications have been taken into account in the report and in the Risk Implications.

S151 Officer commentary

The S151 Officer confirms that all financial implications have been taken into account

Risk Implications

The Council can only charge for a service under section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 if it is discretionary under the legislation (as opposed to a duty) and where no specific charges apply. The report sets out what is regarded under the legislation as being a duty (for which a charge cannot be made) and discretionary (for which a charge can be made). There is, of course, always the risk that a court might interpret the legislation differently.

Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications arising as a direct consequence of this report.

Employment Issues – N/A

Sustainability Issues – N/A

Consultation - N/A

Communications

Advertising additional schedule of fees in the local press and on the council web site