

Gloucester City Council

| | | | |
|------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------|
| Meeting: | Cabinet | Date: | 25 March 2015 |
| Subject: | Proposed implementation of charges for the discretionary services provided for street naming and numbering | | |
| Report Of: | Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | No | Budget/Policy Framework: | No |
| Contact Officer: | Ruth Silk, Business Improvement Officer | | |
| | Email: ruth.silk@gloucester.gov.uk | Tel: 396712 | |
| Appendices: | 1.Comparative charges for Gloucestershire LA's and other authorities 2. Proposed fee structure 3. New Street Naming and Numbering Policy | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture seeking approval of a Street Naming and Numbering Policy that defines how the Council will deliver this statutory function and recover associated costs, and the introduction of a charging regime from May / June 2015 for this function.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

- (1) The implementation of charging for the discretionary element of the street naming and numbering process on a 'not for profit' basis in accordance with the new street naming and numbering policy be approved.
- (2) It be noted that the fees charged are on a cost recovery basis only in line with other local authorities.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 For a property to be officially named or assigned an address, it needs to be approved by the relevant authority.
- 3.2 The Council is the relevant authority and responsible for street naming and numbering within the Gloucester City area, ensuring streets are named and properties numbered. This Statutory function is currently delivered through the Local Land and Property Gazetteer Custodian / Uniform Administrator and is provided free of charge, regardless of the size of the development.

- 3.3 Maintaining a comprehensive and high standard for naming of streets and numbering or naming of properties is essential as it allows:-
- Emergency services to find a property quickly (delays can cost lives and money)
 - Mail to be delivered efficiently
 - Visitors to find where they want to go
 - Reliable delivery of services and products
 - Records of service providers to be kept in an effective manner
- 3.4 The costs associated with this process include staff time for:
- Consultation and Liaison with Ward Councillors, emergency services, water companies, the County Council and Royal Mail on proposed naming/numbering;
 - Naming and numbering of new properties
 - Alterations to either street name or building number of new developments after initial naming and numbering has been undertaken;
 - Notification to organisations of street names and numbers;
 - Confirmation of road names;
 - Responding to challenges from developers and councillors
- 3.5 Many local authorities within England and Wales began charging for this service in 2009, with the majority of Council's in England and Wales now charging. Within Gloucestershire four authorities are already charging: Cheltenham, Stroud, Cotswold and The Forest of Dean with Tewkesbury also looking to implement charges in the near future.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 sets out the comparative charges for the Gloucestershire Local Authorities who currently charge for their street naming and numbering services as well as further comparisons with other local authorities.

4.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The SN&N process can involve a significant amount of Officers' time in correspondence, liaison and preparation of plans, schedules and notification to a significant number of interested parties. All of this work is carried out at the express or implicit request of developers in order to meet the requirements of the Royal Mail, emergency services and public utilities.
- 4.2 By adopting charges, it will be possible to recover the administrative cost of providing this service.
- 4.3 The introduction of a new SN&N policy will enable the service to adopt a formal set of procedures for operating this function which follows best practice.

5.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 5.1 Requisite notice will need to be given to the public and Quedgeley Parish Council of the proposal to adopt a charging regime.
- 5.2 The Council will need to create guidance documents on its website that defines the delivery of its statutory SN&N function.

- 5.3 An application form will need to be developed for the website.
- 5.4 Scripting for customer services will need to be created
- 5.5 New process designed to include taking payments
- 5.6 The charges and scope of charges will be reviewed after a period of 12 months.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Once implemented, there will be no additional resources required as a result of implementing SN&N charges.
- 6.2 By implementing the charges, additional income is expected to be achieved. Analysis of previous years' activity and information about the number of developments started or due to start in the next financial year indicate that additional income in the region of £20k could be achieved in 2015/16 and similar income levels annually thereafter. Any additional income would contribute to the delivery of the Council's future savings requirements.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The relevant legislation relating to street naming and numbering is:-
Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 – Sections 64 & 65
Local Government Act 1972 – Schedule 14 – Part II – paras 23 to 25
Local Government Act 2003 – Section 93
Gloucester City Council can charge for the discretionary naming and numbering services it provides. Discretionary services are those services that an authority has the power but not the duty to provide, as provided for under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003. Charges cover services such as the administrative function of the service, working with Royal Mail, notifying Utilities and other bodies, and for registering non-statutory parts of the address such as property name.
- 7.2 At a meeting on 29th October 1947 the Council as the Street Naming and Numbering Authority for Gloucester City adopted the Public Health Act 1925 – Section 17 to 19 for the naming of streets and for the numbering of houses and buildings
- 7.3 These provisions are essentially discretionary and there is a power to charge for discretionary or non statutory services by virtue of Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003.

8.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 8.1 It is unlikely those who make use of the service would cease using it at the introduction of charges. The charges are modest and non-profit making. No issues have been identified with other authorities when they have introduced these charges.

9.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 9.1 There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality groups.
- 9.2 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

10.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 10.1 None

Sustainability

- 10.2 None

Staffing & Trade Union

- 10.3 None

Background Documents: None