

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AND WASTE POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

MEETING, 29TH JULY, 2015

Present – Councillors Irving (Chairman), Allen, Donaghy (as deputy for Councillor Jones), Chadwick, Graham, Haworth (as deputy for Councillor Sherrington), Hayes, Peel, Richardson and A.S. Walsh.

Augmented by Members of the Licensing and Environmental Regulation Committee for minute 5, viz –

L. Byrne, C. Burrows, Chadwick, Donaghy, Graham, Haworth, Martin, Murray, Peel, Richardson and Wild.

### Officers

Mr. M. Cox	Director of Environmental Services
Ms. S. Schofield	Assistant Director of Environmental Services, Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services
Ms. L. Duckworth	Head of Service, Regulatory Services
Ms. L. Butcher	Senior Group Accountant
Mr. M. Atherton	Senior Engineering Manager
Mr. I. D. Mulholland	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors Bury, Greenhalgh, Haslam and Jones.

Councillor Irving in the Chair

#### **4. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2015 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

#### **5. LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES**

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which informed members of the annual Licensing fees review and set out the proposed fee structure, as required by the Provisions of Services regulations, 2009.

The report explained that the Licensing Unit was responsible for the administration of a wide range of functions where statute required a licence,

permit or consent to be issued and for discharging the related enforcement functions.

The functions included private hire and hackney carriage licensing, alcohol and entertainment licenses, casino and betting licensing together with street trading, charity collections and sex shops.

Members were advised that most, but not all, of the functions carried out by the unit permit the Council to charge a fee.

The last review of fees was carried out to set the fees for 2010-2011 and a decision was taken not to increase the fees from those set in 2008.

New legislation and guidance on fee setting had been introduced and fees should be reviewed annually and adjusted as and when appropriate. This was to ensure that fees were levied at an appropriate level to recover the full costs.

In conclusion, the report explained that the proposed fees had been independently calculated by the Council's financial officers and the methodology used had been scrutinised and approved by Internal Audit.

A complete list of the current and proposed locally set fees was set out at appendix A to the report.

Members in their discussions referred to –

- disputes around fares;
- matters around just covering costs;
- the overall impact on revenue;
- the challenge around fees including court costs;
- the effect of the taxi trade including operators;
- street trading increase;
- comparison with other local authorities; and
- the lack of flexibility of how the Council can spend the revenue monies.

It was agreed that the Licensing and Environmental Regulation Committee be asked to –

- (i) Approve the proposed principles and methodology for the setting of the fees;
- (ii) Agree to publish the proposed fees and consider any objections prior to implementation of the revised fees;
- (iii) Approve the carrying forward of any surplus or deficit to future financial years and for such surplus or deficit to be considered in the setting of future locally set fees;
- (iv) Consider a phased approach to any renewal fee increases;
- (v) Delegate authority to the Director of Environmental Services to resolve challenges relating to any current and future challenges in relation to licensing fees; and

- (vi) Delegate authority to the Director of Environmental Services to determine the appropriate refund level in relation to unsuccessful applicants.

## **6. WINTER GRITTING SERVICE PROVISION**

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which set out details of the Council's revised winter service policy and also made suggestions regarding a number of potential service delivery efficiency options for 2015/16.

Members were advised that the Bolton Council Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan had been reviewed and updated to seek as far as reasonably practical to comply with revised guidance.

The report also put forward some options for efficiencies in the delivery of the service.

Members in their discussions referred to –

- the use of grit bins and misuse;
- the reduction of spare vehicles;
- the effects in different areas of the Borough and appropriate treatment for the conditions;
- liaison with Bolton at Home;
- staff on standby; and
- spreading flexibility whilst on route.

It was agreed that the Executive Cabinet Member for Environmental Services be asked to agree the revised Policy and that this Policy Development Group recommends that the Executive Cabinet Member further considers efficiency options one to three, as set out in the report.

(The meeting started at 5.30pm and finished at 6.35pm)