

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder 15 February 2011
AUTHOR: Executive Director, Corporate Services / Head of ICT

ADDRESS MANAGEMENT – CHARGES FOR STREET NAMING & NUMBERING

Purpose

1. That the Portfolio Holder considers and approves the draft Address Management Policy (**Appendix 1**) and scale of charges in respect of Street Naming and Numbering.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder approves the draft Address Management Policy (Appendix 1) and agrees to the charges for Street Naming and Numbering as set out in paragraph 12 of this report for adoption by South Cambridgeshire District Council with effect from 1 April 2011.
3. This is not a key decision but requires the approval of the Portfolio Holder.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The introduction of an Address Management Policy will enable the SNN Service to adopt a formal set of procedures for operating the service which follows best practice. Furthermore, by adopting charges it will be possible to recover some of the costs of providing the service.

Background

5. Across the country and within Cambridgeshire a number of Local Authorities are reviewing the way they provide their SNN service and considering what actions could be taken to ensure that the full cost of this activity is not carried by the wider community.
6. At its meeting on 13 January 2010 Senior Management Team endorsed the introduction of a scale of charges for the SNN service.
7. Since that meeting the Council adopted Section 64 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 at its meeting on 22 July 2010 in order to prepare for the introduction of charges.
8. Officers have also carried out research into the operation of charges for SNN services at a number of Local Authorities nationwide and locally at East Cambridgeshire District Council where charges were introduced on 1 April 2010.

Considerations

9. Having previously adopted the provisions of Sections 17 – 19 of the Public Health Act 1925 and subsequently having adopted Section 64 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847, the Council may now under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 charge for anything done for the provision of such a service provided that the person to whom the service is given has agreed to its provision. This excludes the statutory elements of the function for which there should be no charge.
10. It is therefore proposed that charges are introduced for non-statutory functions for all new developments and for the renaming and renumbering of a property or street (when requested by a Parish Council or a majority of its residents).
11. When charging for discretionary services the Council has a duty to charge no more than the reasonable costs it incurs in providing the service. The aim is to encourage improvements to existing services and develop new ones that will help to improve the overall service to the community and not to make a profit.
12. The table below sets out the proposed charges:

Activity		Proposed Fee
Naming a new or renaming an existing property		£50 per dwelling
Addressing a new development	1 plot	£50
	2 – 5 plots	£75
	6 – 10 plots	£100
	11 – 25 plots	£175
	26 – 50 plots	£250
	51 – 100 plots	£400
	101+ plots	£500 + £5 per additional plot over 101
Change to a development after notification		£100 + £10 per plot affected
Street renaming following local request		£250 + £5 per property affected
Confirmation of address details		£25 per dwelling

13. **Appendix 2** sets out the comparative charges at nearby Local Authorities who currently charge for their SNN services.
14. The charges and scope of charges will be reviewed after a period of 6 months.
15. In addition to the scale of charges a policy document has been drafted to cover the Address Management work area. The bulk of this policy concentrates on SNN with an additional section appended which outlines the links to the local land and property gazetteer and its importance as the Council's primary source of address data.
16. The SNN elements of the policy will ensure there is a single set of guidance notes for service users to enable the efficient and effective running of the service. In drafting the policy, attention has been given to existing practices together with a thorough review of policies in operation at other Local Authorities whilst ensuring the policy is in line with the adopted legislation.

Options

17. The Council introduces charging for SNN services and thereby recovers a proportion of the costs associated with providing this function or the Council continues to provide its SNN services (both statutory and discretionary elements) free of charge.
18. The Council adopts a formal policy for Address Management (which includes the SNN function) enabling it to operate under a single set of guidance notes and procedures which follow best practice or the Council continues to operate using existing policies which are not brought together in a single document and therefore arguably reducing transparency.

Implications

19.	Financial	There are positive financial implications as revenue will be generated to supplement the current budget for the street naming and numbering service including the street nameplate repair and replacement programme, which is insufficient to meet current demand.
	Legal	Current legislation does not provide an express right to charge for the statutory SNN service, there is a right to cover the cost of providing the non-statutory service.
	Staffing	There are no staffing related implications although a full staffing compliment will need to be retained to offer a fee generating and improved service.
	Risk Management	Charges will not be popular with those affected but as they are modest and non-profit making the risk of alienating residents or businesses is small. We are not aware of other Councils experiencing difficulties when they introduced similar charges, although an Ombudsman case has been reported from North Hertfordshire District where a half-fee refund was payable.
	Equality and Diversity	None specific
	Equality Impact Assessment completed	No As above – no specific equality and diversity implications
	Climate Change	None specific

Consultations

20. None

Effect on Strategic Aims

21. Additional revenue will allow an improved service and help meet the demands being placed upon the service.
22. Furthermore, street nameplates and logical numbering are important so that the emergency services and the public can find locations quickly and effectively. Damaged signs pose a safety risk to the public and may delay emergency services in finding the correct location. In addition, damaged signs not only pose a safety risk but may present an unkempt appearance to an area.

Conclusions / Summary

23. The introduction of a scale of charges for the provision of street naming and numbering services will allow service improvement and provide revenue in future years.
24. The charges and scope of charges will be reviewed after a period of 6 months.
25. The adoption of the Address Management Policy will bring together existing work practices and guidance into one document which will provide a definitive policy for street naming and numbering services.

Background Papers: The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Senior Management Team 13 January 2010
Full Council 31 January 2008
Full Council 22 July 2010

Contact Officer: Paul Grainger – GIS and Information Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713294