

Runnymede Borough CouncilRegulatory CommitteeTuesday, 7 November 2023 at 7.37 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors J Wilson (Chair), M Harnden (Vice-Chair), D Clarke and R Davies.

Members of the Committee absent: None

In attendance: Councillors T Burton and T Gates.

11 Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 20 June 2023, as amended, and 12 July 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

12 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

13 Fees and Charges 2024/2025

The Committee's approval was sought to set the fees and charges under its remit for 2024/2025.

With regard to Gambling Licence fees, Officers reported an estimated deficit of £11,000 for 2024/2025. This was because these were set by statute and remained unchanged since their introduction in 2005.

In respect of taxi licensing, the estimated deficit was £95,000, of which £10,100 were non-chargeable costs. This was attributable to there being fewer drivers and vehicles licensed than in previous years. To illustrate the position, Officers reported that in 2013/14 gross expenditure was £106,000 and gross income was £112,000. However, by 2022/23, gross expenditure was £119,000 but income had fallen to £42,000. Officers added that the number of drivers was slowly rising again with more people taking the Knowledge Test.

Officers were asked whether there were options to reduce the deficit with regard to taxi licensing fees through for example shared services with other local authorities. The Committee was advised that although there were opportunities it would take time to harmonise policies and procedures. The Chair said that he would raise this at the Surrey Leaders Group.

Members enquired about scrap metal dealers in the borough. Officers confirmed that the Environment Agency held a central register of all licensed companies.

Officers had noticed a slight discrepancy in the figures for mobile home site licences on the budget sheet compared with those agreed on a previous urgent action. It was confirmed that despite this the correct fees had been charged. Therefore, Officers were asked to confirm whether the fees relating to mobile home site licences were correct and submit a report to the meeting of the Committee in January 2024 so that those particular fees and charges could be approved.

Resolved that –

The proposed fees and charges, with the exception of those relating to mobile home site licences (subject to confirmation of their accuracy), be approved; to be effective from the dates in the appendix, or as soon as practical thereafter.

14 Charity Collections Policy 2023 - 2028

The Committee was asked to approve the updated Charity Collections Policy following a public consultation which took place over the summer months.

Officers reported a low turn out on the consultation to review the Council's Charity Collections Policy. However, positive feedback had been received from those who had responded. Members were disappointed that the Charity Commission had declined to comment.

The proposed changes to the policy were unchanged from those recommended in June 2023. These were to shorten the main document by providing links to the appendices, whilst still making them readily available and to add a requirement for commercial clothing collection companies to hold a waste carrier's licence or certificate or relevant exemption. Members agreed this would increase accountability and transparency.

Resolved that –

The Charity Collections Policy 2023 – 2028 be approved.

15 SO42 - Urgent Action

The Committee noted urgent action proforma 1026, taken in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, relating to disability awareness training. This was to extend the deadline for drivers and operators to complete the training. All but two (who were not operating at the moment) had done so.

16 Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no exempt or confidential items on the agenda.

(The meeting ended at 7.58 pm.)

Chairman