

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER**  
**SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES**  
**DECISION NOTICE**

Publication Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

At the meeting of the Portfolio Holder – Safer and Stronger Communities, held on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 the following matters were discussed. The decisions of the Portfolio Holder are set out below in each item along with reasons for the decision and other options considered.

**DNPH.SSC.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made with regard to any items on the agenda for this meeting.

**DNPH.SSC.2 FEES AND CHARGES FOR REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT SERVICES 2022/23**

The Portfolio Holder considered a report that gave an annual update to these statutory and locally set charges to keep in line with inflation. A review of the discretionary locally set charges has been undertaken to ensure that the Council maintains its income base and generates income to support provision of services within the agreed budget envelope.

**RESOLVED –**

**1. That the fees and charges, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, to take effect as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 be approved.**

**2. That the licensing fees set out in Appendix 2 of this report, approved by the Licensing Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022 be noted.**

## REASONS FOR DECISION –

All Fees and Charges within the Regulation and Enforcement Service are reviewed annually to ensure that they reflect inflationary cost increases of providing the service.

The review has been completed using the following principles:

1. Charges previously set to achieve full cost recovery, have been increased by 5.4% to meet inflationary rise.
2. Fees and charges set at a fixed amount by statute will continue at the same level. However, some fixed penalty notice amounts within the permitted limits have been changed.
3. Charges which previously have not achieved full cost recovery have been reviewed with an aim of increasing the charge to a level where full cost recovery is achieved where appropriate.
4. For traded services, charges have been set to be consistent with the market rate for such services, which may generate income to support the universal offer of other services.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED –

For those fees and charges set nationally by statute at a fixed amount or is presently at the charged at the maximum permitted the authority has no ability to deviate. For those locally set, options were considered to:

- a) Increase by 5.4% inflation only (recommended)
- b) Increase higher than inflation (not recommended)
- c) Not increase at all (not recommended)

In addition, a phased introduction of import controls for EU origin products may lead to further interim charging arrangements for 'documentary screening' of imports from July 2022 onwards. However, if charges are based on cost recovery, then they will be based on the new 22/23 staffing and service costs.

### **DNPH.SSC.3 STRAY DOG PROVISION**

The Portfolio Holder considered a report that outlined the proposed changes in relation to the stray dog function provided by the Environmental Enforcement Team, which will allow the functions to be provided with the budget available.

## RESOLVED –

**The Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities approved the following service changes around the councils stray dog service to come into effect 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022:**

**1. That the removal public drop off point at the Doughty Road Depot at all times be approved.**

**2. That a service re-design be undertaken to provide reduced facilities at Doughty Road Depot to allow officers to temporarily keep dogs on site during Monday-Friday 9-3pm only (this would be reviewed after 12 months) be approved.**

**3. That the ceasing of weekend call-out cover by officers be approved.**

#### **REASONS FOR DECISION –**

These service changes are recommended due to the following:

Changes to Doughty Road site affecting stray dog kennels.  
Staffing Implications to ensure the welfare of the dogs during evening and weekends and to conduct the necessary observations during these times.

Staffing Implications regarding officer availability to receive stray dogs into Doughty site outside of normal working hours and weekends.

#### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED –**

**Retain 7 day a week service with public drop-off and overnight provisions:**

This was not considered viable due to the costs involved on the facilities and provide additional staffing 7 days a week to fall in line with the observation requirements through the evening.

**Providing call out service to collect stray dogs and utilising reduced facilities over 7 days a week with no public access:**

This was not considered viable due to the current voluntary nature of the staff call-out arrangements and that there are arrangements in place with the contracted supplier to receive stray dogs within their operating hours e.g. 9-5 Mon-Sat. 1300-1600 on Sundays/Bank Holidays

**Service re-design to ensure no dogs are received or kept at Doughty Road Depot at all:**

This option would see officers collecting stray dogs from residents and delivering them directly to contracted kennel provider within their operating hours. However, it was not considered viable as it was still felt important to maintain a 5 day a week collection service from Doughty Road for stray dogs by appointment only.

This will ensure that responsible dog owners who have micro chipped their dogs can be re-united with their animals quickly without any need to travel further.