

**Name of decision maker: Neil Harden**

**Portfolio: Residents and Corporate Services**

**Date of Portfolio Holder decision:**

**Title of decision: Introduction of Address Management Charges**

**Part II: No**

**Part II reason: N/A**

**Decision made and reasons:**

It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder;

- approves the introduction of charging for the discretionary elements of the Street Naming and Numbering function and;
- approves the scale of charges as set out in this report in connection with the Council's Street Naming and Numbering function and that;
- these charges should take effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017

**Reports considered: (here reference can be made to specific documents)**

Please see report attached – "Introduction of Address Management Charges"

**Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders consulted:**

**Deputy Monitoring Officer comments:**

The basis for the charges are reasonable and ensure that the activities they relate to are not funded by other services.

**Deputy S151 Officer comments:**

The proposed income will be factored into the budget setting process and the annual review of charges will be carried out as part of the budget setting cycle and taking effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April each year and will be reported with the annual fees and charges.

**Implications:**

**Risk:**

**Value for money:**

**Options considered and reasons for rejection:**

**Portfolio Holder's signature:**

**Date:**

**Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:**

<b>For Member Support Officer use only</b>	
Date decision record sheet received from portfolio holder:	
Date decision published: 11/10/2017	Decision no:PH-017-17
Date of expiry of call-in period:18/10/17	
Date any call-in received or decision implemented:	

## Background

### Introduction of Address Management Charges – Supplementary PH Report

#### Purpose and Summary

The purpose of the report is to introduce a charging scheme for the existing Street Naming & Numbering (SNN) service as allowed under statute. The report explains the basis on which the charges are calculated and the reasons why these charges should be adopted.

The Power to charge falls under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003. This sets out that a local authority may charge for discretionary services. Discretionary services are those services that an authority has the power but not a duty to provide. An authority may charge where the person who receives the service has agreed to its provision and the charge must not exceed the cost of providing the service. (Charge derivation is described in Appendix 1)

The Council's provision of this service in relation to the naming and numbering of streets and buildings are derived from legislation namely contained within the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 (Section 64 and 65) and sections 17-19 of the Public Health Act 1925. This includes the obligation on the part of the Local Authority to prepare street naming and numbering schemes and to maintain a good standard of street nameplates.

The discretionary elements of the service are;

- Consultation and liaising with external organisations such as Royal Mail, developers, Parish/Town Councils and Emergency Services (as a non-statutory element of naming of streets).
- The naming and numbering of new properties (including conversions).
- Alterations in either name or numbers to new developments after initial naming and numbering has been undertaken.
- Notifications to organisations (Developers, VOA, Fire, Royal Mail, Internal Departments, Geoplace)
- Confirmation of addresses. Notification of such to householders
- Challenges to existing official naming/numbering schemes/addresses held within the street naming and numbering records.

The Council has not previously looked to recoup the costs of the discretionary elements of the SNN but the significant increase in regeneration and development within the Borough has led to a marked increase in SNN activity. The ability to recoup these costs will ensure that this activity is not subsidised to the detriment of other services.

## **Policy Context**

The Council's vision clearly sets out the direction of travel for the Council and in doing so; it shapes our priorities and informs all our strategies and plans. It also details how we work alongside our local partners to deliver the services that people need.

Priorities tell teams what to focus on when they are designing and delivering services. They have been set by our Councillors taking into account our vision and what residents have told us is most important to them:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Building strong and vibrant communities
- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Delivering an efficient and modern council

The proposed charges will improve transparency, efficiency and ensure that regeneration, development within the Borough is delivered in a sustainable and measured fashion, and that Street Naming & Numbering is consistently applied and appropriately subsidised by users of the service.

## **Background**

The appropriate naming of streets, and naming and numbering of buildings is essential for;

- Way finding by the public.
- Delivery of post by the Royal Mail and courier services.
- Address required by Utility Services.
- Fast responses to emergencies by ambulance, police, and fire services.
- Record keeping, e.g. index to the National Land and Property Gazetteer, legal transactions, taxation, planning permissions.

It is important that the property names and numbers are appropriate, and are clearly displayed so that the public and service providers can quickly and easily locate a property and its entrance.

The powers and duties in respect of the naming and numbering of streets and buildings are contained in the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 and Public Health Act 1925.

This includes the essential for the efficient functioning of postal and emergency services as well as for the convenience and safety of the public.

This also gives the Council powers in relation to:

- Naming new streets and footpaths;
- Naming new buildings;
- Renaming existing streets and buildings;
- Deciding upon numbering and renumbering of buildings.

The SNN process is largely an administrative function, but also requires intelligent use of geographical systems and the ability to cross check with other systems e.g. Royal Mail Postal Address File (PAF) Fire Services and Valuation Office Agency (VOA). The process includes:

- Telephone enquiries and advising of the application process;
- Processing application forms;
- Site visits when required;
- Hold meetings with residents/Builders to advise on plans
- Interrogating current LLPG property systems and identifying duplicate entries;
- Creating new streets and addresses in the LLPG system (Local Land & property Gazetteer);
- Distributing new address information to internal and external contacts.
- Routinely reviewing address data back from the National Hub in the form of health checks

Historically the SNN function was the responsibility of a number of different departments;

- Corporate Information (2003-2008)
- Planning (2008 – 2016)
- Legal Governance from 1/9/16 to present

This now means that all address intelligence is managed in one place and is part of the Information management / governance aspect of Legal.

## Projections

According to the Planning Core Strategy Housing Trajectory (2006-2031) adopted by Council on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013 the following completions are projected;

Year	Completions projected	Income Projection
2018/19	496	~£10044
2019/20	488	~£9882
2020/21	497	~£10064
2021/22	428	~£8667
2022/23	508	~£10287

This increase in development activity is reflected in the numbers of Street Naming and Numbering Applications.

As set out above, the Power to charge falls under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003. This sets out that a local authority may charge for discretionary services, although Dacorum does not currently charge for this service, all other Hertfordshire Councils apply SNN charges.

The proposed new charges for Dacorum against other Hertfordshire Councils is shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Comparative SNN Costs in Hertfordshire**

Service	Watford	Three Rivers	St. Albans	Hertsmere	Welwyn Hatfield	East Herts	Stevenage	North Herts	Broxbourne	Dacorum (Proposed)
1 Plot	£60	£100	£250	£110	£150	£50	£95	£116	£54	£115
10 Plots	£170	£300	£450	£1000	£300	£200	£500	£1160	£216	£380
100 Plots	£565	£600	£1000	£985	£1040	£700	£2500	£2150	£756	£975
Amending House Name / Number	£60	£100	£100	£90	£50	£50	£75	£116	No Charge	£100

Table 2 – Proposed Charges to be introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 by the Council

Type of Charge	Fee (£)
Charge for registering new developments / properties (plots)	
1 Plot	£115
2 – 5 Plots	£180
6 – 25 Plots	£380
26 – 75 Plots	£400
76+ Plots	£855 plus £5 per additional plot
Plus Street Name Plate costs (see below)	Developer will need to contact our supplier
Charge for renaming a house or building name (after initial submission)	£100
Charge for amending a house number	£100
Division / Conversion of existing property or renumbering (that new postal numbers)	See Plot Charges above
New Street Nameplate	Contact Environmental Services Dept.
Naming of a building (e.g. Block of Flats)	£100
Renaming / Changing of an existing Street Name <sup>1</sup> where requested by residents and/or Town/Parish Council	£350 plus £25 per property

<sup>1</sup> On the proviso that 66% of the residents agree to the change

These proposed charges would fully recover the costs of delivering the discretionary elements of the SNN. The SNN charges would be reviewed annually to ensure continued compliance with section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 and best value for Dacorum residents.

### **Legal Implications**

The Council's powers and obligations in respect of Street Naming and Numbering are contained within the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 and Public Health Act 1925.

The Power to charge for discretionary services is contained within Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003. Discretionary services are those services that an authority has the power to but is not obliged to provide. An authority can only charge for such services, where the person who receives the service has agreed to its provision. The Act places the Council under a duty to secure that, taking one year with another, the income from charges for the services charged for, does not exceed the costs of its provision.

### **Conclusion**

The Council has a statutory duty to name and number streets, however it has the power to recoup the costs associated with the discretionary elements of the SNN service, which it historically has not done.

Given the significant increase in regeneration and development within the Borough, and the likely future levels of activity, it is now appropriate to ensure that the continued provision of this service is not to the detriment of other Council services.

The proposed SNN charges have been structured to ensure the recovery of the current cost of the SNN resources and systems so that we can offer value for money to residents and prospective developers.

These charges are to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 and will be reviewed annually.

## Portfolio Holder decision record sheet

### Appendix 1 – Derivation of Charges

Plots	GIS Officer Time / Rate	IS Team Leader Time / Rate	System Costs <sup>2</sup>	Totals (Rounded)
1 Plot	1.5 Hours / £53.00	0.5 Hours / £28.00	£33	£115.00
2-5 Plots	3 Hours / £106.00	0.75 Hours / £40.00	£33	£180.00
6 – 25 Plots	7 Hours / £250.00	1.75 Hours / £97.00	£33	£380.00
26 – 75 Plots	10 Hours / £335.00	2.25 Hours / £125.00	£33	£500.00
76 + Plots	18 Hours / £600.00	4 Hours / £222.00	£33	£855.00
Amend House Name / No.	1.5 Hours / £53.00	0.25 Hours / £13.00	£33	£100.00

<sup>2</sup> Annual Maintenance is £22K per year. Data Entry and Administration is factored at 0.15% of annual maintenance