

<b>Notice of:</b>	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
<b>Decision Number:</b>	PH22/2017
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	10 March 2017

## FEES AND CHARGES – GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider and approve the fees and charges for Democratic Governance and Legal Services for the financial year 2017/2018.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To retain the current fee of £20.00 for electoral certificates of residency with effect from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
- 2.2 To note the statutory fee for sale of the electoral register as set out in paragraph 5.2.
- 2.3 To agree the fees and charges for Legal Services as set out in Appendix A for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
- 2.4 To agree that the fees and charges for Legal Services can be reduced on the Published Officer decision of the Director of Governance and Partnerships, after consultation with the Leader of the Council.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The fee will cover administrative costs for certificates of residency and the charge for sale of the register is in line with legislation.
- 3.2 The fees for Legal Services have been complied based on the costs of providing the service and market conditions.
- 3.3a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.3b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

#### **4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priorities are:

“The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool.”

“Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.”

#### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 A certificate of residency is requested from time to time when an elector requires confirmation of their entry on the electoral register. The certificate can be used to assist the elector in gaining credit. The charge for the certificate is currently £20.00 which covers the cost of producing the certificate. It is not proposed to increase the charge, as the cost of providing the service has not increased.

5.2 By law, specified organisations (government departments and credit reference agencies) are entitled to a copy of the full or edited register, on payment of a statutory fee:

- in data format, £20 plus £1.50 for each 1,000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries) in it.
- in printed format, £10 plus £5 for each 1,000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries) in it.

5.3 The fees and charges for Legal Services have been reviewed and proposals are attached at Appendix A. They have been reviewed to be in line with other local authorities and the cost of providing the service. For some fees the charging criterion has been amended to create a simplification of rates. For all charges it has also been made explicit the maximum amount of hours for each fee along with a rate for additional hours. This change means that the charges accurately reflect the actual costs of providing services meaning that more complicated matters are not subsidised by more straightforward ones.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

#### **5.5 List of Appendices:**

Appendix A – proposed legal services charges.

#### **6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The proposed fees and charges reflect the costs of providing the service.

6.2 Under paragraphs 113 and 114 of the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), government departments and credit reference agencies are entitled to receive copies of the Electoral Register for a prescribed fee.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 The proposals are either based on the costs of resourcing the proposed charges or are set on a statutory basis.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 In terms of an equality impact analysis, the service has reflected on the impact of the proposed charges and is not aware of any adverse impacts on any particular groups by the proposals.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 The proposed fees aim to cover employee resources and time.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Not applicable.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None

**14.0 Key decision information:**

14.1 Is this a key decision? No

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: N/A

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

N/A

**15.0 Call-in information:**

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process?

No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed:

Date approved:

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1 None

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1 The Leader of the Council agreed the recommendations as outlined above namely:

1. To retain the current fee of £20.00 for electoral certificates of residency with effect from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
2. To note the statutory fee for sale of the electoral register as set out in paragraph
3. To agree the fees and charges for Legal Services as set out in Appendix A for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
4. To agree that the fees and charges for Legal Services can be reduced on the Public Officer decision of the Director of Governance and Partnerships, after consultation with the Leader of the Council.

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

10 March 2017

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

The fee will cover administrative costs for certificates of residency and the charge for sale of the register is in line with legislation.

The fees for Legal Services have been complied based on the costs of providing the service and market conditions.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

10 March 2017

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1