

Notice of:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
Decision Number:	PH25/ 2018
Relevant Officer:	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Decision:	27 February 2018

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 2018/2019.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To retain the current fee of £20.00 for electoral certificates of residency with effect from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

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 2018 to 31 March 2019.

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 compiled based on the costs of providing the service, market conditions and an increase for inflation costs factored in.

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” and “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: N/A

Date approved: N/A

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1 None.

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1 The Cabinet Member 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 2018 to 31 March 2019.
2. To note the statutory fee for sale of the electoral register as set out in paragraph 5.2.
3. To agree the fees and charges for Legal Services as set out in Appendix A for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.
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.

18.2 Date of Decision:

27 February 2018.

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.

19.1 Date Decision published:

27 February 2018.

20.0 Executive Members in attendance:

20.1

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1