

# NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Streetscene & Engineering Cabinet Board

*8<sup>th</sup> September 2017*

### Report of the Head of Streetcare

M. Roberts

#### **Matter for Decision.**

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

#### **Review of Pest Control Fees and Charges**

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To review the Pest Control Fees.

#### **Executive Summary**

- 2 Due to the need to achieve savings and in order to cover the cost of service delivery, it is proposed to increase all fees and charges in relation to the delivery of Pest Control. It is also proposed that the number of treatments per call be limited.
3. The service is a non- statutory function, however there are public health implications to be considered.
4. The existing “pricing structure” means that the Authority is currently heavily subsidising the service.
5. A recent comparison made with neighbouring Authorities confirmed that our fees and charges are at the lower end of the scale, with some Local Authorities throughout Wales not offering the service at all. There is also a significant discrepancy between our existing charges and the charges being levied by private contractors.
6. In view of the above there is a need to carry out a review of the Pest Control Service pricing structure.

## Background

7. As part of the Forward Financial Plan (FFP), the Environmental Health Service Transferred to the Environment Directorate in 2016. This led to the Pest Control Service being amalgamated with the Dog Warden Service within Streetcare. Changes have been made to the service to reduce costs to the Council but further progress needs to be made.
8. The current service is delivered by three Pest and Dog Control Enforcement Officers, the service is discretionary and is currently being subsidised.
9. Whilst the service is currently available to both domestic and commercial properties, the majority of the requests that we deal with are in domestic properties.
10. The current “one off charge” for treatment in a domestic property is £31 and includes a limited number of return visits in some cases and repeat visits until the problem is eradicated in some others. The existing charge for a commercial premise treatment is £62 per visit for a single treatment.
11. Where there may be a non- specific rodent problem in an area which usually requires the baiting of local sewers responsibility lies with Dwr Cymru (Welsh Water).
12. The Council’s service offers private companies/schools/industrial units and other council sections etc the option of setting up a contract for pest control treatments; the majority of our existing contracts are priced at £200. All contracted service users would receive four visits annually as a part of their contract plus any additional visits that may arise in respect of pest control throughout the year.
13. Service users have the option of booking appointments “on line” or via the Customer Service Section. The delivery of the service also includes an “out of hours” facility which is generally for advice for residents whereby the “on call officer” would contact the service user to discuss their problem, but also has the discretion to visit if the problem is deemed to be an emergency. Such visit is subject to an enhanced call out charge of £61.
14. In terms of the delivery of the service during the normal working day, the County Borough is divided into three areas, each with its

own dedicated officer. The new booking system allows for 10 visits per day to be allocated to each officer. The officer carries out visits and at the time of the treatment makes the necessary arrangements for any follow up visit should this be required, up to the level of any limit.

## Benchmarking Information

15. A comparison was carried out with neighbouring Authorities in terms of their service delivery for pest control. The results indicate that in general terms the service offered by Neath Port Talbot compares favourably with both the City & Council of Swansea and Bridgend County Borough Council who only offer a service during the normal working day. Neither Carmarthenshire County Council nor Powys County Council offer an “in house” pest control service. Comparisons were also made with private companies with some quotes for a three visit programme of treatment for any pest costing being in excess of £500. The average cost per visit by private companies was £50.

## Pest Control Comparison Charges

Authority/Company	Type of Pest	Charge	Comments
NPT - Residential	Rats/Mice	£31.00 – Max 5 visits – (£6.20 per visit)	
	Cockroaches/Bedbugs Fleas	£31.00	
	Wasps	£31.00	
	Ants	£31.00	
	Bees	N/A	Advice Only- £31 if visited Single Visit – Inside Only
NPT- Commercial	Rats/Mice Insects	£51.00 per visit +vat	Minimum of two visits

NPT- Contracts	All Pests	£200 annually	Unlimited.
Swansea cc - Residential	Rats/Cockroaches	Free	Free during Office Hours. £100.00 fee for Out of Hours Calls Including Weekends. Cannot guarantee when available.
	Bedbugs Mice	Free £62.00 – one off fee – (Max 5 visits)	Treatments start at £62 please contact for an estimate.
	Fleas/Wasps/Flies	£62.00 inc VAT	
Swansea cc – Commercial	Rats/Cockroaches	Start at £62.00. Further estimate for additional visits.	
	Bedbugs Fleas/Wasps/Flies	Not Available Start at £62.00 then estimate.	
Bridgend cc - Residential	Rats/Mice/Cockroaches /Bedbugs	Free	Office Hours Only
Bridgend cc - Residential	Wasps	Not Available	Advise using a Private Company
Bridgend cc - Commercial	Not Available		
Carmarthen cc	No Service Provided		
Powys cc	No Service Provided		
<b>Private Companies</b>			
Various			A sample of private contractors contacted; average cost is around £50.00 per visit.

## Proposal

16. Given the current financial constraints placed on the Authority it is proposed that the level of subsidy provided to this service is reduced through the following actions:

(1) From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 it is proposed that the fees and charges across the pest control service increase to a level that will allow the service to become more sustainable, as set out in the table below.

(2) That the number of treatments/revisits included within the fee be limited, as shown in the table below.

<b>Neath Port Talbot CBC</b>	<b>Type of Pest</b>	<b>Proposed Charges</b>	<b>Included</b>
NPT-Residential	Rats/Mice	£46.00	Up to 3 visits
	Cockroaches	£46.00	Up to 3 visits
	Bedbugs	£46.00	Up to 3 visits
	Fleas	£46.00	Per visit
	Wasps	£46.00	Per visit
	Ants	£46.00	Per visit
	Out of hours visit	£92.00	As above, however where more than 1 visit is included only the first visit will be an 'out of hours' visit.
NPT-Commercial	Rats/Mice/Insects.	£76.00 plus VAT	Per visit
NPT- Contracts	All pests	£300 annually	4 visits per year Plus up to 4 call outs during office times

## **Financial Impact**

17. Applying the proposed new charges from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 would reduce the service subsidy allowing the service to be more financially viable in 2017/18 and beyond.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

18. A Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the assessment it has been determined that this proposal does not require an Equalities Impact Assessment

## **Workforce Impact**

19. There are no anticipated workforce impacts associated with this report.

## **Legal Impact**

20. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

## **Risk Management**

21. There are no risk management issues associated with this report

## **Consultation**

22. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item

## **Recommendation(s)**

23. It is recommended that from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017, pest control service charges are increased, and the number of associated treatments/revisits is restricted, as detailed in the report.

## **Reason for Proposed Decision(s)**

24. To reduce the deficit in the delivery of the pest control service and to enable the service to become more sustainable in future years.

## **Implementation of Decision**

25. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

## **Officer Contact**

26. Mr Andrew Lewis, Waste and Neighbourhood Services Manager.  
Tel: 01639 686021 or e-mail: [a.lewis@npt.gov.uk](mailto:a.lewis@npt.gov.uk)