

NON EXEMPT

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

29 November 2017

Beach Huts Review

Operations, Environmental Services and Norse Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel

For Decision

Portfolio: Acting Leader and Cabinet Lead for Corporate Strategy, Devolution Finance and Norse

Key Decision No

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** At its meeting held on 7 November 2017, the Scrutiny Board considered a report (Appendix A) from the Operations, Environmental Services and Norse Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel, setting out its findings and recommendations following a review of the Beach Huts within the Borough.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1** It is recommended that Cabinet :

- 2.1.1** consider ways of improving the appearance and site layout of the beach huts;
- 2.1.2** consider providing new beach huts in the car park adjoining the Hayling Island Skatepark as shown in annex D of the attached report. Such development to be constructed under permitted development rights subject to public consultation and consultation with statutory consultees;
- 2.1.3.** endorse the view that any additional beach huts should infill within existing beach hut sites on Hayling Island;
- 2.1.4.** establish the market rate for a beach hut on Hayling Island and propose a strategy for achieving that fee before changing the current beach hut fees. The market rate should consider such factors as fees in equivalent beaches, the demand and rate of change of ownership;

- 2.1.5** reduce the Beach Hut Plot Transfer Licence Fee to £100 and review the level of the fee for next year;
- 2.1.6** endorse the principle that the Beach Hut Plot Transfer Licence Fee include other elements in addition to administrative costs;
- 2.1.7** agree that the facility to pay by equal instalment by direct debit over a six month period specified by Norse South East be offered to new and existing licensees with no administrative charge included or added;
- 2.1.8** agree that the instalment facility be made available for every year and not just this financial year;
- 2.1.9** agree that a short term lease be offered to beach hut plot hire licensees;
- 2.1.10** agree that the officers of the Council and Norse South East be requested to build a working relationship with the newly formed Beach Hut Association;
- 2.1.11** endorse a more robust management of non payment of fees; and
- 2.1.12** consider whether residents of the Borough should be given first choice of new beach huts.

3.0 Subject of Report

- 3.1** At its meeting held on 7 November 2017, the Scrutiny Board considered a report (Appendix A) from the Operations, Environmental Services and Norse Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel, setting out its findings and recommendations of the Panel's review of Beach Huts within the Borough.
- 3.2** The Board endorsed a majority of the recommendations of the Panel but were not prepared to recommend that the current plot hire fees be frozen for three years (including this year) (recommendation 2.1.4 of the report). The Board considered that, with the exception of the Beach Hut Plot Transfer Fee, beach hut fees should not be changed until the Cabinet had established the market rate for beach huts on Hayling Island and a strategy for achieving these fees. The market rate should consider such factors as fees on equivalent beaches, the demand and rate of change of ownership of beach huts.
- 3.3** In response to the concerns raised by a depute that the current fee structure of charging non residents more than residents encouraged the Council to let beach huts to non residents, the Board felt that the Cabinet should consider whether residents of the Borough should be given first choice of new beach huts.

5.0 Implications

5.1 STRATEGY

- 5.1.1 The recommendations seek to make the Council's beach hut provision financially sustainable
- 5.1.2 The review recognises that previous actions by Norse and the Council do not meet the standards for public service excellence and seeks to address the concerns raised.

5.2 LEGAL

- 5.2.1 The provision of a lease for beach hut owners has been approved by Legal Services. The terms and conditions and roll out of lease has not been considered as part of the review.

5.0 RESOURCES

- 5.1 The facility to enable instalment payment of the licence fee over a 6 month period represents additional administration and costs. The Panel were assured by officers these additional costs and the reduction of the transfer fee to £100 would be manageable and not have a significant financial impact on the Council.

6.0 STAKEHOLDERS

- 6.1 In total, 78 complaints were received from beach hut owners in relation to the rise in charges, introduction of a transfer of licence fee, removal of instalment payments and the communications between Norse and residents.
- 6.2 Hayling Island Ward Councillors and representatives of the Beach Huts Owners were invited to discuss these concerns with the Panel and the Board. The options raised by the Hayling Island Ward Councillors and representatives were considered by the Panel. All those invited to speak to the Panel were given the opportunity to comment on the final report and findings pack.

7.0 RISKS

- 7.1 A failure to address the concerns of the licensees will lead to further damage to the Council's reputation. The recommendations seek to redress the concerns raised.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Panel's Report

Background Papers:

[Findings Pack](#)

[Supplement to Findings Pack](#)

The Panel's report was agreed and signed off for publication by:

Head of Service: 15 November 2017

Head of Finance: 16 November 2017

Head of Legal: 15 November 2017

Contact: Councillor Jackie Branson

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