

Committee: COMMUNITY & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item

Date: 21 January 2010

6

Title: Pest Control Review Group

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Item for decision

Summary

- 1 The Pest Control Review Working Group met on the 23 November 2009 to consider the report of the Head of Environmental Health and determine the appropriate course of action for the future provision of pest control services within the district.
- 2 The working party considered 5 options for changes to the service and concluded that it should remain as an in-house service providing an essential public health safeguard but that the net cost to the Council of providing the service should be reduced to achieve as far as possible a cost neutral position within 2 – 3 years.
- 3 The working party supported the previous decision of the committee regarding the treatment for rats in domestic premises that this should remain a free service but that other charges should be raised wherever possible (benchmarking with other LA and private sector charges). In addition they concluded that the discretionary discount for people aged 65+ should be removed (in line with the draft corporate policy proposed to be introduced in 2010-11), but that those residents in receipt of Council administered benefits should receive a discount of 25%, thereby protecting those most at risk of financial hardship.
- 4 Other recommendations included increasing the number of contracts for treatments in commercial premises and increasing public awareness of the service.

Recommendation

- 5 The Committee is requested to endorse the following recommendations of the Pest control Review Working Group:
 - I. No charges are introduced for the treatment of rats in domestic premises for 2010/11.
 - II. that the pest control service remain in house and the recommended ways of reducing the net cost of providing the service are adopted, including:
 - Increasing the charges for, and number of, contracts with commercial premises;

- Removing the discretionary discount for people aged 65 and over (but retaining it for those in receipt of Council benefits)
- III. the effect of removing the concessions to those aged 65 and over, in terms of hardship, be monitored during the year 2010/11
- IV. appropriate steps be taken to increase public awareness of the service – for example in Uttlesford Life, parish magazines, the Phone Book and the Web
- V. Consideration is given to the practicability of introducing an extra charge for rapid response to requests for the pest control service.

Background Papers

- 6 The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
- Minutes of the Pest Control Review Working Group held on 23 NOVEMBER 2009
<http://cmis.uttlesforddc.gov.uk/CmiswebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=16039>

Impact

7

Communication/Consultation	Review included Member Task group
Community Safety	No direct implication
Equalities	Those in greatest financial need will continue to receive a discounted service
Finance	Moves service towards cost recovery
Health and Safety	None
Legal implications/Human Rights	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	Non specific
Workforce/Workplace	Pest control officers contributed to the review

Situation

8. Provides continuation of a well received frontline service while reducing the financial cost to the Council.

Risk Analysis

9

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Income stream does not increase	2 higher charges may deter some service users	2 net cost is not reduced	Monitoring of income stream to assess uptake Increased effort into securing commercial contracts and advertising of service

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.