

Maidstone Borough Council

External Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 21 April 2009

Call-In: Review of Fees and Charges for Hotfoot 2009-10

Report of: Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer

1. Background

- 1.1. Councillors FitzGerald and Batt have called-in the decision of the Cabinet Member for Community Services with regard to "Review of Fees and Charges for Hotfoot 2009-10".
- 1.2. In order to assist Members in their consideration of this issue the following documents have been attached to this agenda:

Document
Call-in Form
<i>Report for Decision: Review of Fees and Charges for Hotfoot 2009-10</i>
<i>Record of Decision of the Cabinet Member for Environment: Review of Fees and Charges for Hotfoot 2009-10</i>

- 1.3. The Cabinet Member for Community Services, Councillor Marion Ring, and the Sports, Play and Youth Development Manager, Jacqueline Bryden will be in attendance at the meeting for interview.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The reasons for calling-in the Cabinet Member's decision are stated as:

"We do not believe that the price rise of 21% can be justified in the current climate. Whilst we recognise the fact that concessions are provided we feel that the decision will lead to families just outside of the qualification parameters for concessions will be unable to afford the high increase. There is a lack of financial evidence within the report and furthermore we are concerned at the lack of depth to the evidence submitted in the report as it relies entirely on a comparison with one other borough."

- 2.2. The Committee should consider the decision of the Cabinet Member against the above reason.
- 2.3. Having considered the call-in the Committee has three options for action:

- (i) **Take no action** – the decision will be implemented as taken by the Cabinet Member on 3 April 2009.
- (ii) **Refer to the Cabinet Member**– the comments of the Committee will be referred to the Cabinet Member for reconsideration of the decision within five working days, after which a final decision will be made.
- (iii) **Refer to Council** – the comments of the Committee and decision of the Cabinet Member will be referred to Council. If Council does not object to the Cabinet Member’s decision it will be implemented. If Council does object, it does not have power to make a decision unless the Cabinet Member’s decision is against the policy framework or contrary to or inconsistent with the budget. Unless that is the case, Council will refer its comments back to the Cabinet Member for reconsideration of the decision within five working days, after which a final decision will be made.

3. Reasons for Urgency

- 3.1 Call-ins of Cabinet decisions must be heard within ten working days of the expiry of the call-in period. The completed call-in form was received by the Overview and Scrutiny Partnership Manager on 14 April 2009 and the call-in period expired on 14 April 2009. The Chair of the External Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed to take the call-in at the meeting of the Committee on 21 April 2009.