

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION
BY**

COUNTY COUNCILLOR AVRIL YORK

(PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REGENERATION AND PLANNING)
Date: January 2015

REPORT AUTHOR: Heather Jones, Professional Lead Building Control

SUBJECT: Street Name Plates Maintenance & Repair
Public Health Act 1925 – Section 17-19

REPORT FOR: Decision

Summary

- 1.0 The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development has delegated powers to approve changes in Building Control, based on the recommendations from the Head of Service (agreed by the Board on 28/09/2010).
- 1.2 Following a review of costs for replacement street name plates this financial year (where 50% of the budget – the annual budget for 2014 is £6,860.00 per annum - has been committed within the first five months of the financial year) it is obvious that if building control continues to meet all the demands received within the department it is likely the budget will all be committed by month nine. Therefore any requests received after that date will not be fulfilled.
- 1.3 The spend on replacement street name plates over the last five years has amounted to more than £64,000 for which the Building Control service area bears the cost. Requests come from a number of sources: members of the public, Town Councils, internal highways staff and councillors causing volatility within the budget as can be seen in the table below.

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Grand Total
£14,569.19	£15,469.50	£7,177.06	£19,311.99	£8,245.28	£64,773.02

- 1.4 Informal discussions with authorities such as Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion would confirm the budget in Powys is substantially higher than in other authorities which appear to be in the region of £2,000 to £3,000 per annum. The budget for Powys in 2014 is £6,860.00, the cost per sign ranges from £150 to £400 including installation costs. It is proposed that this budget will be reviewed in 2015/16 as part of the strategy for reviewing all fees, charges and budgets for the Building Control Service.
- 1.5 Informal discussions with other Welsh authorities also confirm the responsibility of street signage generally lies within the Highways Service. It is proposed Building Control seek to review whether it is best placed to provide this service as part of the budget review in 2015/16.

Proposal

Replacement / New Signs

- 2.0 It is proposed to limit the replacement of street signage to the maximum amount in the budget and only in the event there is budget remaining at the end of a financial year this will be utilised for any request for new signage on existing streets. All replacement requests will be maintained on a list and dealt with in date order but signs that pose a health and safety risk assessed by the Building Control Surveyors on an area basis and such signs will then be replaced on a first come first served as the budget allows.
- 2.1 Replacement requests will be investigated and street name plates will only be replaced if deemed essential.
- 2.2 Requests will not be supported for street nameplates to be replaced on streets where there is already one street nameplate present.
- 2.3 Requests for replacement street nameplates where they have been vandalised or defaced will result in a full investigation in the first instance to try and recover the costs as per current legislation.

The above policies are in line with other Authorities

- 2.4 It is intended to undertake consultation with the local Town or Community Council with a view that they finance the supply and installation costs of any new signage, although building control can arrange for the sign to be erected on their behalf if required. If new signage has been erected at the expense of a local Town or Community Council, maintenance and repair will revert to Powys County Council. This would bring us in line with other Authorities such as Mid Suffolk in provision of **new** signage on existing streets, estates and developments.
- 2.5 It should be noted signage on new developments is the responsibility of the developer and is therefore excluded from this report.

Powys Change Plan

The proposal relates to the One Powys plan as it will ensure the Building Control service remains financially in control, fit for purpose and supports the ethos of stronger, safer and economically viable communities.

Options Considered/Available

Options include:

1. Implementing the changes detailed in the Proposal section of this report in order to more properly control expenditure for replacement street sign plates in Powys.
2. To maintain the status quo and be subject to additional budget pressures which are not controlled and therefore will not be fulfilled within a reasonable time period.
3. Provide further funding to support the street naming budget within the Building Control Service whatever its volatility.

Preferred Choice and Reasons

To implement option one above. The Council is currently seeking ways to diminish its spending and is not therefore in a position to increase a budget that is volatile due to a lack of policy options. The status quo cannot be maintained as the lack of policy restraint makes the budget volatile. Option one provides a transparent policy framework that will ensure a fairer distribution of limited resources.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

The proposal supports the existing policy in regard to the Welsh language aspect of street signage.

Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

The proposal does not have any impact in the context of securing the safety of protection of children and young people.

Local Member(s)

The proposal will apply with equal force across the whole County.

Other Front Line Services

The proposal has no implication on front line services.

Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, BPU)

Legal –Colin Edwards it will bring us in line with neighbouring authorities in both Wales and England and would seem reasonable considering the current financial status of the authority and the applicable legislation.

Extract from legislation:

19 Indication of name of street.

- (1) *The urban authority shall cause the name of every street to be painted, or otherwise marked, in a conspicuous position on any house, building or erection in or near the street, and shall from time to time alter or renew such inscription of the name of any street, if and when the name of the street is altered or the inscription becomes illegible.*
- (2) *If any person . . . , pulls down . . . any inscription of the name of a street which has lawfully been set up, or sets up in any street any name different from the name lawfully given to the street, or places or affixes any notice or advertisement within twelve inches of any name of a street marked on a house, building, or erection in pursuance of this section, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding [level 1 on the standard scale] and to a daily penalty not exceeding [£1].*

Comments from other officers:

Finance comment:-

Finance have noted the information contained within the report. It is essential that costs are kept within budget and therefore agree with the recommendation of a priority list and also encourage liaison with the Community Councils, as is the case in other areas, to adopt the provision of signage where appropriate and therefore alleviate some of the burden on the Authority. We also need to ensure that the current cost of provision compared with other Authorities is providing value for money and that the way we deliver the service is the most cost effective option.

Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

Not applicable.

Corporate Communications

Communications Comment: No proactive communication action required.

Statutory Officers

The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments made by Finance.

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: " I have nothing to add to the report".

Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

The view of the Monitoring Officer is that:

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
To implement the changes set out in the Proposal section of the report.	To ensure the service remains sustainable and to bring Powys County Council in line with other authorities.

Relevant Policy (ies):	
Within Policy:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	ALL
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Cllr John Powell
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	20 January 2015

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Background Papers used to prepare Report:

CABINET REPORT TEMPLATE VERSION 3