PRESENT:

Councillors Pacey-Day and Helen Walton

Sean Lawson (Head of Environmental Services), Mannie Ketley (Head of Resources), Chris Blundell (Financial Services Manager), Paul Ansell (Scrutiny and Policy Officer) and

Veronika Beckova (Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer)

6. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

A decision on a chairman for the 2014/15 municipal year was deferred until the next meeting. Councillor Pacey-Day took the chair for this meeting.

7. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Mrs Parker and Mrs Simpson-Vince.

8. SKELETON FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

The Scrutiny and Policy Officer presented a briefing paper on the skeleton fees and charges policy (Agenda Item 5). The skeleton policy included two checklists. The first of these was for use in choosing the approach to charging in each service, ranging from “cost recovery” to “free”. It was suggested that the “approach” column should be moved to the left of the “description of service” column. Apart from this, the use of a table along these lines was agreed.

The second checklist would be used in the “challenging” stage of the process. This posed questions that could be asked when inviting service managers to justify their choice of approach.

Both of these checklists were to be regarded as drafts that would be amended during the course of the review and in the course of their use.

The following additional comments were made:

- Any system put in place should be simple to follow and administratively easy.
- Some form of classification of services provided is in use but requires formalising through a policy to urge service managers to check.
- Most fees and charges are set on an ad-hoc basis. Certain services have informal policies in place. For example, some environmental services (e.g. services of public health significance) provided by the council are subject to a minimal charge.
The members highlighted the importance of understanding the full cost of recovery (staff, building, energy costs, etc).

The importance of asking the right questions was also highlighted by the members as stated in the briefing paper:

- What does the council aim to achieve by providing the service?
- Should we be providing the service?

During the discussion, the following questions were raised:

*Is the new leisure centre subsidized?*

No. In fact, the council receives a return on it from the operator.

*Have fees at the Crematorium changed since its opening?*

A pricing policy is being developed.

9. **BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING – 19 NOVEMBER 2014**

It was agreed that the task group would test the checklists would in relation to the following services:

- Cemeteries
- Sports pitches
- Bulky waste – household collections
- Trade waste collection

The Head of Environmental Services will attend the next meeting to represent these services, possibly with other service managers.