

# Public Document Pack

## SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Meeting of Public Protection Working Party

**Date: Tuesday, 8th June, 2021**

**Place: Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:** Councillor M Terry (Chair)  
Councillors M Berry, K Buck\*, M Dent, J Warren and P Wexham

\*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.

**In Attendance:** E Butler, L Harper and S Tautz

**Start/End Time:** 6.00 pm - 6.40 pm

#### **1 Apologies for Absence & Substitutions**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillor D Garston (substitute Councillor K Buck) and Councillor D Nelson (no substitute).

#### **2 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made by members of the Working Party.

#### **3 Notice of Motion - Death Certificate Compassionate Fund**

The Working Party considered a report of the Executive Director (Transformation) in response to a Notice of Motion referred by the Council at its meeting on 4 March 2021, concerning the establishment of a Death Certificate Compassionate Fund to cover the cost of replacement death certificates.

The Working Party was advised that the Coronavirus Act 2020 had introduced a temporary change in the law from March 2020 that provided for death registration to be completed by telephone to comply with the social distancing requirements of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside arrangements for the issue of death certificates by postal services. Members noted that some postal services attracted an additional cost to the statutory fee (£11.00) for the issue of each death certificate set by the General Register Office and that the Council was unable to refund the cost of certificates that were lost in the postal system or for which receipt was delayed as a result of the impact of the pandemic, or to waive the fee for the issue of replacement certificates in such circumstances.

Councillors asked a number of questions in relation to current arrangements for the registration of a death and the issue of death certificates, which were responded to by officers.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Notice of Motion seeking the establishment of a Death Certificate Compassionate Fund, be noted.

- (2) That the Cabinet be recommended to initiate the establishment of an appropriate Death Certificate Compassionate Fund.
- (3) That the Cabinet be recommended that support arising from the proposed Death Certificate Compassionate Fund only be available to applicants in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction, or otherwise at the discretion of the Council's Registrars on a case-by-case basis.
- (4) That, in considering the detail and application criteria of the proposed Death Certificate Compassionate Fund, the Cabinet also receive full details of the estimated cost and financial implications of the operation of the Fund.

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_