

**DRAFT TEMPLATE**

Checklist of questions all managers will need to consider when setting income Charges.

1. Do we need to provide this service at all and if not please explain why we are providing it?

Yes. The EPS currently provides a free statutory service and also provides charged assessment and consultation services which enable schools to understand and meet their pupils' needs more effectively.

2. Is this a new charge to be considered or an amendment/change to our existing charging policy?

The proposed change is from partial to full cost recovery.

3. Is the charge set by Statute?

No the charge however is at market value.

4. Is the level of charge set by Statute?

No

5. If 3 & 4 above are not applicable, is the proposed charge based on full cost recovery and if not please specify why not

➤ Political

➤ Mean Tested

➤ Statutory

The EPS is currently required to provide a statutory service at no charge to schools.

➤ Negative impact on the environment

## ➤ Other – please specify

## 6. Who uses the service and when, and can they go elsewhere?

Schools make referrals to the EPS when they have concerns about the special educational needs of their pupils. They can access independent educational psychologists for non- statutory work. Independent advice will often be accessed from psychologists who will have no understanding of the context of Bromley schools and therefore will not have the “inside knowledge” of what is available locally.

## 7. What impact will any change in charging have on the service?

The current relationship with schools may change and EPs may find that they need to accept referrals based on school request rather than agreed criteria.

## 8. Will consultation need to be undertaken out and how long will this take?

## 9. Is there evidence that there will be a disproportionate impact on some Customer groups? If yes a full equality impact assessment will need to be undertaken

There have been variations in the rate of referral to the EPS across different schools, although this is still subject to change as schools adapt to the new system. This could indicate that some schools may not be referring pupils who they might have referred before charges were introduced.

## 10. How acceptable are the proposals to the public?

There has been a recent complaint by a school and a Cllr regarding not enough services being available for schools. There is a risk of this increasing.

## 11. Is the charge subject to VAT? (if you are not sure, please seek advice from the VAT Officer in Finance)

12. Impact on service demand – if demand increases/falls, can the Council adjust its provision accordingly?

Level of staffing may be harder to predict and service demand may vary at different times of the year. Less of this intervention to maintain pupils in schools and other provisions may result in higher exclusion levels and lower identification of a range of needs.

13. Which services do we offer concessions on? Please state if this happens in your area.

Statutory services are currently provided at no cost.

### Benchmarking

14. Are third party commercial providers operating similar services in competition with the council?

- 14b If yes, what/how do our charges compare and why are they different?

The Bromley EPS service charges were set at a competitive level, slightly below some local providers..

15. Is there a planned rate of increase for charges (above inflation) and how frequently are charges increased above inflation?

Not currently planned but will need to be revisited.

- 15b. Is member approval needed for new charges or increases above inflation (scheme of delegation allows chief officers to increase by inflation only, unless specifically agreed)?

Yes

- 15c. Is this consistent with third party commercial providers?

16. How do charges compare to:

- Similar councils?
- Neighbouring councils?
- Other service providers?
- How are charges structured, and why?
  
- How and when will we evaluate the impact of charges?
- What data will we need?
- Can we collect this data cost effectively?
- When should we next review our approach?

### **Payment Methods**

17. Income collection method – does it advantage/disadvantage or encourage/discourage use?

- a) Is a prompt/advance payment discount appropriate/desirable?
- b) Is the administrative process involved economic and/or efficient?

### **Other**

18. Please identify if there are any risks or unintended consequences as a result of the proposals.

Extending the charge to all EPS services could result in inequity across schools with some buying in services much more frequently than others. This could mean that some pupils who currently have access to the service may not in the future.

It is also possible that schools will become more subject to parental pressure when making referrals rather than adhering to previously agreed referral criteria. This could result in EPs seeing pupils at lower levels of need whilst more needy pupils are not referred.

The important relationship between schools and EPs may change with the introduction of a commercial dimension.