

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: Monday 17 January 2021

Report author: Head of Customer Experience

Title: Street Naming and Numbering policy

1.0 Background

1.1. Watford Borough Council has the legal responsibility for the naming and numbering of streets and properties within the borough.

1.2. The Council's new Street Naming and Numbering policy (see Appendix 1) has been developed for the following reasons:

- The recommendation from the council's Overview and Scrutiny BAME task group that the Council's street naming and numbering policy supports the Council's ambition that the town's street and building names reflect our town and its history and rich diversity.
- To provide guidance to developers, businesses and residents who undertake property development and address changes and ensure that the function for maintaining the addresses within the borough is carried out to the highest standard.

2.0 Risks

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <small>(treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)</small>	Risk Rating <small>(combination of severity and likelihood)</small>
Not having an approved policy.	This could impact on good customer service, inconsistency in the application of Street Naming and Numbering protocols and could leave the Council at risk of challenge in relation to the discretionary fee charges it makes for the street naming and numbering service.	Formally adopt the policy and ensure that it is periodically reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose.	Treat	4

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1. Cabinet to approve the new Street Naming and Numbering policy for adoption.

Further information:

Danielle Negrello
danielle.negrello@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by:

Andrew Cox, Group Head of Transformation

4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1. Watford Borough Council (WBC) has the legal responsibility for the naming and numbering of streets and properties within the borough. The Council has the discretion to make decisions as to the naming of streets and the numbering of properties. The authority has the power to approve or reject property addresses submitted by developers or the general public, or prescribe its own addressing schemes.
- 4.2. The legislation under which street name and numbering is carried out at WBC is:
- Public Health Act 1925 - Section 17: Notice to urban authority before street is named <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/15-16/71/section/17>
 - Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 - Section 64: Houses to be numbered and streets named and Section 65: Numbers of houses to be renewed by occupiers <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/10-11/34>
 - Public Health Act Amendment Act 1907 Section 21: Power to alter names of streets <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Edw7/7/53>
- 4.3. Section 93 Local Government Act 2003 gives the council the power to charge for the street naming and numbering service. The current charges can be found on our website <https://www.watford.gov.uk/streetnamenumber>. These charges are reviewed annually.
- 4.4. All elements of an address, with the exception of postcode and post town, are defined by the council. Allocation of postcodes is managed by Royal Mail and must be confirmed by them. The maintenance of postcode information, and any future change to individual postcodes or postcode sectors, is the responsibility of Royal Mail.
- 4.5. The objective of the street naming and numbering service is to provide a unique and unambiguous address for every property within the borough, to ensure that:

- Emergency Services can find a property quickly
 - Mail is delivered efficiently
 - Residents and visitors can easily find their way around the town
- 4.6. Many legal transactions associated with properties are delayed until they can be identified by street names and/or numbers. For instance, utilities suppliers will not normally connect their services until such time as premises have been given a formal postal address.
- 4.7. The aim of the Street Naming and Numbering Policy is to set out the correct process, rules and fees for the following activities within Watford:
- Street Naming – providing a street name to a new street or an existing street with no name;
 - Property numbering – providing numbers to plots, in-fills (properties built between existing houses or in the grounds of), property conversions and commercial premises;
 - Re-naming existing streets – this is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the Emergency Services;
 - Re-numbering existing properties and buildings – this is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the Emergency Services and the inclusion of additional development;
 - Allocating house numbers to properties that only have a house name – this function is carried out largely for public safety reasons and in consultation with the Emergency Services;
 - Any other projects put forward at the discretion of the Authority Address Custodian.

Implications

5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the income raised from the policy is within existing budgets.

5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken for this report. The key findings of the assessment are:

The potential positive effects of the new policy are:

- There will be significant emphasis placed on introducing new street and block names that reflect Watford's diversity and heritage.

The potential negative impacts of not having this policy in place would be:

- The potential for names that are not culturally or ethnically sensitive or that fail to commensurately reflect the diversity and heritage of Watford inadvertently being put forward as new street or block names.

Full details can be found in See Appendix 2.

5.3.2 Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 There are no staffing implications from the proposals in this report.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications from the proposals in this report.

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 Having an approved street naming and numbering policy ensures that emergency services can quickly locate properties and other locations within the borough in an emergency.

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 There are no sustainability implications from the proposals in this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Watford Borough Council Street Naming and Numbering Policy

Appendix 2 – Street Naming and Numbering Policy EIA

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.