

By email to local authority early adopters

Date: 11th August 2016

Dear colleague

Cost recovery for requested FHRs re-visits

Thank you for expressing an interest in the early adoption of the cost recovery for FHRs requested re-visits. You have been selected as one of the local authorities to be an 'early adopter'.

Legal advice received by the FSA indicates that the [Localism Act 2011](#) gives a legal basis for the recovery of costs for non-statutory services requested/agreed to by businesses and that this would allow for the recovery of costs for providing FHRs requested re-inspections in England. Before you proceed with adopting this approach we would advise that you seek the input of your own legal team.

We appreciate that the current use of cost recovery may vary from authority to authority. Some authorities have already introduced cost recovery (for other services) and have established processes in place, whereas for others this will be new and the introduction may take a little longer. Regardless of the position at your authority we would encourage you to take part.

The intention is to collect information from early adopters for the twelve weeks from 15th August – 7th November 2016 (inclusive). We will review this information and use it to inform the wider roll-out, anticipated to take place in early 2017.

If you are only able to introduce cost recovery near to, or even some time after 7th November 2016, your experiences and feedback will be really useful. You will wish to note that we **would not** expect early adopters to pause or stop cost recovery at the end of October so your efforts to adopt this approach policy would certainly not be lost

What you will need to do

The document '*Cost recovery for FHRs requested re-inspections a guide for early adopters*' contains details of what you'll need to do to introduce cost recovery and a checklist of the information we'd like you to provide. This includes:

- 1) Seeking agreement from your legal department.
- 2) Calculating the costs of carrying out the requested revisits. The guidance contains details of the processes considered by LAs in Wales when calculating these costs, which you can use as a guide;
- 3) Securing the necessary agreement from within your authority for implementing cost recovery. This may include getting agreement from the portfolio holder, elected members and/or relevant committees;

- 4) Completing the cost calculation for your authority on the worksheet 'Cost calculation' of the excel file 'FHRs cost recovery for requested revisits - LA feedback questionnaire' provided in the email and returning this to us;
- 5) Putting in place the necessary processes to collect the costs;
- 6) Amending the standard letters issued to businesses to indicate the cost charged and the options for payment. Templates can be found in appendix 2 of the document 'Cost recovery for FHRs requested re-inspections a guide for early adopters'; and
- 7) Feeding back your experiences using the 'Feedback questionnaire' in the excel file 'FHRs cost recovery for requested revisits - LA feedback questionnaire'.

If you do experience any issues, have any queries or comments on the guidance or what you do, please do not hesitate to get in touch as soon as these arise so that we can discuss. My contact details can be found in the footer of this letter.

Thanks once again for your participation.

Yours sincerely

Michael Harding
Food Hygiene Rating Team