



Agenda

Policy, Finance and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 22 March 2016 at 7.00 pm
Council Chamber - Town Hall

Membership (Quorum-3)

Cllrs Mrs McKinlay (Chair), Kerlake (Vice-Chair), Aspinell, Barrett, Clark, Hirst, Hossack, Parker and Russell

Agenda Item	Item	Wards(s) Affected	Page No
1.	Apologies for Absence		
2.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting		5 - 14
3.	Transfer of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Shops to the General Fund		15 - 22
4.	Hutton Community Centre - Report to follow	Hutton North	
5.	Response to consultation on new Thames Crossing - Report to follow		
6.	Community Alarms Service		23 - 30
7.	Urgent Business		

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. L. R. B.' with a large, sweeping underline.

Head of Paid Service

Town Hall
Brentwood, Essex
14.03.2016

Information for Members

Substitutes

The names of substitutes shall be announced at the start of the meeting by the Chair and the substitution shall cease at the end of the meeting.

Where substitution is permitted, substitutes for quasi judicial/regulatory committees must be drawn from Members who have received training in quasi- judicial/regulatory decision making. If a casual vacancy occurs on a quasi judicial/regulatory committee it will not be filled until the nominated member has been trained.

Rights to Attend and Speak

Any Members may attend any Committee to which these procedure rules apply.

A Member who is not a member of the Committee may speak at the meeting. The Member may speak at the Chair's discretion, it being the expectation that a Member will be allowed to speak on a ward matter.

Members requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting.

Point of Order/ Personal explanation/ Point of Information

Point of Order

A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Chair will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Procedure Rules or the law. The Member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which they consider it has been broken. The ruling of the Chair on the point of order will be final.

Personal Explanation

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation must relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate, or outside of the meeting. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

Point of Information or clarification

A point of information or clarification must relate to the matter being debated. If a Member wishes to raise a point of information, he/she must first seek the permission of the Chair. The Member must specify the nature of the information he/she wishes to provide and its importance to the current debate. If the Chair gives his/her permission, the Member will give the additional information succinctly. Points of Information or clarification should be used in exceptional circumstances and should not be used to interrupt other speakers or to make a further speech when he/she has already spoken during the debate. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a point of information or clarification will be final.

Information for Members of the Public

Access to Information and Meetings

You have the right to attend all meetings of the Council and Committees. You also have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available at www.brentwood.gov.uk.

Webcasts

All of the Council's meetings are webcast, except where it is necessary for the items of business to be considered in private session (please see below).

If you are seated in the public area of the Council Chamber, it is likely that your image will be captured by the recording cameras and this will result in your image becoming part of the broadcast. This may infringe your Human Rights and if you wish to avoid this, you can sit in the upper public gallery of the Council Chamber.

Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to make recordings, these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

If you wish to record the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment then please contact the Communications Team before the meeting.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

Private Session

Occasionally meetings will need to discuss some of its business in private. This can only happen on a limited range of issues, which are set by law. When a Committee does so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

modern.gov app

View upcoming public committee documents on your Apple or Android device with the free modern.gov app.

Access

There is wheelchair access to the Town Hall from the Main Entrance. There is an induction loop in the Council Chamber.

Evacuation Procedures

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point in the North Front Car Park.



Minutes

Policy, Finance and Resources Committee Tuesday, 16th February, 2016

Attendance

Cllr Mrs McKinlay (Chair)	Cllr Clark
Cllr Kerlake (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Hirst
Cllr Aspinell	Cllr Parker
Cllr Barrett	Cllr Russell

Apologies

Cllr Hossack

Substitute Present

Cllr Poppy

Also Present

Cllr Kendall
Cllr McCheyne
Cllr Mynott
Cllr Mrs Pound
Cllr Tee

Officers Present

Helen Gregory	- Interim Head of Housing
Chris Leslie	- Finance Director
Ramesh Prashar	- Financial Services Manager
Philip Ruck	- Head of Paid Service
Jean Sharp	- Governance and Member Support Officer
Daniel Toohey	- Monitoring Officer
David Wellings	- Corporate Health & Safety Advisor

333. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Hossack.

334. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 15 December 2015 were approved as a true record.

335. Service Delivery Hub - Update Position

The report before Members provided a status report on the present position of the Service Delivery Hub (SDH). The SDH was key to improving the occupancy of the Town Hall, provided a centre of excellence for customer service for the residents and users of the Town Hall whilst at the same time reducing the cost to the Council of operating in the Town Hall.

Further information was provided within the report on the work which would result in the potential of some early adopters who would relocate to the Town Hall prior to the completion of the SDH project.

Members proposed that groups who had initially expressed an interest in moving into the Town Hall but who would not now be able to be accommodated should be advised of the progression of the Service Delivery Hub.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay MOVED and Cllr Kerlake SECONDED an amended recommendation and following a discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED

That approval is given to the Head of Paid Service and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of P, F & R and group leaders to finalise the detailed negotiations for the Service Delivery Hub to co-locate the interested parties.

(Cllr Clark declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a trustee of the Citizen's Advice Bureau).

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

This would enable effective decision making to the point where wider Member consideration was required.

336. Approval for Restructures in Service Areas

The report requested the approval of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee to allow the Head of Paid Service to conduct and implement restructures in service areas of the Council. The Council's Organisational Change Policy made it clear that approval was sought from Members prior to restructuring being carried out at a senior level of the organisation.

The budget approved in June 2015, required a further saving of £100,000 to be made in the Senior Management Team, also known as the Corporate Leadership Board (CLB). Thus a restructure of this area was required.

If agreed, the proposed restructures would be implemented as soon as possible in accordance with agreed policy and procedure.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay MOVED and Cllr Kerslake SECONDED the recommendations in the report and following a discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- 1. The Head of Paid Service be granted delegated authority to undertake, manage, and implement the restructure of the Corporate Leadership Board (CLB) provided that consultation takes place with the Leaders of all political groups (or in their absence, their appointed deputies). Such consultation shall include meetings with the said Leaders and shall include advice as to progress.**
- 2. The PFR committee notes that the Head of Paid Service already has the authority to implement restructures below CLB level but will consult with Leaders of all political groups (or in their absence, their appointed deputies) as to progress and impact on the organisation.**

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable the Council to align its available resources with its service delivery model and to meet its operational budget.

337. Shared Service Options

Members were reminded that the Council was continuously looking for opportunities to protect front line services in the face of a challenging financial environment. Economies of scale, sharing best practise and efficiency gains from combining resources with nearby authorities were being considered by most Councils.

The report recommended that officers provide a business case for further consideration by Members.

Cllr Parker MOVED and Cllr Russell SECONDED the recommendation in the report and following a discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That Members agree to the Head of Paid Service preparing a business case incorporating options for combining the delivery of our public

services with other Councils which will be brought back to Members for consideration.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To investigate how transforming service delivery might assist in maintaining or enhancing the local delivery of these services whilst saving costs through efficiency gains and economies of scale. Added value benefits of such an arrangement would be those from sharing best practice with other Authorities together with increased capacity and resilience.

338. Revised Health and Safety Policy

The Health and Safety Policy had been revised as required under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was appended to the report for Members' information. It was reflective of current organisational and management structures within the Authority. The Health and Safety Policy had been passed to Corporate Leadership Board and all Health and Safety Committee members for comment and review in accordance with its conditions.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay MOVED and Cllr Kerslake SECONDED the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That the revised Health and Safety Policy (February 2016) be approved.

Reason for Recommendation

A review and revision of the Council's health and safety policy was required to ensure that it reflected the organisation arrangements, structure and health and safety management system. This timely revision and endorsement would enable the Council to continue its commitment to develop the health and safety culture and management system of the organisation and fulfil its legal duty.

339. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2016/17

The report considered the Medium Term Financial Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and included results of the tenant consultation and the consideration of the Environment & Housing Management Committee concerning the proposed rent charges for 2016/17.

Cllr Hirst MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendations in the report and following a discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was RESOLVED that the Committee recommends to Ordinary Council on 2 March 2016:

1. To approve the HRA Business Plan for 2016/17 and beyond as shown in Appendix 3 of the report.
2. To agree a 1% decrease in rents for General Need Housing for 2016/17 and for the following 3 years.
3. To agree to freeze the rents for Supported Housing for 2016/17 and then apply a 1% decrease for the following 3 years as outlined in paragraph 4.18 of the report
4. To agree to freeze the proposed Service Charges for 2016/17 for tenants.
5. To agree to apply the formula rent to all new tenancies from April 2016/17.
6. To agree the Fees and Charges proposed at Environment and Housing Management Committee on 9 December 2015 (attached to the report as Appendix 1).
7. To note the Section 151 Officer's Assurance Statement on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of the reserves.
(Cllr Barrett declared a pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of being a leaseholder of a Council property and advised that the Monitoring Officer had granted a dispensation so that he could take part in the discussion but not vote).

Reasons for Recommendation

Effective financial management underpins all of the priorities for the Council.

The Council is required to compile a budget which collates all the income and expenditure relating to the Council's housing stock. The Council is also required to agree the rent levels and notify tenants of any changes to their rents.

340. General Fund Budget 2016/17

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) considered by Policy, Finance and Resources Committee on 15 December 2015 gave Members an update on the various significant changes that would impact on the Council's financial position following announcements made since the General Election in May 2015 and the Autumn Statement in November 2015. Particular issues highlighted, relevant to the General Fund, included the phasing out of the Revenue Support Grant, changes to the New Homes Bonus & the Business Rates Retention schemes and the creation of Combined Authorities.

The fundamental principles of the Council's MTFP were to:

- (i) Maintain a sustainable financial position against a background of unprecedented financial uncertainty and reduced government funding, including the delivery of efficiency targets.

- (ii) Support the vision of our Borough through appropriate identification of resources required to deliver the key priorities outlined in the 'Vision for Brentwood'.
- (iii) Maximise opportunities and mitigate risks associated with the fundamental change to the way in which local government was financed.

The report before Members considered:

- (i) The General Fund budget proposals for 2016/17 to 2018/19.
- (ii) The Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2018/19.
- (iii) The Treasury Management & Investment Strategy for 2016/17.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay MOVED and Cllr Kerslake SECONDED the recommendations subject to the addition of a clause and following a full discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED that the Committee recommends to Council on 2 March 2016:

- 1. To approve the General Fund - Revised MTFP for 2016/17 as shown in Table 8 at paragraph 5.8 which includes the proposed savings targets as shown in Table 7 at paragraph 5.7 of this report.**
- 2. To approve the proposed Capital Programme and Funding totalling £23.7 million for 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in Tables 13 and 14 of this report.**
- 3. To approve the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy as set out in Section 10 of this report.**
- 4. To note the Section 151 Officer's Assurance Statement as set out in Section 11 of this report.**
- 5. That Members consider the financial position of the Council when proposing a level of Council Tax for 2016/17.**

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council was required to approve the Budget as part of the Budget and Policy Framework.

341. Brentwood Town Centre Action Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan, "Vision for Brentwood" highlighted the need to develop a Town Centre Action Plan to link key development opportunities, including William Hunter Way. The Action Plan should also take into account the wider themes of quality of design, community/landowner engagement, heritage, economy, and the deliverability of the overall plan.

In order to bring forward a high quality Action Plan for the Borough's major town centre, it was proposed to appoint high quality planning and development consultants to help officers prepare the plan. To ensure the Council achieved the right Plan and the best value for money, it had been agreed to work with one of the country's leading experts in this field, the Design Council, to prepare a high quality tender brief for the work. This brief would be used to procure the consultancy for the Brentwood Town Centre Action Plan. A timeline for taking this forward had now been proposed and was included in the report to take the Action Plan forward as a key Council priority.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay MOVED and Cllr Kerslake SECONDED the recommendations in the report and following a full discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- 1. Agrees the proposed timeline for the preparation of the Brentwood Town Centre Action Plan outlined in Table 1 of this report.**
- 2. Agrees to establish a cross-party working group to focus on the design and requirements for the Town Centre Action Plan. This group will comprise 4 Conservatives, 2 Lib Dems and 1 Labour. The group will be chaired by Cllr John Kerslake.**

Reasons for Recommendation

The future planning of Brentwood Town Centre requires a holistic approach to its development to maximise the benefit for local residents and businesses. To do this, the Council needs to appoint experienced planning and development consultants to help undertake this task. To make sure that the best consultants are appointed, a clear and detailed tender brief needs to be prepared to procure this work. By engaging the Design Council in this process, the Council will ensure that the initial tender brief and consultants subsequently appointed to develop the Action Plan will be of the highest calibre.

342. Termination of meeting

During the preceding item, in accordance with Rule 28 of Part 4.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, the business of the meeting not having concluded by two hours after its start, Members voted and agreed to continue with the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

343. Wash Road Allotments

The report considered the granting of a new Lease to Wash Road Allotment Association Ltd previously occupied by Hutton Horticultural Society (HHS).

It was proposed that Wash Road Allotment Association Ltd take a new 5 year lease of the Allotment from 1 January 2016 at a rent of £150pa.

Cllr Russell MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendation and following a discussion and a vote taken on a show of hands it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

1. That a new lease be granted to Wash Rd Allotment Association Ltd subject to the Heads of Terms set out in Appendix B.

2. That delegated authority be granted to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Chair or Vice Chair of the Policy Finance and Resources Committee to grant leases and licences, to consent to lease assignments and any other interest in property of up to £25,000 (excluding VAT) per year on properties leased or licensed at market value.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay advised that to avoid incurring the expense of commissioning independent valuation reports where income from a lease would be low she had requested that officers undertake valuations in house where rental would be less than £400pa.

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure continuity of the Wash Road Allotment site and proper administration of the Council's assets.

344. Termination of meeting

In accordance with Rule 28 of Part 4.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, the business of the meeting not having concluded by two hours and 30 minutes after its start, Members voted and agreed to continue with the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

345. Warley Scout Lease

The report before Members considered the surrender of the existing lease and the granting of a new lease to the Warley Scouts in respect of the Scout building (known as Eagle Hall) in The Drive, Warley.

Attached to the report for Members' consideration were confidential appendices showing the Heads of Terms and the Assessment of the extent to which the organisation's activities contributed towards achieving the Council's aims and objectives, including details received from Warley Scouts.

Cllrs Aspinell and Poppy left the Chamber during consideration of this item and therefore took no part in the vote.

Cllr Russell MOVED and Cllr Hirst SECONDED the recommendation and following a full discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That a new lease be granted in accordance with the terms set out in Heads of Terms at Appendix A (Exempt).

Reason for Recommendation

A new lease for the Scouts being put in place on the basis outlined in Appendix A would provide continuity.

346. Exclusion of the Public

Cllr Mrs McKinlay MOVED, Cllr Kerslake SECONDED and it was RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded and the following item be considered in private session on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

347. Warley Depot

Members were reminded that at the Asset and Enterprise Committee meeting held on 27.03.15 it was agreed to report back to a future meeting the results of an initial investigation into the viability of the redevelopment of the Depot site, adjoining land and the relocation of existing activities.

The report before Members considered the initial information gathered and the next stage of the project to enable a definitive decision to be made on whether to move towards implementation.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay MOVED and Cllr Kerslake SECONDED the recommendations in the report and following a full discussion it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

that the recommendations as set out in the report be agreed.

348. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 10.10pm

22 March 2016

Policy, Finance and Resources Committee

Transfer of Housing Revenue Account Shops (HRA) to General Fund

Report of: *Chris Leslie, Finance Director*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the transfer of the shops portfolio from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the General Fund (GF). The portfolio comprises of 24 shops which are no longer used for the housing purposes for which they were originally acquired.
- 1.2 Opportunities for both the General Fund and HRA arise from this transfer of assets, risk and external debt costs.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 **That the shops currently held in the Housing Revenue Account shown in Appendix A be transferred to the General Fund with effect from 1st April 2016.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 At 31 March 2015 the Council owned 2,496 dwellings 1095 garages and car spaces and 24 shops that were accounted for in the HRA.
- 3.2 International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) require that these properties are categorised according to the purposes for which the Council holds them. As part of the Council's continuous review of its assets, some properties have been identified where the Council's reason for holding them has changed since the original acquisition, which

requires that these properties be moved from one class of assets to another.

- 3.3 Where the purpose for holding a property is not related to the provision of housing under Part II of the Housing Act 1985 (Part II), the property cannot be held within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). If a property is currently held with the HRA, usually as a result of being originally acquired or constructed under Housing powers, it must be transferred (“appropriated”) to the General Fund.
- 3.4 The shops have remained in the HRA as a result of being acquired using housing powers. The shops were originally provided as part of neighbourhood development but no longer contribute to the achievement of a housing objective.
- 3.5 The right to buy policy (where tenants can purchase their council home from the council at a discounted price) means that an increasing proportion of properties on the Council’s housing estate are occupied by leaseholders or private tenants of leaseholders rather than Council housing tenants which was the case when estates were originally built. This means that the shops are no longer supplied solely for the neighbourhood of the housing tenants.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The shops currently sitting in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) were originally provided as part of neighbourhood development. These shops are now let on a purely commercial basis, and are not there to meet the need of HRA tenants.
- 4.2 The list of shops that are being proposed for transfer are outlined in Appendix A.

Accounting Treatment on Transfer of Assets.

- 4.3 Best practice determines that the shops are General Fund properties based on the current nature of the assets. Furthermore, where an asset is held to achieve a return for capital appreciation as in the case here, the correct classification is investment property.
- 4.4 Asset transfers between the General Fund and HRA are dealt with by means of Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) adjustments.

- 4.5 The HRA CFR will lower by the valuation of the shop portfolio. The reduction in the HRA CFR will create larger headroom for the HRA to borrow for other capital initiatives. The current headroom (the difference between actual debt and the borrowing requirement when the HRA became self financing) is £7 million.
- 4.6 The General Fund CFR will be increased by the equivalent amount of the valuation of the shop portfolio. The cost of servicing the debt will be met from the income generated by the assets. As the properties will be considered to be investment properties they will not be subject to a depreciation charge, but instead will be subject to annual revaluations.

Financial Effect of Transfer

- 4.7 The transfer of assets at 1st April 2016 means that the above rental income will be accounted for in the General Fund and the HRA will lose this revenue income stream.
- 4.8 The transfer between the HRA and General Fund, transfers the risks and returns of the shops from the HRA to the General Fund.
- 4.9 The General Fund will receive the rental income and take responsibility of managing and maintaining the shop portfolio as well.
- 4.10 The Council will need to revisit its Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy in order to calculate the MRP provision needed on the transfer of shops.
- 4.11 Currently, the HRA charges the General Fund for internal borrowing. The transfer of these assets will transfer the risk of future interest rate fluctuations, which can impact the amount the HRA charges the General Fund for borrowing. Therefore, the HRA will benefit from greater investment income.
- 4.12 The interest rate exposure will need to be considered annually in budget setting.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To comply with legislation, the shops should be transferred from the General Fund to the HRA.
- 5.2 The transfer will also generate a net revenue income stream to the General Fund, the HRA will lose this income stream however through efficiency savings the HRA can offset this loss of income.

6. References to Corporate Plan

- 6.1 Good financial and asset management underpins all priorities within the Corporate Plan.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Ramesh Prashar, Financial Services Manager

Tel & Email: 01277 312513, ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.1 The financial implications are set out in body of the report.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Saleem Chughtai, Legal Services Manager

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / saleem.chughtai@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.2 Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that the Council may appropriate for any purpose which the Council is authorised to acquire land, any land which belongs to the Council and is no longer required for the purpose for which it is held immediately before appropriation.
- 7.3 Section 19 (2) of the Housing Act 1985 provides that the Council shall not appropriate land held for the purposes for Part II of the 1985 Act without the consent of the Secretary of State if any part of the land consists of a house or part of a house for any other purpose.
- 7.4 For the shops as proposed in this report, Section 19(2) of the 1985 Act has no relevance as the land to be appropriated to the GF does not consist of a house or part of a house. To appropriate the shops from the HRA to the GF, the Council will rely on the power in Section 122 on the 1972 Act. In order to avail itself of the appropriation power, the Council needs to be able to confirm that the land is no longer required for the purpose for which it was held immediately before the appropriation.

- 7.5 Given the circumstances of the report and the mix of tenures that have arisen through, the 'right to buy' scheme, other changes in tenure and the commercial lease of the shops, transferring the shops from the HRA to the GF would not be an unreasonable position to take.

Other Implications

- 7.6 **Asset Management** – The General Fund will manage the shop portfolio and will bear the risks and rewards of the shop portfolio.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – List of HRA Shops to be transferred

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Phoebe Barnes – Principal Revenue Accountant

Telephone: 01277 312839

E-mail: phoebe.barnes@brentwood.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

List of HRA Shops to be Transferred

Shop Address
26 & 36 Copperfield Gardens
2 Harewood Road
4 Harewood Road
6-8A Harewood Road
1 The Keys Eagle Way
2 The Keys Eagle Way
3 The Keys Eagle Way
4 The Keys Eagle Way
5 The Keys Eagle Way
6 The Keys Eagle Way
7 The Keys Eagle Way
8 The Keys Eagle Way
9 The Keys Eagle Way
10 The Keys Eagle Way
70 Orchard Avenue
114 Orchard Avenue
120 Orchard Avenue
1 Rayleigh Parade
2 Rayleigh Parade
3 Rayleigh Parade
4 Rayleigh Parade
5 Rayleigh Parade
6 Rayleigh Parade
48/50 Blackmore Rd
Total Annual Income £178,874

This page is intentionally left blank

22 March 2016

Policy, Finance and Resources Committee

Community Alarm Service

Report of: *Helen Gregory, Acting Head of Housing & Benefits*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council has a number of fees and charges relating to the services it provides. As part of the budget setting process, these charges are reviewed on an annual basis. Whilst some of the fees and charges are statutory, and therefore determined through legislation, the Council must also review its charges for discretionary services to ensure they reflect the current costs of service provision.
- 1.2 Historically review of fees and charges for this service have been on an adhoc basis and have not reflected the true cost of this service.

2. Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 **That Members approve the recommendation made at the 9 March 2016 Environment and Housing Management Committee to increase the Community Alarm Charge by 0.50p per week from the 1 June 2016 which will generate an additional income to the general fund of £22,620.00.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council currently operates a Community alarm service to residents in the Borough which is a discretionary service. The purpose of this service is to provide a 24 hour response service for vulnerable or older residents who may suffer with ill health, disability or other risk due to age. This service provides residents with the opportunity to remain independent in their own home.
- 3.2 Currently, we have 1142 clients that use our alarms service, and it is anticipated that this figure will continue to rise given the increasing financial pressures on other organisations.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The fees and charges for this service have not been reviewed since 2013/2014 and it is proposed that the existing fees & charges are increased for the 2016/17 budget.
- 4.2 The review of the current fees and charges for this service has been carried out and it has demonstrated that our current fees and charges are one of the lowest in Essex and we will remain less in comparison to other Authority's in Essex if we increase our charges (See Appendix A).
- 4.3 Various options have been considered of what increase would be appropriate in this financial climate as below;

Option A	£0.25p increase
Option B	£0.50p increase
Option C	£0.75p increase
Option D	£1.00p increase

- 4.4 It is recommended that Option B is approved for the 2016/17 financial year and that these charges are reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process. Based on initial estimates, it is anticipated that the option B proposal will generate an additional fee income of approximately £22,620 to the general fund which is based on the number of current service users and the charges being implemented from 1st June 2016.

- 4.5 There are 101 service users that pay a lower charge as they are in receipt of Housing Benefit or Pension credit.
- 4.6 It is anticipated that this will virtually offset the anticipated loss of income from Essex County Council.
- 4.7 With the proposed increase of 50p per week, the comparison below demonstrates that our fees and charges will remain below that currently provided by other Local Authority's.
- 4.8 The increase in charge would be implemented at 1 June 2016 to allow resident consultation to take place.

5. References to Corporate Plan

- 5.1 Value for Money – “Investing and innovating in key services.

6. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Chris Leslie, Finance Director

Tel & Email: 01277 312542 / chris.leslie@brentwood.gov.uk

- 6.1 Increased income for the General Fund.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Daniel Toohey, Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / daniel.toohey@brentwood.gov.uk

- 6.2 Taken with s93 of the Local Government Act 2003, s3 of the Localism Act 2011 contains general powers for a local authority to charge for non-statutory or discretionary services, subject to a duty to secure that, taking one financial year with another, the income from charges does not exceed the costs of provision.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 6.3 The review of Community alarm fees affects vulnerable or elderly clients. Proposals for reduced fees for clients in receipt of benefit will minimise the impact of this.

7 Background Papers

7.1 None

8 Appendices to this report

Appendix A - Local Authority comparison

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Angela Williams

Telephone: 01277 312568

E-mail: angela.williams@brentwood.gov.uk

Community Alarms

Local Authority comparison

Authority	Current charge (inc VAT)	Income (excl VAT)	Current charges	Current Income
Brentwood	3.00	2.50	148,070.00	
Basildon	5.38	4.48	-	-
Colchester	5.95	4.96	-	-
Tendring	4.98	4.15	-	-
Harlow	3.86	3.22	-	-
Redbridge	4.35	3.63	-	-

Proposed charge increases

Current charge +	Increased charge (inc VAT)	Increased charge if in receipt of full HB or pension credit (inc VAT)	Income (excl VAT)	Income if in receipt of full HB or pension credit (excl VAT)	Annual income based on current number of service users (all services)	Annual income increase based on current number of service users (all services)
Current	3.00	2.40	2.50	2.00	148,070.00	-
25p	3.30	2.70	2.75	2.25	163,150.00	15,080.00
50p	3.60	3.00	3.00	2.50	178,150.00	30,160.00
75p	3.90	3.30	3.25	2.75	193,310.00	45,240.00
1.00	4.20	3.60	3.50	3.00	208,390.00	60,320.00

Additional services – Charges to customer

Charge type	Current charge (£) Incl VAT	+25p	+50p	+75p	+1.00
Extra 2 nd pendant/week	0.60	0.90	1.20	1.50	1.80
Smoke detectors/week	0.60	0.90	1.20	1.50	1.80
Key safe/week	0.60	0.90	1.20	1.50	1.80
Bogus caller Button/Panic button/week	0.60	0.90	1.20	1.50	1.80
Temperature extreme sensor/Week	0.60	0.90	1.20	1.50	2.40
CO2 Detector/week	1.20	1.50	1.80	2.10	2.40
Fall Detector/week	1.20	1.50	1.80	2.10	2.40
Flood Detector/week	1.20	1.50	1.80	2.10	2.40
Bed sensor/week	2.40	2.70	3.00	3.30	3.60
Pill dispenser/week	2.40	2.70	3.00	3.30	3.60

Other charges - Income

Charge type	Current income (£) excl VAT	+25p	+50p	+75p	+1.00
Extra 2 nd pendant/week	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50
Smoke detectors/week	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50
Key safe/week	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50
Bogus caller Button/Panic button/week	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50
Temperature extreme sensor/Week	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50

CO2 Detector/week	1..00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00
Fall Detector/week	1..00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00
Flood Detector/week	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00
Bed sensor/week	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00
Pill dispenser/week	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00

This page is intentionally left blank

Members Interests

Members of the Council must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and the nature of the interest at the beginning of an agenda item and that, on declaring a pecuniary interest, they are required to leave the Chamber.

- **What are pecuniary interests?**

A person's pecuniary interests are their business interests (for example their employment trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which they are associated) and wider financial interests they might have (for example trust funds, investments, and asset including land and property).

- **Do I have any disclosable pecuniary interests?**

You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if you, your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner have a disclosable pecuniary interest set out in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

- **What does having a disclosable pecuniary interest stop me doing?**

If you are present at a meeting of your council or authority, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of your authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any business that is or will be considered at the meeting, you must not :

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, of if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business or,
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

- **Other Pecuniary Interests**

Other Pecuniary Interests are also set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and apply only to you as a Member.

If you have an Other Pecuniary Interest in an item of business on the agenda then you must disclose that interest and withdraw from the room while that business is being considered

- **Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Non –pecuniary interests are set out in the Council's Code of Conduct and apply to you as a Member and also to relevant persons where the decision might reasonably be regarded as affecting their wellbeing.

A 'relevant person' is your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner

If you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you are present at a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest whether or not such interest is registered on your Register of Interests or for which you have made a pending notification.

Policy, Finance and Resources Committee

1. The functions within the remit of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee include all financial matters relating to the budget, (and for the avoidance of doubt, being the superior Committee on all such matters including capital, revenue and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) except where the law otherwise requires), and, without prejudice to the generality of this, include the specific functions which are set out below.

Policy

To undertake and discharge any functions in relation to strategic policies including periodic reviews of the policy framework adopted by full Council from time to time except where required by law to be undertaken elsewhere.

Finance

- 1) Financial Services
 - 2) Contracts, commissioning, procurement
 - 3) Legal services
 - 4) Health and safety at work (in so far as it relates to the Council as an employer)
 - 5) Corporate communications and media protocols
 - 6) Corporate and Democratic services
 - 7) Member Development
 - 8) Data quality
 - 9) Human resources
 - 10) Information Communication Technology
 - 11) Revenues and Benefits
 - 12) Customer Services
 - 13) Assets (strategically)
2. Overall responsibility for monitoring Council performance.
3. To formulate and develop relevant corporate policy documents and strategies including the Corporate Plan.
4. To formulate the budget proposals in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework, including capital and revenue spending, and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (including rent setting for Council homes), in accordance with the Council's priorities and make recommendations to Council for approval.
5. To formulate the Council's Borrowing and Investment Strategy and make recommendations to Council for approval.
6. To take decisions on spending within the annual budget to ensure delivery of the Council's priorities.

7. To approve the making of a virement or payment from the Council's reserves with a maximum value of £200,000.
8. To approve the write-off of any outstanding debt owed to the council above the delegated limit of £5,000.
9. To determine capital grant applications.
10. To make recommendations on the allocation and use of resources to achieve the Council's priorities.
11. To manage and monitor the Council approved budgets;
12. To provide the lead on partnership working including the joint delivery of services.
13. To consider any staffing matters that are not delegated to Officers, such as proposals that are not contained within existing budgetary provision.
14. To strategically manage any lands or property of the Council and provide strategic property advice relating to the Council's Housing Stock and without prejudice to the generality of this, to specifically undertake the following:-

The Council's Asset Management Plan

- (a) The acquisition and disposal of land and property and taking of leases, licenses, dedications and easements.
- (b) The granting variation renewal review management and termination of leases licenses dedications and easements.
- (c) Promoting the use of Council owned assets by the local community and other interested parties.
- (d) To manage any lands or property of the Council;
- (e) To include properties within the Council's Asset Management Portfolio including Halls etc.
- (f) To take a strategic approach to asset management, ensuring that the use of all of the Council's Property assets achieves Value for Money and supports the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.
- (g) To review the Corporate Asset Management Plan annually.
- (h) The acquisition of land in advance of requirements for the benefit, improvement or development of the Borough.
- (i) Disposal of land (including by lease) surplus to the requirements of any Panel or Committee.
- (j) Appropriation of land surplus to the requirements of a committee.
- (k) Promote the use of Council owned assets by the local community and other interested parties where appropriate.
- (l) Property and asset management, including acquisitions and disposals not included in the approved Asset Management Plan.

(m) To take a strategic approach to commercial activity, both existing and new, ensuring the Council realises revenue generation opportunities and supports the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.

(n) Promoting a culture of entrepreneurialism and building the required skills and capacity.

(o) To consider, and approve, business cases and commercial business plans for commercial activity.

This page is intentionally left blank