

**23 January 2019**

**Policy, Performance and Resources**

**Fees and Charges 2019/20**

**Report of:** *Phoebe Barnes – Interim Financial Controller*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Fees and charges levied by the Council for various services are reviewed on an annual basis by the relevant Committees relating to the Services.
- 1.2 Recommended amendments to fees and charges are incorporated into the budget setting process to take effect from the following financial year.

**2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That the proposed fees and charges attached in Appendices A – C are approved and are incorporated as part of the budget setting process to be reported at the next Policy, Projects & Resources Committee and Ordinary Council.**

**3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 The Council has fees and charges relating to specific services provided. 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 that they reflect the current cost of service provision.
- 3.2 The individual charges that are being proposed are set out in Appendices A, B, and C of this report.
- 3.3 Fees & Charges go to their individual committee and then all Fees & Charges are referred to Policy, Projects and Resources as part of the Budget.

- 3.4 The proposals in Appendix A-C are for areas that sit within Policy, Projects and Resources Committee remit, or where the fees and charges were not ready to make the deadline for the delegated committee and have been referred to Policy, Projects and Resources for approval.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 This year, the Council has undertaken a benchmarking exercise of all Fees & Charges. Fees & Charges where possible, have been compared against other Local Authorities within Essex as well as Local Businesses, if similar charges apply.
- 4.2 The proposed increase for 2019/20 are summarised below:

##### **Community Alarms**

- 4.3 At the time of Community, Health & Housing Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018, the Community Alarm service, was going under an extensive review of the cost of providing the service.
- 4.4 It was therefore recommended that proposed charges would be reported to Policy, Projects and Resources, so that the new Fees & Charges can be included in the proposed budget.
- 4.5 The alarm service is not a statutory service and is required to be self-financing so that no pressure is required from the general fund to provide this service in the Borough.
- 4.6 An extensive exercise was completed in December to look at the costs of providing the current service.
- 4.7 In the past, the Council was able to obtain funding predominantly from Essex County Council for certain aspects of this service. County Council usually funded the equipment costs and installation of this equipment.
- 4.8 The Fees & Charges set out in Appendix A, list the proposed fees required to charge in order to maintain the current service at a cost neutral position.
- 4.9 The proposed Fees & Charges have been benchmarked against other organisations that provide a similar service. Any increase to the Fees & Charges is to recover increase costs the Council has to pay as well as loss of funding.

## **Car Parking Season Tickets**

- 4.10 Season ticket prices have not been amended since October 2017. The Council has seen an increase in the take-up of season tickets across many of its car parks.
- 4.11 Season tickets are offered more on a commercial basis within the Borough. There has been a growth in season tickets, in 2017 there were approximately 714 season tickets sold and in 2018 there have been 864 sold to date.
- 4.12 Space must be managed within the Borough so that the casual users and residents find parking available when they travel to Brentwood.
- 4.13 From investigations other private parking sites within the area are more expensive at approximately £1400 per annum and whilst we seek to increase our season ticket charge, a more reserved increase is suggested from £950 to £1100 for a 12-month ticket. All other fees & charges are in Appendix B.
- 4.14 It is recommended that the car parks continue to be monitored and where appropriate the Council offer further spaces for season tickets as this guarantees income for the Council and utilises the car parking spaces in the Borough.
- 4.15 At this point there will be no other increases to Off-street Parking Fees & Charges.

## **Town Hall Fees & Charge**

- 4.16 The Fees and Charges regarding the new Town Hall have been reviewed in line with the Town Hall Project. The proposed fees and charges are to reflect the improved meeting room space available in the new refurbished Town Hall 2019. These will be made available to outside organisation as well as tenants who lease the commercial space.
- 4.17 All the charges can be found in Appendix C.

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 The recommended increases to fees and charges will enable the Council to recover the cost of services provided.

## **6. Consultation**

6.1 Not applicable.

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

7.1 The application of the fees and charges will help the Council to maximise assets to deliver corporate objectives and ensure community benefit.

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts Interim Chief Finance Officer**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500**

**jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk**

8.1 All costs associated with providing chargeable services have been reviewed in order to ensure, fees & charges are fully cost recoverable.

8.2 The benchmarking exercise ensures fees & charges are competitive and affordable.

8.3 The fees referred to in this report will inform the 2019/20 budget setting process.

### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title:**

**Tel & Email**

8.4 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

8.5 None

**9. Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

9.1 None

**10. Appendices to this report**

- A Community Alarms Fees & Charges
- B Town Hall Room Hire Fees & Charges
- C Car Parking Fees & Charges

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Phoebe Barnes – Interim Financial Controller

**Telephone:** 01277 312500

**E-mail:** [phoebe.barnes@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:phoebe.barnes@brentwood.gov.uk)