

Committee(s): Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee	Date: 24 November 2021
Subject: Fees and Charges	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Phoebe Barnes, Corporate Manager (Finance)	Public
Report Author/s: Name: Phoebe Barnes, Corporate Manager (Finance) Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: phoebe.barnes@brentwood.gov.uk	For Decision

Summary

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

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

R1. Agree to the proposed charges for 2022-23 as attached in Appendix A & B subject to the annual budget setting process.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. The Council's has several 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 that they reflect the current costs of service provision.
2. The individual charges that are being proposed are set out in Appendix A & B of this report.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

3. The proposed fees are based on a calculation of the costs involved in administering the various areas of work, apart from where there is statutory charge or where the fees are set by Government.

4. The Council where possible will adopt a full cost recovery of fees and charges.
5. It is proposed that all current non statutory fees and charges are increased by 1.9% as a minimum. This is to reflect increase in costs to maintain the services. However, managers can increase fees and charges above this recommended percentage increase as long as the change can be justified within the supporting covering sheet to the appendix.
6. Within each appendix a covering sheet explains the following:
 - a) Objectives and rationale behind the fees and charges
 - b) The proposed change in fee
 - c) Justification for this revision
 - d) Any benchmarking undertaken to aid in informing the level of charge
 - e) Whether any consultation needs to be considered
 - f) Expected income from the proposed fees and charges.
7. The fees and charges with proposed changes are:

Parking

- a) Pending the Parking Strategy outcome, it is proposed parking fees and charges are increased by 1.9% in line with the Council's budget guidelines.
- b) Any revision to these charges will be brought to the next committee for approval. It is expected that proposed charges for King Georges Playing Fields car park will be presented, this is to align with the opening of the pavilion in the new financial year.

Facilities Management

- a) Charges for committee room hire to external bodies, have been increased by 1.9% and rounded to the nearest whole number.
- b) Charges for weddings at the Town Hall are determined by Essex Registration Services. The element attributable to the Council has been increased by 1.9%

Design & Print Services

- a) Charge for provision of design and print services has been increased by 1.9% and rounded to the nearest ten pence.
- b) No change to click charges as these are based on charges the Council incurs, rounded to the nearest penny.

Economic Development

- a) Officers are looking at creating sponsorship packages for the business showcase. Currently sponsorship for the business showcase is aligned with the sponsorship packages offered by community events. A review of whether to tailor packages based on different events is being reviewed and therefore these fees and charges will be presented at the next committee.

Legal Services

- a) Legal services are looking to introduce charges to aid in ensuring the Council recovers the cost of legal fees incurred.
- b) These are still being developed by officers and therefore will be presented at the next committee in February.

8. Proposed changes identified are explained within each covering sheet appendix.

Reasons for Recommendation

9. Officers review fees and charges annually and this will be used to inform the 2022/23 budget setting process.

Consultation

10. None required.

References to Corporate Plan

11. To ensure the provision of efficient and effective services of our residents and businesses.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) and S151 Officer

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

12. Financial implications have been include within the report.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312500/amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

13. The Council is able under the relevant legislation to recover costs for services it provides. The Council can charge for discretionary services under the Local Government Act 2003 section 93 and the Localism Act 2011 general power of competence, and is able to review the fees and charges in line with these provisions.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy)

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

14. It is important that the Council review fees and charges as part of the budget setting process, which identifies how corporate priorities will be delivered, including growing our economy.

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

None

Background Papers

None

Appendices to this report

- Appendix A: Proposed fees and charges – Parking
- Appendix B: Proposed fees and charges – Facilities & Management and Design & Print.