

5th November 2014

Housing and Health Committee

Fees and Charges

Report of: Ashley Culverwell, Head of Borough Health Safety & Localism

Wards Affected: All

This report is: Public

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Recommended amendments to the fees and charges are incorporated into the budget setting process to take effect from the following financial year.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members agree to freeze the proposed Fees and Charges at 2014/15 levels as outlined within the report, which will then be incorporated within the 2015/16 Budget.**
- 2.2 That a further report be presented to this Committee providing details of the outcome of the planned review of the current charging policies, which will then inform the 2016/17 charging levels.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 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.

- 3.2 The individual charges that are being proposed are set out in Appendix A to this report.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 Following consideration of the methods of calculating fees and charges it has been decided that a full review of the Council's charging policies should be undertaken.
- 4.2 Until this review has been carried out, the outcome of which can inform the 2016/17 budget setting process, it is recommended to keep fees and charges at the 2014/15 level.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 Recommendation is to freeze the charges at 2014/15 levels for 2015/16 pending a full project review of all discretionary fees and charges in order that the outcome of the review can inform the 2016/17 budget setting process.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Not applicable

7. References to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 A Modern Council – providing increased customer satisfaction in the quality of Council services
- 7.2 Costs of services provided based on efficient systems providing value for money to customers.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive

Tel & Email: 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 Historically, the Council has increased fees and charges in line with inflation (currently projected at 2% per annum). This is to reflect that the costs of running the service will rise by approx 2%, and therefore we try and maintain fees and charges at the same level. There is therefore a risk that there will be an implicit cost to a freeze since it will not keep pace with the inflationary cost increases, however this cannot be quantified or

confirmed until such time as the review of the current charging policies has been undertaken.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services

Tel & Email: 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 Publishing the Council's fees and charges as well as providing transparency satisfies legal process.

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

- 8.2 Costs are applied inclusively to all sectors of the community

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

- 9.1 None.

10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A - Schedule of Fees and Charges

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: David Carter, EHO Manager

Telephone: 01277 312509

E-mail: david.carter@brentwood.gov.uk