

**14 January 2015**

**Finance and Resources Committee**

**In Kind Policy**

**Report of:** *Ashley Culverwell, Head of Borough Health, Safety and Localism*

**Wards Affected:** *All wards*

**This report is:** *Public*

**1. Executive Summary**

1.1. The Council's Funding Strategy was agreed at Strategy and Policy Board in November 2013 (min. ref 263). As part of the implementation of that Strategy officers were asked to develop an 'In kind Policy' to ensure that future funding and support in this area has clear guidance and has a consistent, transparent and accountable approach to ensure that this supports the Council's priorities and ensures that the support is targeted to those most in need.

1.2. There are two key strands to the In Kind Policy: Printing and Parking Permits. Currently these arrangements are provided free to certain organisations.

1.3. Any lease arrangements that the Council has with Voluntary and Community Sector organisations will be covered in a separate Community Let Policy which will go before Asset and Enterprise Committee on 21 January 2015 for Members to consider. Room hire within the Town Hall will be covered in a separate report which is going to a future Asset and Enterprise Committee.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. That Members agree to the adoption of the In Kind Policy (**Appendix A**).
- 2.2. That the following timelines apply to the implementation of the in kind policy:
  - 2.2.1 The revised parking permits (one per person for Members, employees and Voluntary Sector organisations) will commence from April 2015.
  - 2.2.2 Free parking permits will cease to be issued for Brentwood Library from April 2016 (to allow time for Essex County Council to adjust their budgets accordingly)
  - 2.2.3 The community rates for printing to be implemented in April 2016 to allow organisations to allocate within their budgets
  - 2.2.4 Commercial printing rates to be implemented in April 2015

## **3 Introduction and Background**

- 3.2 In 2013 Officers undertook a review of the level of support that it gave to voluntary and community organisations which was estimated at over £600,000 annually. It was then examined to determine whether this support was fit for purpose i.e. what governance was in place; how the organisation supports the Council's priorities and consider a more strategic approach to future funding.
- 3.3 It was agreed at 18 June 2013 Overview and Scrutiny Committee (min. ref 40) to look at the four areas of support;
  - Parish Council Grants
  - Discretionary Rate Relief
  - Partnership/Community Funding
  - In kind support
- 3.4 The In Kind Support Policy which is the subject of this report covers two key areas;
  - 3.4.1 Printing,
  - 3.4.2 Parking Permits

- 3.5 Preferential Lease arrangements
- 3.6 The Council is developing a separate **Community Let Policy** which will set out the Council's methodology for letting Council assets to voluntary and community sector organisations. This will go before Members at Asset and Enterprise Committee on 21 January 2015.
- 3.7 Room hire within the Town Hall will be covered in a separate report which is going to a future Asset and Enterprise Committee.
- 3.8 The Council needs to ensure that there is a fair and transparent process in place where it gives additional support to voluntary sector organisations, rather than the ad hoc arrangements that are currently in place. While the current situation supports very worthy organisations, it is not a fair process which is accessible to any voluntary organisation.
- 3.9 As the Council is under increasing monetary pressures to rationalise its spending then it is proposed to adopt a cost recovery model for these strands, wherever possible.

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

- 4.2 Free printing and postage
- 4.3 Currently the Council provides free printing to various voluntary and community organisations which are set out in **Appendix B**.
- 4.4 It is proposed that in future paper and quantity or 'click' charge costs are to be charged to the organisation, added to this will be an hourly rate which is currently set at £42 per hour for full cost recovery for the commercial rate, while the community rate will be subject to 50% relief at £21 per hour. All hourly rates are chargeable in fractions of 5 minutes.
- 4.5 The Council also provides free postage to a couple of organisations as set out in **Appendix B**.
- 4.6 *It is proposed that in future those costs should be borne by the relevant organisation.*
- 4.7 Free parking permits
- 4.8 Currently the Council provides free parking permits for use in Council car parks to various organisations and individuals as set out in **Appendix B**.

- 4.9 *It is proposed to adopt the following principles for future support.*
- 4.10 That any existing permits will not be charged for, but that an agreed number of permits are issued initially (the organisation will need to provide the names) and the permits are numbered in the following way e.g. CAB1, CAB 2, BCT1, BCT2 so that if car details change the permit can still be used without any additional cost to the organisation. However for any lost/replacement permits an administration fee will be applied. This will be payable by the organisation requesting it and will be a flat fee of £10. This process would be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the Council is only issuing the number of permits actually required by the organisation.
- 4.11 It is proposed that the Council will continue to provide parking permits to enable the organisations listed in **Appendix B** to park free of charge with the exception of the volunteers working at Brentwood Library. As employees of Essex County Council (ECC), ECC should assume responsibility for their volunteer expenditure costs. It is therefore proposed that this free parking should cease from April 2016 which allows over 12 months for the organisation to adjust to this change.
- 4.12 The Council will also need to bear in mind that any large developments will also impact on parking availability in Brentwood, such as Crossrail and the William Hunter Way development, so there will need to be a review the provision of free parking should the demand for parking spaces increase and/or availability of parking spaces decrease.
- 4.13 Staff and Member parking permits
- 4.14 Elected Members and some employees currently have parking permits which allow them to park across the Borough and at the Town Hall free of charge. If they have multiple cars each permit refers to the number plate for each car. Where there is more than one car, the issuing of more than permit creates unnecessary additional administration costs.
- 4.15 It is proposed that Members and employees should only have one allocated permit each, and that this permit can be transferrable between their vehicles. Any lost/replacement permits will incur an administration charge of £10. The permit will not include the number plate of the car to enable transfer of the permit to the car in use.
- 4.16 A benchmarking exercise was undertaken with other Essex authorities regarding charging staff for parking which is attached in **Appendix C**. This demonstrates that some Local Authorities have a charging

mechanism in place for staff at a reduced cost to what other car park users would pay.

- 4.17 It is proposed that the position at Brentwood Town Hall car park will remain unchanged with many staff parking free of charge, but this will be reviewed once the Town Hall Development Project has been completed. The allocation criteria for staff car parking permits are currently being reviewed by the Asset team as part of the Town Hall Development project implementation.

## **5 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.2 The Council needs to rationalise its support to the voluntary and community sector, so the support needs to be targeted to those organisations that support the Council's priorities and support our most vulnerable residents.
- 5.3 The Council also needs to ensure that the processes that it puts in place are fair, consistent and transparent to all organisations.

## **6 Consultation**

- 6.2 The draft Funding Strategy went out to consultation on 21 June 2013. The consultation was sent via email and was available on the Council's website. The consultation included:

- local community groups
- voluntary sector organisations
- Brentwood Council for Voluntary Services
- Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board
- Clinical Commissioning Group for Brentwood and Basildon
- members of the public
- local schools
- local councillors
- Parish Councils
- Brentwood and Ongar MP
- other partners organisations

Feedback was presented at Strategy and Policy Board in November 2013 as part of the report. In addition there were face to face meetings with each of those organisations which are currently in receipt of direct grant funding. In summary the majority of organisations were in support of the new approach to funding that the Council is taking in respect of the Community and voluntary sector, ensuring that funding is targeted to support the community more effectively. There was caution around any

disproportionate reduction in funding to the voluntary sector in relation to the Council's other spending. There were also a number of new initiatives that could be introduced to support the development of a Community Hub as part of the Town Hall development project.

6.3 An Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group was set up to look at the Council's approach to funding. The group examined four areas of funding, one of which was the 'In Kind' support, and the proposed principles and criteria around future funding which were proposed in the Council's Funding Strategy. Their comments were fed into the Funding Strategy report that was considered by Strategy and Policy Board in 20 November 2013.

6.4 Those organisations that will be directly affected have been informed of the proposed recommendations within this report have been asked to comment. This feedback is attached in **Appendix D**.

## **7 References to Corporate Priorities**

7.1 The In Kind Policy will ensure that the support for the Voluntary and Community Sector is both targeted, supports the Council's priorities and provides effective support for the local community.

## **8 Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

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

**Tel & Email: 01277 312712/ [jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk)**

The table lays out the current financial implications for the Council in respect of the In Kind Policy. These are currently being met from existing budgets.

<b>In Kind Support</b>	<b>Current level of additional support in £</b>
Free printing & postage	2,973
Free parking permits	24,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,233</b>

## **Legal Implications**

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

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312860 [christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk)

Any existing legal commitments that the Council has entered into with regard to any voluntary or community organisation will need to be examined before any changes could be implemented.

- 8.1 **Asset Management implications** – Where there are any existing lease arrangements or preferential rental agreement in respect of voluntary and community organisations utilising Council assets any changes to arrangements would need to be taken into consideration and due notice given.
- 8.2 **Equality and Diversity implications** – The In Kind Policy will target support to voluntary and community organisations that best support the Brentwood community regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race religion and sexual orientation.

## **9 Background Papers**

- 9.1 Funding Strategy 2013-16 as agreed at 21 November 2013 Strategy and Policy Board

## **10 Appendices to this report**

- Appendix A – In Kind Policy and Charging Structure
- Appendix B – In Kind Policy impact on external organisations
- Appendix C – Staff car parking arrangements across Essex
- Appendix D – Feedback from organisations

## **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager

**Telephone:** 01277 312634

**E-mail:** kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk