

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

08 January 2014

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Key Decision

1 REVIEW OF FEES FOR STREET NAMING & NUMBERING SERVICES

1.1 Street Naming & Numbering : Introduction

- 1.1.1 The requirement to provide a Street Naming & Numbering service is derived from the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 and the County of Kent Act 1981. The TMBC Street Naming & Numbering Policy sets out the framework under which the service is delivered in this authority.
- 1.1.2 During the summer of 2013 the responsibility for Street Naming and Numbering was passed to the GIS Officer in IT Services.
- 1.1.3 Last year's review identified that despite introducing a number of automated systems to help provide the service in a more efficient manner it remained the case that SNN cases can take a very considerable resource to resolve. The fees levied in 2013 were revised to account for the workload involved.
- 1.1.4 In line with the previous fee schedule the following priorities have been accounted for in the latest review:
- 1) There should be no overall reduction in income to the Council through the SNN function;
 - 2) The cost of SNN to the Council should, where possible, be recovered through fees and charges (noting that this is not always possible, and not always desirable);
 - 3) Ensure there are no 'perverse incentives' to apply for alternative naming schemes to minimise costs;
 - 4) Ensure there is clarity in the fee schedule to avoid confusion and the need for officer discretion in charging fees; and
 - 5) Where workloads are sufficient to justify such, additional new fees should be considered.

- 1.1.5 The changes introduced in the fee structure last year continue to address the five principles set out above. For the purposes of this year's review I have concentrated on principles 1 and 2 – ensuring that the cost of SNN to the Council is recovered where possible through fees and charges.
- 1.1.6 In the details provided below I have taken into account inflation based upon the Consumer Price Index at a rate of 2.5%.
- 1.1.7 To provide some context, I have set out the major steps involved in each of the main types of SNN. This is to provide Members with a level of understanding of the work involved. The current scale of Fees in Tonbridge & Malling is set out in **Annex 1**, with the proposed scale in **Annex 2**.

1.2 SNN : New properties

- 1.2.1 The naming of new properties falls into two categories – in-fill addresses, and new developments.
- 1.2.2 In-fill addresses are those where a small number of new properties are to be added to an existing street. Upon receipt of a formal application and appropriate fee, the SNN Officer must liaise with internal colleagues, Royal Mail and the developer in producing a draft numbering/naming scheme. In streets with an existing numbering scheme, the new property must be allocated a number; however where no numbering scheme is in place, the developer may choose a property name. Although only providing a small number of addresses, this can take a substantial resource to ensure no duplication of numbers or, more particularly, property names.
- 1.2.3 Larger new developments require considerable work to ensure they are named and numbered correctly and in compliance with the Policy. Often a new street is also required, the fee for which is included in the SNN fee. Where a new street is named, the SNN Officer must also consult with local members, area planning committee, the parish council and the developer in addition to Royal Mail, which increases the time taken and the cost of the service.
- 1.2.4 The fee structure for addressing properties is the area with most diversity across Kent. At present, TMBC charge £700 for up to 30 plots; Ashford charge a sliding scale to £34 per plot above 20 plots; Tunbridge Wells charge a fixed fee per property addressed. As a result, it is not simple to compare the fees across Kent. However, the table below sets out some examples for a few authorities:

Scenario	Fees (using current schedules)				
	TMBC	T/Wells	Sevenoaks	Maidstone	Ashford
New street, one property	£230	£200	£100	£175	£145
New street, five properties	£325	£400	£200	£300	£290
New street, 35	£750	£1,900	£925	£1,500	£1,290

properties					
New street, 100 properties	£1,400	£5,150	£1,900	£4,100	£3,500

1.2.5 On larger-scale developments, the fee for Street Naming and Numbering in Tonbridge & Malling is one of the lowest across Kent. These larger developments require additional resources to properly devise and apply an SNN scheme, so there is justification for increasing the fee on a revised scale. It is important to note, however, that it is not realistic in any case to quantify the number of hours work required to deliver the SNN service; this is because two near-identical applications can raise very different issues, so taking different resources to resolve.

1.2.6 I recommend the following fee structure for new developments of 4 or more in-fill properties, and for developments requiring new streets:

- 1) Fee for naming of a street, other than in relation to new property addressing: £205 (*currently £200*).
- 2) Fee for addressing plots, including street naming if required:

1-4 units	£205 + £31 per unit (<i>currently £200 + £30 per unit</i>)
5-10 units	£205 + £26 per unit (<i>currently £200 + £25 per unit</i>)
11 or more units	£410 + £11 per unit (<i>currently £400 + £10 per unit</i>)
- 3) A development is considered to be separate if they are received on separate applications and/or they do not share a common road which is also being named for the first time as part of the application.
- 4) Individual flats are considered as individual plots.

1.3 SNN : Existing properties

1.3.1 In addition to new developments, a significant proportion of the work undertaken within the SNN function is related to the renaming or renumbering of existing properties. I recommend the following fee structure for existing streets and properties:

- 1) Renumbering an existing property: £51 (*currently £50*).
- 2) Renaming an existing property, not in a current numbering scheme: £51 (*currently £50*)
- 3) Registering the addition or change or an alias to a numbered property: £51 (*currently £50*)

- 4) Removing an existing alias from a numbered property: No charge (*currently no charge*)
- 5) Rename an existing street: £1,540 (*currently £1,500*)
- 6) Rename a block of flats: £1,540 (*currently £1,500*)
- 7) Fee for addressing units (flats) when splitting an existing property: £87 per unit (*currently £85 per unit*).
- 8) Fee for addressing a single property when merging separate units: £169 (*currently £165*)

1.4 Summary

- 1.4.1 The table below sets out the current and proposed fee for a range of different scenarios.

Scenario	Current schedule	Proposed schedule
Existing street, one new property	£165	£169
Existing street, two new properties	£170	£175
New street, one property	£230	£236
New street, five properties	£325	£335
New street, 35 properties	£750	£795
New street, 100 properties	£1,400	£1,510
Renaming an existing street	£1,500	£1,540
Renaming / renumbering an existing property	£50	£51
Adding an alias to an existing numbered property	£50	£51

- 1.4.2 In my opinion this proposed Fee Schedule, coupled with the current balance of cases received, meets the five principles identified in paragraph 1.1.3.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 The requirement to provide a Street Naming & Numbering service is derived from the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847, the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 and the County of Kent Act 1981. The TMBC Street Naming & Numbering Policy sets out the framework under which the service is delivered in this authority.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.6.1 The five principles identified in paragraph 1.1.3 include that there should be no overall reduction in income to the Council through the SNN function; and that the

cost of SNN to the Council should, where possible, be recovered through fees and charges. In my opinion, the proposed Fee Schedule meets these principles.

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 The five principles which underpin this review were designed to minimise risk to the Council.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.8.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report. There are no equality impacts associated with the revised Fee Schedule for Street Naming and Numbering.

1.9 Recommendations

- 1.9.1 In summary, I recommend that the following Fee schedule for Street Naming & Numbering be adopted from 1 April 2014:

- 1) Fee for addressing one new in-fill property: £169
- 2) Fee for addressing two to three in-fill properties: £87 per property.
- 3) Where four or more properties are to be named or numbered, the fee for new developments (below) will be levied.
- 4) Fee for naming of a street, other than in relation to new property addressing: £205.
- 5) Fee for addressing plots, including street naming if required:

1-4 units	£205 + £31 per unit
5-10 units	£205 + £26 per unit
11 or more units	£410 + £11 per unit
- 6) A development is considered to be separate if they are received on separate applications and/or they do not share a common road which is also being named for the first time as part of the application.
- 7) Individual flats are considered as individual plots.
- 8) Renumbering an existing property: £51
- 9) Renaming an existing property, not in a current numbering scheme: £51
- 10) Registering the addition or change or an alias to a numbered property: £51
- 11) Removing an existing alias from a numbered property: No charge

- 12) Rename an existing street: £1,540
- 13) Rename a block of flats: £1,540
- 14) Fee for addressing units (flats) when splitting an existing property: £87 per unit.
- 15) Fee for addressing a single property when merging separate units: £169

Background papers:

contact: Darren Everden

Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The provision of street naming and numbering services will continue to be delivered to all applicants in a fair and equal way. Changing the fee structure better reflects the cost of providing the service, but does not adversely or positively affect any group in the community.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.