

COUNCIL

13 March 2017

PROPOSED CHANGES TO PLANNING APPLICATION FEES

Report of the Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport)

Strategic Aim:	Sustainable Growth	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr O Hemsley, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Growth, Trading Services and Resources (except Finance)	
Contact Officer(s):	Dave Brown, Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport)	01572 758461 dbrown@rutland.gov.uk
	Gary Pullan, Development Control Manager	01572 720950 gpullan@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	Not Applicable	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. Approves a 20% increase in planning application fees with effect from the date set out in the regulations and commits to investing the additional income in the planning service.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider an offer by the government to increase planning application fees.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 On the 20th February 2017 Council approved the fees and charges for 2017/18. The report noted that planning application fees are set nationally. The government last increased fees in 2012.
- 2.2 On 21st February 2017 the council received a letter from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) offering to increase fees by 20%. In return the council is required to confirm by the 14th March 2017 that it will invest the additional income in the planning service for the life of the current parliament. Details of current fees can be found in the background papers (10.2).

3 CONSULTATION

3.1 There is insufficient time to carry out consultation.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The council could choose to leave planning fees unchanged.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The budget for planning application fee income for 2017/18 is £320,000. Income can be volatile as a significant proportion is generated by a small number of large developments.

5.2 A 20% increase is likely to result in an additional income of £64,000 per year. DCLG has stated that the regulations will be in place by July 2017. If correct the additional income is likely to be around £48,000 in 2017/18. As the council is obliged to spend the additional income on the planning service there is no overall impact on the budget.

5.3 The 2017/18 expenditure budget for the planning service is £521,000. However, we are still waiting for DCLG to confirm which functions are included (e.g. planning policy).

6 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The government will need to make regulations to modify the fees. If approved, the council's Section 151 Officer is required to return a declaration to DCLG accepting the increase in fees and confirming the additional income will be "spent entirely on the planning function".

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.2 Equality impact screening has been carried out and a full equality impact assessment is not required.

7 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 As planning fees have not been increased since 2012 it is recommended that Council agree to a 20% increase and invest the additional income to improve the planning service.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Fixing Our Broken Housing Market - The Government's Housing White Paper:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590463/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_accessible_version.pdf
- 10.2 A Guide to Fees for Planning Applications in England:
https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/uploads/english_application_fees.pdf

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.