

ADDITIONAL FEE INCOME CHARGES
REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (COMMUNITY
DIRECTION)



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To advise on the proposed charging regime for services currently provided by the Development Control team for free.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.2 That Members agree to the proposed charging schedule in order that the matter can be advertised in the Borough Bulletin and on the Council Website prior to coming into force on 1 October 2012.

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

3.1 Members will be aware that service areas have been challenged to find savings or additional income in order to strengthen the Council's financial position.

3.2 As part of this process the Development Services team has looked carefully at the service provided to Customers to assess whether there are opportunities to charge a fee for services currently delivered free.

3.3 In considering which services could be charged for the service area looked at whether the service added value to the process and whether the service could be obtained by the customer by doing the research themselves. The purpose of this was to ensure there was customer choice.

3.4 A report was presented to Corporate Operations Board on 25 June 2012, see report and appendix to that report attached at Appendix.

3.5 The following services were considered fee chargeable:

| SERVICE | COST | ANTICIPATED YEARLY INCOME |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Administering Viability Statements | £100 each | £1000 |
| Monitoring Plan and Open Space Legal Agreements | 2% of required contribution | £2000 |
| Monitoring financial contributions on behalf of third parties | 1% or £150 (whichever the greater) | £2500 |
| Planning History Checks, Permitted Development Checks and Discharge of Condition Checks | £56.80 each | £500 |
| Pre-application charging | £1700 each | £13600 |
| TOTAL | | £19600 |

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [PE]

4.1 Contained within the body of the report. In future years these can be included as part of the Council's Scale of Fees & Charges document which is approved annually by Executive.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [EP]

5.1 Legal implications as those within attached COB report.

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This is considered to relate to all the aims of the Corporate Plan.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 None

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

| Management of significant (Net Red) Risks | | |
|---|---|--------------|
| Risk Description | Mitigating actions | Owner |
| Imposition of a new target for responses and limited staffing resources available to commit to responding | Income to be re-invested into planning services to improve processes | Tracy Miller |
| Customers do not receive a standard of service that justifies the proposed charge | A protocol setting out the details of the pre-application service together with service standards will be published on the web site | Tracy Miller |
| Customers who receive positive pre-application advice may complain in the event that a subsequent planning application is not granted | The advice will be provided in writing and will contain a caveat to ensure that the advice is given without prejudice to the final decision of the local planning authority and making it clear that any advice does not predetermine the final decision. The protocol will clarify the basis of any advice | Tracy Miller |
| Imposing additional financial pressures on developers/customers in the economic downturn | Evidence demonstrates that developers/applicants benefit from pre-application advice, particularly on larger complex | Tracy Miller |

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| | development proposals. Procedures will be in place to ensure that the advice given is timely, constructive and reliable. Sufficient information is obtainable on the Council's website to assist applicants/developers in the submission of householder and smaller application types. | |
| The proposed charge may not reflect the actual cost of providing pre - application advice (in later years) | The charges have been set following rigorous analysis of the costs of providing planning services and benchmarking with other local planning authorities. The pre-application activity and costs will be monitored and reviewed after a period of one year and updated as necessary. | Tracy Miller |

9. **KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The introduction of additional charges for services currently provided for free could impact adversely on developers and customers. However, if the local authority do not set a charge for such services it is unlikely in the future to be able to provide them at all. The charge will apply equally to major developments in rural and urban locations.

10. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: Report to Corporate Operations Board dated 25 June 2012 and Draft Protocol for Pre-application Charging

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