

Notice of:	Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation
Decision Number:	PH22/2020
Relevant Officer:	Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mark Smith, Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation
Date of Decision:	9 March 2020

EUROPEAN INFORMATION REGULATION (LAND CHARGES) FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider and agree revision of fees and charges for European Information Regulation (EIR Land Charges) for 2020/21.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To agree to the proposed fees and charges for Land Charges EIRs for 2020/21, which are detailed in section 5.3 with effect from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

2.2 To agree that the fees charged can be reduced from these rates in exceptional circumstances on the published Officer decision of the Director of Communications and Regeneration, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The fees and charges for 2020/21, need to be approved in order to take account of inflation and the costs of providing the service.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To set other rates for fees and charges for Land Charges EIRs, however, such fees might not reflect the costs of providing the service and therefore may be at odds with legislation governing cost recovery in this area.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 The attached schedule proposes a revised scale of fees and charges for Land Charges EIRs which have remained the same since 2012. The proposals have been compiled taking in to account the increased cost of providing this service since the fees were last set.

5.2 It is further proposed that the Director of Regeneration and Communications be delegated authority, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to make reductions to these fees if necessary.

5.3 The proposal is to increase the current charges for the statutory Land Charges EIR service the Council offers. The current charges are shown in the left had column and the new charges on the right.

2012/2013	2020/2021
£0.80 per question for a maximum of 10 questions	£3.82 for the first question plus £0.80 per additional question thereafter

The change has been necessitated by the fact that the charges assumed that all ten questions would be asked. Because of migration of data accessible for free on the automated register, only two questions are now being asked but the amount of work required to take payment, register and return the request remains the same and is not being recovered. The cost of two questions will now be **£4.62** which reflects accurately the cost of proving responses and the administration behind the process.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 The proposals are in line with the General Fund Revenue Budget 2020/21

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The marked increase in EIR requests since migration of the Land Register to HMLR means that the amount of time spent completing such reports has increased substantially. Not increasing the costs places further pressure on a budget already hit by loss of revenue through the transfer of the LLC1 search to Land Registry and reduced numbers of CON29 searches.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? No

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? N/A

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed:

Date approved:

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1 None

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1 The Cabinet Member agreed the recommendations as outlined above namely:

1. To agree to the proposed fees and charges for Land Charges EIRs for 2020/21, which are detailed in section 5.3 with effect from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
2. To agree that the fees charged can be reduced from these rates in exceptional circumstances on the published Officer decision of the Director of Communications and Regeneration, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

18.2 Date of Decision:

9 March 2020

19.0 Reason(s) for decision:

The fees and charges for 2020/21, need to be approved in order to take account of inflation and the costs of providing the service.

19.1 Date Decision published:

9 March 2020

20.0 Executive Members in attendance:

20.1

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1