

Notice of:	Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation
Decision Number:	PH23/2020
Relevant Officer:	Alan Cavill, Director of Regeneration and Communications
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mark Smith, Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation
Date of Decision:	9 March 2020

PLANNING FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The proposed fees and charges for Planning for 2020/21.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To maintain the national charging schedule for statutory planning applications as detailed in Appendix 'A' with effect from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

2.2 To amend the Council's pre-application charging schedule to remove the category for significant major applications. To otherwise continue to charge for pre-application advice in accordance with the schedule detailed in Appendix 'A' with effect from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

2.3 To maintain the level of fees retained when invalid applications are not subsequently made valid.

2.4 To agree that the fees charged can be reduced from these rates in exceptional circumstances on the published Officer decision of the Director of Regeneration and Communications, 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, the budget, market and the costs of providing the service.

3.2 The fees for statutory planning applications are set by central government.

3.3 The significant major development category charge should be removed to reflect the

fact that this category of development is no longer recognised by central government.

- 3.4 The Council's charging regime for pre-application advice is otherwise in-line with other Councils and the advice of the Planning Advisory Service. It was agreed in 2016 and is still considered to be appropriate.
- 3.5 Abortive work is undertaken when applications are deemed to be invalid upon receipt and are not subsequently made valid.
- 3.5a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.5b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes
- 3.6 Other alternative options to be considered:
- 3.6.1 As the fees for statutory planning applications are set by central government, there are no alternative options available for those fee rates.
- 3.6.2 The fee for pre-application advice on significant major development proposals could be retained but this category of development is no longer recognised by central government. The Council receives very few such applications and so the removal of this fee category would not be expected to have a substantive impact on budgets.
- 3.6.3 The other options with regard to the provision of pre-application advice are to increase or reduce the charges, to remove the charges, or to discontinue the service.
- 3.6.4 The current fees are considered to be reasonable and proportionate. To increase them could discourage uptake. This and discontinuance of the service would remove the potential to influence proposals prior to submission and improve the quality of submissions. To reduce or waive the pre-application advice fees would mean that the Council could not recover the cost of providing the service and this would compromise wider service delivery.
- 3.6.5 The other option for invalid applications would be to not charge a fee. However, this would prevent the Council from recovering the cost of abortive work and could compromise wider service delivery.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priorities are both “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool” and “Communities: creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 The schedules are attached at Appendices A(a) and A(b). The proposals are in-line with the Council’s General Fund Revenue Budget for 2020/21 and were compiled taking into account inflation and market conditions and the opinion of the Planning Advisory Services.

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 in order to achieve additional flexibility to adapt to market conditions.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.5 List of Appendices:

Appendix Aa – National planning fee schedule 2018

Appendix Ab – schedule of charges for pre-application planning advice charges for retained fees for 2020/21

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 A shortfall in budget could impact on staffing levels and therefore the efficiency and quality of service delivery.

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 Changes to or loss of fee income could impact on the 2020/21 Revenue Budget.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Impact on budget could impact on staffing levels and therefore the efficiency and quality of service delivery. Failure to meet statutory targets could result in the Council being placed in special measures and having its decision-making powers removed.

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 maintain the national charging schedule for statutory planning applications as detailed in Appendix 'A' with effect from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
2. To amend the Council's pre-application charging schedule to remove the category for significant major applications. To otherwise continue to charge for pre-application advice in accordance with the schedule detailed in Appendix 'A' with effect from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
3. To maintain the level of fees retained when invalid applications are not subsequently made valid.
4. To agree that the fees charged can be reduced from these rates in exceptional circumstances on the published Officer decision of the Director of Regeneration and Communications, 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, the budget, market and the costs of providing the service.

The fees for statutory planning applications are set by central government.

The significant major development category charge should be removed to reflect the fact that this category of development is no longer recognised by central government.

The Council's charging regime for pre-application advice is otherwise in-line with other Councils and the advice of the Planning Advisory Service. It was agreed in 2016 and is still considered to be appropriate.

Abortive work is undertaken when applications are deemed to be invalid upon receipt and are not subsequently made valid.

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