

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7 JUNE 2016

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT AND COUNCIL SUPPORT

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT: PRE APPLICATION REVISED
SERVICE AND CHARGES

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To allow Executive to consider proposed revision to the service and charges.

RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL That:

(A)	the ‘in-year’ revision to charges for the Development Management pre-application advice service be adopted as set out in this report.
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1.0 Background

1.1 Pre-application charges were first introduced by the Council in April 2007. A review undertaken toward the end of last year concluded that the service to customers should be improved with regard to both quality and timescale. The review also concluded that the cost of providing the service is not met by the fees currently charged.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 It is proposed that additional and dedicated planning officer resources be provided to deliver the service. This will ensure that acceptable turnaround timescales can be achieved. A dedicated resource for the majority of submissions will also ensure consistency. Additional senior officer checking will be introduced into the process in order to maintain and improve the quality of

output. It is necessary however to increase the fees charged for some elements of the service in order to secure these improvements.

2.2 The proposed revisions to charges are set out in the following table:

Category of development	Charge from 1 April 2016 (£)	Proposed charge (£)
Householder	30	130
Heritage Advice	50	130
Major development proposals	Fee between £840 and £1,200 depending on the scale of the proposals	Individually quoted fee in all cases
Adverts	50	100
Proposed Lawful Development	50	130
Affordable Housing advice	105	No fee (costs to be included in the individual quote for major schemes)

No changes are proposed to the fees for other categories of development.

2.3 Secondary Fees – these are charged when an applicant returns for further advice relating to a scheme amended after their first submission. This will remain for the high volume cases – householder and heritage advice. For major developments it will be factored into an individual quote. No other secondary fees would be charged.

2.4 Meetings - are currently offered only for major and minor development types. This would continue (included within the initial fee). In relation to all other development types they would be offered at £25 per hour per officer. The Council would have the discretion to withdraw the offer of a meeting for clearly unacceptable proposals where detailed engagement is inappropriate.

2.5 Urgent Advice – the Council often receives requests for advice to be provided urgently, usually associated with a land or house

sale. It is currently unable to respond to requests of this nature. It is proposed that premium fee levels be introduced for the provision of urgent advice to test the market as part of these proposals. For all fee types it is proposed that the fee (all elements including any meeting requests) be increased by 100% if a response is required in 5 working days or less.

- 2.6 Charities and Parish and Town Councils - A 25% reduction in the relevant fee is currently allowed for submissions made by registered charities and Parish and Town Councils. No change to this allowance is proposed.
- 2.7 The Executive is requested to consider and endorse these revised service and fee proposals. The operation of the service will continue to be monitored and any further appropriate consequential changes (to service) would be introduced after consultation between Officers and the Executive Member.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

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