



Proposed Adoption of Pre-Application Charging Fees

Report by the Director for the Economy

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 18th November 2015, the Planning Committee considered the attached report and resolved to approve:
- (i) the principle of charging for pre-application advice on all development proposals, except those relating to house extensions;
 - (ii) the charging regime set out in Section 3.3 for the purposes of public consultation;
 - (iii) a 12 month review of the charging regime; and
 - (iv) for the wording of the amendment of paragraph 3.5.1 of the report to be delegated to the Head of Economic Growth.
- 1.2 The pre-application charging scheme was the subject of a 6 week consultation period from the 19th February 2016 to the 5th April 2016. During this period, no representations were received.

2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 As no comments were received in connection with the consultation exercise, Members are recommended to agree to implement the pre-application charging regime from 1st August 2016. A similar report and recommendation will be made to the next Adur Planning Committee.
- 2.2 In setting a budget for the Development Management Service for 2016/17, an assumed increase in income from pre-application service of £25,000 was included for Adur and Worthing and, therefore, it is important that the charging regime is implemented as soon as possible. It should be noted that on larger development sites Officers have already entered into Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs)

and these have set out an overall charge for pre-application advice and this often includes the cost of Coastal Design Review Panel meetings.

- 2.3 When the attached report was last considered by Worthing Planning Committee there was some debate about whether all community and voluntary organisations should be exempt from such charges. The concern was that some large national community and voluntary organisations might be promoting a commercial development in Worthing to finance a project elsewhere in the Country and in those circumstances a charge should still be imposed. To address this concern it is recommended that the guidance notes published with the charging regime will include a caveat that states,

‘Community and Voluntary organisations undertaking development which directly benefits Adur and Worthing residents and businesses may not be charged for pre-application charging depending on the precise nature of the development proposal’.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) adopt the Pre-application Charging Schedule set out in the attached report starting on 1st August 2016; and
- (ii) to review the charging regime in 12 months time (August 2017).

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

Pre-application Charging report and minute of meeting - considered at Planning Committee dated 18th November 2015.

Charging Regimes adopted by other West Sussex District and Borough Councils.

Contact Officer: James Appleton

James Appleton

Head of Economic Growth

Portland House,

Richmond Road,

Worthing

01903 221333

james.appleton@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 To deliver efficient and cost effective services.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 There are no specific Government targets in relation to pre-application charging but it is recognised that charging can help to deliver a cost effective service.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Whilst, providing a free service enhances the reputation of the service it also causes significant workload issues and affects the service given to those applicants have paid to have a planning application determined. Pre-application negotiations will still be encouraged but it is anticipated that the introduction of the charges will provide for a more efficient and cost effective service that will recover more of the cost of the service. Overall it would therefore seek to enhance the Development Management Service.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 This is a joint policy for Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils.