

MELTON ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

10TH JANUARY 2018

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES

PLANNING APPLICATION FEES

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the Government's intended increase in fees for planning applications and to advise how the associated expenditure will be determined.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- (i) **The Committee note the content of this report.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Members may recall that publicity was given to a Government proposal in early 2017 to increase the statutory fees paid for planning applications. This was subsequently postponed but the Government has now announced that it will take effect on 17th January 2018, and has published a Statutory Instrument accordingly.
- 3.2 The increase of 20% applies 'across the board' for the fees paid by applicants for Planning Applications and similar (n.b it does not affect the various exemptions or concessions within the legislation, and relates solely to planning application fees as opposed to other sources of income , e.g 'pre application' discussions).
- 3.3 It is anticipated that this will amount to some £130,000 additional income per annum, based on existing fees receipt levels within the 2017/18 budget (£600,000 in total , which is likely to be exceeded) and that proposed for 2018/19 (£650,000).
- 3.4 When initially promoted, the Government required assurance that the additional income would be directed to activity that would assist improving planning performance and would be genuinely 'extra' within budget arrangements. The Council subscribed to these terms and completed certification accordingly. The new legislation explains that the subscriptions submitted in 2017 is sufficient to enable the Council to receive the increased fee level from 17th January 2018, that no new certification is required and that the 'terms' subscribed to in 2017 still apply.
- 3.5 Given the timing of this announcement, it is considered that the expenditure of the additional fee income will be incorporated into the budget setting process for 2018/19. It is therefore proposed that a further report will be submitted to the meeting of Policy, Finance and Administration Committee on 24th January 2018 making recommendations as to its intended use.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The additional income will make a strong contribution to our planning performance. Planning (both Local Plans and Development Management) are key activities towards corporate priorities particularly in respect of the strength of the economy, improved connectivity (including the MMDR) delivery of housing to meet the Borough's needs (including affordable housing).

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is not considered that there are wider financial implications arising from this announcement. It is understood the increase will be permanent and as such 'recurring' in budgetary terms, allowing for sustained investment in the areas concerned.
- 5.2 The Development Management function operates under a strict performance regime overseen by CLG. Whilst our performance has been adequate for these purposes to date, investment can only assist in maintaining and improving this decision. However we should be equally concerned that performance is measured by 'results on the ground' and any investment in service provision will be

focused on securing improved outcomes for our community and our customers.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 EQUALITIES

7.1 No Equalities Implications have been identified.

8.0 RISKS

8.1 The risks identifies below are the potential outcomes:

L I K E L I H O O D	A	Very High				
	B	High				
	C	Significant				
	D	Low				
	E	Very Low		1		
	F	Almost Impossible				
			Negligible 1	Marginal 2	Critical 3	Catastrophic 4

IMPACT

Risk No	Risk Description
1	Investment fails to improve planning performance

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

9.1 There are no specific climate change implications.

10.0 WARDS AFFECTED

10.1 Works could take place in any ward in the Borough.

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Date: 8th January 2018

Appendices : None

Background Papers: None

Reference :

PFA