

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 6

meeting date: 13 OCTOBER 2016
title: REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: TRUDY HOLDERNESS / ROBERT MAJOR

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek member approval on proposals to increase this committee's fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2017.
- 1.2 These proposals are the first stage in the review of this committee's budget for the forthcoming 2017/18 financial year.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's fees and charges are reviewed on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process.
- 2.2 This report requests that members consider proposals for the increase in fees and charges for this committee's services. Such charges would be implemented with effect from the 1 April 2017 and would operate for the duration of the 2017/18 financial year.
- 2.3 The council's latest budget forecast allows for a 1.5% inflationary increase in the level of income raised from fees and charges. The review aims to increase budgeted income for 2017/18 by this amount as a minimum.
- 2.4 After applying this percentage increase, proposed charges have generally been rounded up or down to minimise any problems with small change. This inevitably impacts on the individual percentage rise for each separate charge, particularly when the current charge is low.
- 2.5 Planning application fees are currently set by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Pre-application fees are set by the relevant Local Planning Authority.

3 ADVICE OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 In September 2016, the Budget Working Group considered the overall three-year Budget Forecast. In summary the forecast shows a potential budget deficit for 2017/18 of £265k after taking £300k from general fund balances.
- 3.2 The forecast includes an overall increase in income from fees and charges of 1.5%. Service committees are requested to review their fees and charges in order to achieve this targeted income.
- 3.3 The current budgeted income to be received from fees and charges which are set by this committee is £38,550 (as stated above planning application fees are set nationally and so are excluded). A 1.5% increase on this total would therefore generate £580.

4 REVIEW OF THE FEES AND CHARGES

4.1 The review of the fees and charges is coordinated by financial services, working together with heads of service and budget holders.

4.2 This follows the process shown below:

- Budget holders are provided with an indication of the fees and charges factoring in the budget working group proposals.
- A discussion meeting is then held between budget holders and financial services to enable the budget holder to propose a set of fees and charges for their services. This may depend on where there is a national requirement or service specific reason for setting a fee or charge at a different level than the budget working group target.

A review of the main Building Control fees and charges were considered by this committee in August 2016 these were to take effect from 1 September 2016. A further review of these charges which will take effect from 1 April 2017 will be considered at a later date. This is to comply with the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 which states that the charges should be based on achieving a full cost recovery. Work on the forecasting of costs of this service for 2017/18 is currently being carried out, and will form the statutory basis for setting the building control fees and charges for next year.

4.3 Following the discussions a **proposed** set of fees and charges for implementation from 1 April 2017 has been produced for this committee and is shown at Annex 1. This annex provides details of:

- the current charge for 2016/17
- an estimate of the level of 2016/17 income raised by each charge (Net of VAT)
- the proposed charges for implementation from 1 April 2017
- an indication of the potential income that may be achieved in 2017/18, should the proposals be agreed (Net of VAT)
- the resulting percentage increase from 2016/17 to 2017/18
- Date that each charge was last increased (They are all reviewed annually, but may not necessarily be increased)

4.4 The indication of potential income which is shown throughout Annex 1 is provided for guidance purposes only and is based on past and current activity levels. No account is taken of any change in service use which may be influenced by a change in charge levels.

4.5 Work is still underway on forecasting income budget levels for 2017/18 and such budget proposals will be reported back to this committee in January 2017 for approval.

4.6 If you agree the recommended charges shown in Annex 1, the estimated extra income raised is £3,900, an overall increase of 10.12%.

- 4.7 This higher level of increase is, mainly due to a proposal from the planning service to fix the fees and charges until March 2019 and also to introduce some new charges. Where possible an indication of potential income has been included in the estimated extra income.

5.0 INTRODUCTION OF NEW CHARGES

- 5.1 The Planning Section recommends the introduction of several new charges as follows:

Large Scale Major Developments – up to two meetings

- 5.2 It is proposed to include a charge for larger scale major developments - such developments would involve the following:

- Residential schemes of over 100 units or, where the number of dwellings is not specified, a site area of over 3.5 Ha;
- Retail, commercial and industrial schemes with a floorspace of 2,500sq.m or more or on sites of 2.5 hectares or more;
- Educational, hospital, leisure and recreational schemes on sites of 2.5 hectares or more;
- Schemes with 2 or more land uses on sites of 2 hectares or more;
- Changes of use of building(s) with a gross floor area of 2,500 sq. m. or more;
- Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development

Additional Meetings for Householders and all other Developments

- 5.2 The Authority receives requests for additional meetings to discuss amendments and revisions to pre-application proposals after the formal advice has been given. Currently there is no charging mechanism for such meetings and this often results in applicant's having to submit a new pre-application enquiry.

In view of the above, and to create consistency when dealing with such requests, an additional charge will be created to allow applicants to pay for and arrange an additional meeting with the Pre-Application Planning Officer after formal advice has been issued.

Discharge of Conditions Meetings

- 5.3 The Authority receives a small number of requests for pre-application meetings to discuss potential discharge of condition applications after decisions have been issued, and there is currently no mechanism to charge for such meetings.

Prior Notification – Telecommunications and all enquiries

- 5.4 The Authority currently charges the same amount for all prior notification pre-application enquires, however as a result of the 2015 General Permitted Development Order there are differing levels of complexity involved with such enquiries and it is therefore considered necessary to split this category with a different fee payable for telecoms prior notifications and all other prior notifications due to the complexity of the legislation and submission requirements.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Fees and Charges provide a key income source for the Council. Fees and charges also provide a mechanism to target concessions, and also to charge service users directly rather than allowing the financial burden of certain service provision to fall on the council tax.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The Local Government Acts of 2000 and 2003 extended authorities' powers to charge for discretionary services.
- Political – none
- Reputation – Substantial increases to charges can generate adverse publicity.
- Equality and Diversity – One of the aims of the fees and charges mechanism on many services is to pass on service concession in order to increase inclusivity.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Work has been undertaken by financial services, heads of service and budget holders in reviewing the fees and charges operated by this committee. This review has now been completed as part of the budget process, for implementation from 1 April, should the proposals be approved.

7.2 The Budget Working Group recommends that all service committees seek to increase their fees and charges overall by 1.5%. If you agree with the recommended charges, this committee will meet the target required.

8 RECOMMENDATION THAT COMMITTEE

8.1 Consider the introduction of the proposed new charges set out in section 5.0.

8.2 Consider the proposed charges at Annex 1 and approve them for implementation with effect from 1 April 2017.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

PRINCIPAL PLANNING
OFFICER

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

PD8-16/TH/AC
26 SEPTEMBER 2016

For further information please ask for Trudy Holderness extension 4433

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR IMPLEMENTATION FROM 1 APRIL 2017

PLANNING - PLANG	Ledger Code	VAT	Date of Last Change	Current Charge 2016/17	Budgeted Income Net of VAT for 2016/17	Proposed Charges for 2017/18 1.5% Inflation	Indication of Potential Income Net of VAT for 2017/18	Percentage Increase in Charge
				£	£	£	£	%
Planning Decision Notices	PLANG/8231m	Non Vatable	01 April 2016	18.70	3,220.00	20.00	3,440.00	6.95

Pre- Application Advice	Minor Developments	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	200.00	8,810.00	220.00	9,690.00	10.00
	- additional meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	New Charge	-	-	110.00	0.00	-
	Intermediate Developments	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	400.00	5,720.00	440.00	6,290.00	10.00
	- additional meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	New Charge	-	-	220.00	-	-
	Major Developments - up to two meetings	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	815.00	15,000.00	880.00	16,200.00	7.98
	- additional meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	385.00	330.00	440.00	380.00	14.29
	Large Scale Major Developments - up to two meetings	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	New Charge	-	-	1,000.00	-	-
	- additional meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	New Charge	-	-	500.00	-	-

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR IMPLEMENTATION FROM 1 APRIL 2017

PLANNING - PLANG		Ledger Code	VAT	Date of Last Change	Current Charge 2016/17	Budgeted Income Net of VAT for 2016/17	Proposed Charges for 2017/18 1.5% Inflation	Indication of Potential Income Net of VAT for 2017/18	Percentage Increase in Charge
					£	£	£	£	%
	Discharge of Conditions Meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	New Charge	-	-	100.00	400.00	-
	Householders - Without Meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	55.00	1,140.00	50.00	1,040.00	-9.09
	- With Meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	95.00	2,660.00	100.00	2,800.00	5.26
	- additional meeting	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	New Charge	-	-	50.00	400.00	-
	High Hedge or Tree Issues	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	57.00	0.00	60.00	0.00	5.26
	Listed Building or work in Conservation Area	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	100.00	670.00	100.00	670.00	0.00
	Advertisement Advice	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	57.00	0.00	60.00	0.00	5.26
	Prior Notification - Telecommunications	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	01 April 2016	105.00	0.00	110.00	0.00	4.76
	Prior Notification - all other enquiries	PLANG/8495n	VAT Inclusive	New Charge	-	-	150.00	-	-

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR IMPLEMENTATION FROM 1 APRIL 2017

HIGH HEDGES - HIGHH	Ledger Code	VAT	Date of Last Change	Current Charge 2016/17	Budgeted Income Net of VAT for 2016/17	Proposed Charges for 2017/18 1.50% Inflation	Indication of Potential Income Net of VAT for 2017/18	Percentage Increase in Charge
				£	£	£	£	%
Submission of High Hedges Complaint	HIGHH/8460u	Non Vatable	01 April 2016	565.00	0.00	565.00	0.00	0.00

BUILDING CONTROL – BLDGC	Ledger Code	VAT	Date of Last Change	Current Charge 2016/17	Budgeted Income Net of VAT for 2016/17	Proposed Charges for 2017/18 1.50% Inflation	Indication of Potential Income Net of VAT for 2017/18	Percentage Increase in Charge
				£	£	£	£	%
Building Control Decision Notices	BLDGC/8231m	Non Vatable	01 April 2016	18.70	1,000.00	20.00	1,140.00	6.95

Total Income from fees and charges set by this committee					38,550.00		42,450.00	10.12
Overall extra income generated							3,900.00	