

PLANNING APPLICATION FEE INCREASE 2017
Cllr Peter Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development
March 2017
Deadline date: 13 March 2017

Cabinet portfolio holder:	Cllr Peter Hiller – Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development
Responsible Director:	Simon Machen – Director of Growth & Regeneration
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes – Urgency procedures have been invoked due to deadline for responding to Government. Unique Key decision Reference from Forward Plan : N/A
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	NO – Suspension of call-in procedures have been invoked.
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO
Is this a project and if so has it been registered on Verto?	NO

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

The Cabinet Member is recommended to agree to the opt in 20% increase in planning application fees that has been offered to the City Council.

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 This report seek the agreement for the adoption of a 20% increase in planning application fees.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 2.1 This report is for the Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.4 of Part 3 of the constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio at paragraph (a).
- 2.2 Urgency, Special Urgency and Suspension of call-in procedures have been invoked in relation to this decision, as set out in the Council’s constitution at Part 4, Section 7(6), Section 7 (7), and Section 8 (10.22) respectively. This is with the agreement of the Chairman of the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Monitoring Officer. The decision is urgent due to the deadlines provided to the Council by central government. The suspension of call-in has been granted as a delay in the implementation would mean the Council was no longer eligible to opt in to the 20% increase in planning application fees.

3. **TIMESCALE**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. **DETAILS OF DECISION REQUIRED**

- 4.1 Following the publication of the Housing White Paper in February 2017 in which reference is made to an increase in planning application fees, the City Council has now received a letter from DCLG. The letter offers to planning authorities the opportunity to opt in to a 20% increase in planning application fees. The terms of the proposal are such that if an authority signs up for the increase then in exchange it must agree to retain the additional revenue and that existing baseline and income assumptions will not be adjusted down with a view to the money being spent on improving resourcing leading to better services, improved performance and capacity to deliver growth. A decision needs to be made on whether to opt in to the fee increase in the context of the terms of the arrangement.

5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 No consultation has been undertaken in respect of the matter covered in this report.

6. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

- 6.1 The application of a 20% increase in planning fees would increase income by c£280,000 (not in the first year as the go live date for the fee increase is July 2017).. Whilst no firm decisions have been made, it is likely that the additional revenue would be spent on improving the resilience of the Technical Administration, Development Management and Planning Policy Teams. Spend in these area will drive the delivery of the Council ambitious growth agenda and help facilitate new council tax, business rate and new homes bonus income for the Council.

7. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS & ANY RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 7.1 The City Council is required to indicate to DCLG if it wishes to opt in (or out) to the proposed planning application fee increase. 2012 was last time that the Government increased planning fees and in the recently published Housing White Paper it is recognised that in order to improve the delivery of much needed housing, resourcing in council planning services needs to be improved. Whilst the planning service within Peterborough City Council is high performing and a well respected operation amongst development professionals it is tightly resourced with modest resilience capability notwithstanding the establishment of a shared service with Fenland Council a year ago. The adoption of the proposed fee increase is not anticipated to have a dampening effect on the submission of applications as the planning fee makes up a very small element of the overall cost of facilitating development. The increased revenue income will be used to help improve the robustness of the service and the delivery of growth.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 Instead of opting in to the fee increase the Council could decide to keep fees at their existing level.

9. **IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The recommendation if accepted will see a 20% increase in revenue income in the order of £280,000 pa. It is not anticipated that the fee increase will reduce the number and type of

planning applications being submitted. In accepting the increase in planning application fees, the City Council must agree to use the revenue generated within the planning service.

10. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

10.1 None.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

11.1 DCLG letter to Chief Executives - 21 February 2017

11.2 Planning application records (1 April 2016 to 31 Jan 2017) – planning fee paid.