

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Increase in Pre-Application Fees and removal of discounted fees
Date of decision:	26 March 2021
Decision maker:	Assistant Director for Regulatory, Environment and Waste Services
Authority for delegated decision:	Authority for delegated decision: Herefordshire Council's constitution - Scheme of Delegation Part 3 Functions Scheme, Section 7 Officer Functions: Economy and Place Scheme of Delegation updated 25/03/21 Lines 1 and 71
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Director of Economy & Place, Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet Members have all been consulted on the savings plan required for the Economy & Place Directorate, which includes ensuring full cost recovery is achieved for all planning fees set by the council rather than by statute.
Decision made:	<p>That the council increases the pre-application fee by 10% immediately and removes the exemption charges for the following categories:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the enquiry is to benefit a person who is registered disabled • Works to trees - covered by a Tree Preservation Order or in a Conservation Area • Advice on how to submit a planning application • Enquiries made by another Herefordshire Council department • Enquiries made by a town or parish council in connection with their statutory functions • Enquiries made by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) or Housing Association (HA) - where the development is solely for social/affordable housing • Enforcement Cases <p>In addition pre-applications for rural workers dwellings will incur an additional charge of £600 to cover review by the agricultural advisor</p>
Reasons for decision:	To ensure the service provides full cost recovery for the benefit of Herefordshire residents. The removal of the exemption category ensures the service is being funded by the applicant. In addition, the statutory planning application fees were raised by 20% in January 2018 whereas the council only increased pre-app fees by 10% in April 2019. Therefore this additional increase ensures consistency with the uplift in the national planning fees as well as achieve full cost recovery.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	The decision supports the full costs recovery of the planning service to enable an effective pre-application process to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements to frontload planning applications, as recommended by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	The alternative would mean that the costs for processing the applications would fall on the council or that we do not operate a pre-app service which is contrary to the NPPF. which encroaches pre-planning advice to ensure well informed planning applications are submitted.

Details of any declarations of interest made:	None
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Signed

Date: 26 March 2021