

## **PROPOSED FURTHER CHANGES TO PLANNING FEES**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 In September 2004, the Government consulted on proposals for changes to planning fees in 2005/06. This report outlines a list of further changes to be introduced from 1st April 2005. Comments are required by 28th January 2005.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The original consultation paper was reported to the Policy & Finance Committee on 7th December 2004. Given the very short timescale for response, the changes now proposed are being reported to the first appropriate Committee.

### **3 REVISED PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 Following consideration of consultation responses, the Government is now proposing:
- Fees be increased by an average of 39% to raise an additional £68 million in fees in 2005/06
  - greater differentiation between the fee increases proposed for small and large applications; and
  - that fee increases be viewed alongside performance improvement initiatives.

- 3.2 A copy of the revised fee schedule and that from the original consultation is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

### **4 DISCUSSION**

- 4.1 It is considered that the proposals now being put forward for a larger fee increase are fair and reasonable and move more quickly towards a situation where fees will cover the costs of service delivery.
- 4.2 The proposed categories do seem to be appropriate, including some minor changes to categories 4 and 17 to simplify fee calculation.
- 4.3 There is no doubt that a significantly higher maximum fee for larger applications, £50,000 as opposed to the previously suggested £28,500, is to be welcomed, given the additional complexity and resources required to process such applications.

- 4.4 It is concluded that the further increases to the scale of fees are to be welcomed.

**5 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

**Resource Risk**

- 5.1 Planning fees do not, at present, cover the cost of service delivery.

**6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposed changes will help to reduce the gap between the delivery of the development control service and the fees charged to applicants.

**7 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That, subject to comments from Members, the ODPM be informed that this Council supports the proposals for a greater increase in planning fees from 1st April 2005.

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**Background Papers:-**

ODPM Consultation Paper "Further Proposed Changes to the System of Planning Fees in England" - December 2004.

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