

Single Member Cabinet Decision

**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference**

E2973

Planning Performance Agreements - Change to Charging Method

Decision maker/s	Cllr Liz Richardson, Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning
The Issue	A recent review discovered that the way PPA income was managed was not robust and that the Council was not covering its costs in delivering this enhanced service. There were also a number of other changes to ensure that this popular service could be improved
Decision Date	23 rd May 2017
The decision	The Cabinet Member agrees that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The way PPAs are paid for can change from monthly by invoice during the life of the PPA to an up-front charge with the introduction of a PPA fee schedule based on the scale and scope of development 2. All relevant consulted officers as determined by the planning officer will now be included in PPAs to ensure PPAs are consistent with other applications and that B&NES has the best chance of being able to deliver a high quality response within the agreed timescales
Rationale for decision	Clear to customers what will be paid in advance with no unexpected additional invoices, potentially making it easier to market the PPA service to our customers Flexibility of being able to negotiate PPAs separately (and pay in separately) for each of the 3 stages of development (pre-app, app, post-app) Certainty of deadlines for customers because all consultee departments will be included automatically
Financial and budget implications	Save approx 3-4 days per month of Finance Officer not issuing invoices and chasing payment, allowing officer to retire Save approx 4 hours per week of each of Senior Planning Officers' time setting up & managing time recording, to be reinvested in performance improvement Saving of consulted officers time not recording/inputting time (unquantifiable), to be reinvested in performance improvement No bad debt or invoice queries
Issues considered (these are covered in more detail in the report)	Customer Focus; Corporate; Impact on Staff;

Consultation undertaken	Staff; Service Users; Stakeholders/Partners; Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer
How consultation was carried out	<p>Developers who had used the PPA service were asked for their views via telephone interviews</p> <p>All planning officers and environment team staff were given the opportunity to give their views</p> <p>The Agents Forum meeting on 22 February 2017 was presented with the proposed charging schedule and gave their views</p> <p>The Agents Forum mailing list was consulted by email questionnaire on 21 March and 7 responded</p> <p>As a result of consultations the cost of the 3 highest categories was reduced slightly to reduce the risk that PPA volumes would go down with the introduction of the up-front payment.</p>
Other options considered	<p>The process could stay as it is, however, given the number of inefficiencies with the current process, not changing is a great risk because there are no resources within the department to administer the process once the Finance Officer retires</p> <p>The process could revert to time recording in Uniform as originally set up 4 years ago, however this was less successful than the current process because some consulted teams were not on Uniform (and are still not on Uniform)</p> <p>The PPA service could be stopped altogether, and this may please some, however developers who use the service have been very complimentary and the income we receive ensures that the true cost of delivering the planning process can be more realistically covered</p>
Declaration of interest by Cabinet Member(s) for decision, including any dispensation granted:	<i>The nature of interest and whether interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an-other interest, including any conflict of interest, (as defined in Part 2, A and B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests). Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of their staff before taking the decision.</i>
Any conflict of interest declared by anyone who is consulted by a Member taking the decision:	
Signatures of Decision Makers	
Date of Signature	
Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision	