

Subject:	FEES AND CHARGES 2023/24
Meeting and Date:	Planning Committee (for information) – 17 November 2022 Cabinet – 16 January 2023 (part of larger report)
Report of:	Sarah Platts, Head of Planning and Development
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Nicholas Kenton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment
Decision Type:	Key
Classification:	Unrestricted
Purpose of the report:	This report has been prepared in order to bring the levels of fees and charges (F&Cs) for the financial year 2023/24 to Members' attention. These revised F&Cs will be included in the budget estimates for 2023/24.
Recommendation:	<p><u>Planning Committee</u></p> <p>That Members note the Council's fees and charges set out in Appendices 5.1 and 5.3 and note the national planning fees set out in Appendix 5.2.</p> <p><u>Cabinet</u></p> <p>That Members approve the Council's fees and charges set out in Appendices 5.1 and 5.3 and note the national planning fees set out in Appendix 5.2</p> <p>Minor adjustments to the local fees and charges to be delegated to the Head of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Investment.</p>

1. Summary

The constitution specifies that the Council's F&Cs shall be reviewed annually. In order to meet this requirement, all Directors have been asked to review the F&Cs within their areas of responsibility and to produce recommended levels for 2023/24. The fees and charges for planning are included in Appendices 5.1 and 5.3 for members to note. Members will also note the national fees for planning included in Appendix 5.2.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Council's constitution specifies that F&Cs shall be reviewed annually.
- 2.2 The level of Member approval required is dependent upon the types of F&Cs raised and therefore reports have to be submitted to:
 - Licensing Committee
 - Regulatory Committee
 - Planning Committee
 - Cabinet

- 2.3 In order to meet this requirement, the following reports are produced for setting the Planning fees:
- Planning Committee – Report to the meeting on 17 November 2022 of all F&Cs relevant to the Planning Committee.
 - Cabinet – Report to the meeting on 16 January 2023 of all F&Cs, but seeking specific approval of those F&Cs set by Cabinet.
- 2.4 Members are reminded that there is a framework of broad guidelines to be considered in formulating proposals for F&Cs is in place. This includes a checklist, which has been circulated to all Service Directors and to all officers considering F&Cs so that a rigorous and consistent approach is taken. A copy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.5 As in previous years, in order to assist Members, the data on F&Cs has been tabulated into a standard format that has been used for Appendix 5.1.

Detail and Narrative

These give a brief summary of the type of service being provided.

Set by Government

This indicates whether a charge is statutory or not. If a charge is statutory then it is effectively set by Government and although formal Member approval is still sought, there is little or no scope to make changes.

2023/24 Charge Inc VAT

The charge has been provided inclusive of VAT for two reasons. First, it shows what the customer will actually pay and is therefore more meaningful.

Second, charges for some services, car parking for example, which are not simply a direct recovery of costs, are set at a level, inclusive of VAT, having regard to relevant considerations including market level, where appropriate. The VAT is therefore a deduction from the amount of charge retained by DDC and is not a key factor in determining the appropriate charge. Members are asked to approve this approach.

2023/24 Proposed Charge Inc VAT

This is the recommended charge for 2023/24 and will, subject to Members' approval, be included in the 2023/24 budget.

2023/24 Total Expected Income ex VAT

This gives a broad indication as to how much income DDC is expected to receive and has been included to provide Members with a sense of the relative importance of individual charges or group of similar charges. The more significant income streams (generating over £3k) have been highlighted in **bold** type.

In some cases, the level of use is very low, or infrequent, or the service has only recently been introduced and so no level of income has been included.

Comments (inc Reason for the Change in Charges)

This provides Members with a brief explanation for the change. This will often be due to inflation or “catch up” inflation if the increase has been previously deferred until it can be made to a sensible rounded figure.

In some instances, guidance is still awaited from Government as to the basis upon which F&Cs should be set. In these cases, it has not always been possible to set a fee level, Member’s approval is sought to enable officers to adopt such fees at or close to government directed levels without a further report.

In summary, the fees and charges are proposed to remain at the same level as the current year. Planning application fees are nationally set and the target forecast for 2023-24 is proposed at £850,000 (2022-23 target is £900,000). The pre-application fees were quite significantly increased a couple of years ago and are therefore proposed for now to remain at the current levels. Remaining fees and charges generate very small sums (for instance, copying charges are reducing due to the availability of increased online information).

3. Basis for Setting of Fees

- 3.1 Members should take into account the following matters referred when noting the fees and charges included in Appendices 5.1-5.3:
- The statutory basis for levying the charges.
 - All relevant legal requirements and government guidance.
 - The cost of providing the service.
 - The need to maximise income at a time of grant cuts and council tax capping so as to ensure that in so far as possible, and taken year on year, the fees and charges are sufficient to meet the costs of providing the services.
 - Comparable charges at neighbouring authorities.
 - What the market can bear.
 - The matters referred to in the checklist of issues to consider (at Appendix 1).

4. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

There are no climate change implications.

5. Resource Implications

See Appendices.

6. Corporate Implications

Comment from the Strategic Director of Corporate Resources (linked to the MTFP):

- 6.1 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council:

- 6.2 Comment from the Equalities Officer:

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges checklist

Appendix 5.1 – Schedule of recommended F&Cs

Appendix 5.2 - A Guide to National Fees for Planning Applications in England
Appendix 5.3 – Pre-application Planning Fees
Appendix 5.4 - Section 106 Monitoring Fees

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