

# FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

## AGENDA PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Date:** Wednesday, 29 January 2020

**Time:** 5.00 pm

**Venue:** Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

**Members:**

Councillor N J Walker (Chairman)

Councillor I Bastable (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors F Birkett  
T M Cartwright, MBE  
P J Davies  
K D Evans  
M J Ford, JP  
Mrs K Mandry  
R H Price, JP

**Deputies:** S Dugan  
Mrs C L A Hockley  
Mrs K K Trott



**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Chairman's Announcements**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from members in accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct.

**4. Deputations**

To receive any deputations of which notice has been lodged.

**5. Review of the Council's Pre-Application Planning Advice Service and Charges**  
(Pages 1 - 20)

To consider a report by the Director of Planning and Regeneration on the proposed changes to the Council's pre-application planning advice service.



P GRIMWOOD  
Chief Executive Officer  
Civic Offices  
[www.fareham.gov.uk](http://www.fareham.gov.uk)  
21 January 2020

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# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to Planning Committee

**Date:** 29 January 2020

**Report of:** Director of Planning and Regeneration

**Subject:** Review of the Council's Pre-Application Planning Advice Service and Charges

#### SUMMARY

A report by the Director of Planning and Regeneration concerning proposed changes to the Council's pre-application planning advice service along with increases in the level of charging for providing pre-application planning advice, is due to be considered by the Council's Executive on 3 February 2020.

The Executive report and associated appendices are attached as a background paper to this summary report.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Committee :-

- (i) note the proposals the Director of Planning and Regeneration is making to the Executive in respect of pre-application planning advice and charges; and
- (ii) refer any comments on the proposals for pre-application planning advice and charges to the Executive when it considers this item at its meeting on 3 February 2020.

## **BACKGROUND**

1. Fareham Borough Council introduced pre-application planning charges in April 2009 for providing advice on many types of development.
2. Providing pre-application planning advice is a discretionary service. Local planning authorities may charge for providing discretionary services but where charges are made, they must not exceed the cost of providing the service.
3. The pre-application charges introduced in 2009 represented partial recovery of the costs associated with the Council providing the advice. Small annual increases have been made to the pre-application charges in recent years, but the current charges still do not reflect full cost recovery.
4. Following a review of the pre-application planning advice service, it was found that the service is broadly meeting the requirements of our customers. Some changes are proposed to address specific requests made by customers of the service.
5. It is also recommended that the actual charging structure for the service is changed, and that many of the charges are increased to recover a greater proportion of the actual cost to the Council for providing the service.
6. Some pre-application advice currently provided free of charge, is proposed to remain free of charge at the present time.
7. Details of the proposed changes to the pre-application planning advice service and charges are set out within the Executive report and associated appendices which are attached to this report.

### **Appendices:**

Annex 1: Report of the Director of Planning and Regeneration to the Executive - Review of the Council's Pre-Application Planning Advice Service and Charges

A: Fareham's current pre-application planning advice charges

B: Comparison of pre-application planning advice charges across Hampshire

C: Proposed pre-application planning advice service specification

D: Proposed pre-application planning advice charges

### **Background Papers:**

Report of the Director of Planning and Regeneration to the Executive - Review of the Council's Pre-Application Planning Advice Service and Charges

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Lee Smith (Ext 4427)

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 03 February 2020

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Planning and Development
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Review of the Council's Pre-Application Planning Advice Service and Charges</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Planning and Regeneration
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	A dynamic, prudent, progressive and best practice Council

**Purpose:**

To advise the Executive of the outcome of a recent review of the Council's pre-application planning advice service and charges.

**Executive summary:**

A review of the Council's pre-application planning advice service has recently been undertaken and found that it was broadly meeting the requirements of customers. The review also established that the Council's current charges for providing pre-application planning advice, represent only partial recovery of the costs of delivering the service. A proposal is therefore being brought to the Executive to increase the level of charging to provide pre-application planning advice.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Executive:

- (a) agrees the provision of pre-application planning advice based on the service specification set out in Appendix C;
- (b) recommends the proposed increased charges for providing pre-application planning advice set out at Appendix D to Council for approval as part of the Council's budget;
- (c) notes that, subject to the approval of Council as set out in (b) above, the charges will come into effect for all pre-application planning advice requests received on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020;
- (d) notes that a further report addressing charges in relation to listed building and heritage assets advice, planning performance agreements and design coding work (as set out within Paragraphs 37 and 46-50 of the Briefing Paper) will be presented to a future meeting of the Executive.

**Reason:**

To ensure that the pre-application service meets the needs of customers. To ensure that a greater proportion of the cost of delivering the pre-application planning advice service is recovered from users of the service, reflecting the Council's Medium-term Financial Strategy.

**Cost of proposals:**

If the increased charges proposed in the report are implemented in full, the Council will receive additional income and recover a greater proportion of the cost of delivering the pre-application planning advice service.

**Appendices:**

**A: Fareham's current pre-application planning advice charges**

**B: Comparison of pre-application planning advice charges across Hampshire**

**C: Proposed pre-application planning advice service specification**

**D: Proposed pre-application planning advice charges**

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	03 February 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	Review of the Council's Pre-Application Planning Advice Service and Charges
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Director of Planning and Regeneration
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Planning and Development

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Fareham Borough Council introduced pre-application planning charges in April 2009 for providing advice on many types of development.
2. Providing pre-application planning advice is a discretionary service, but one strongly encouraged by the Government and welcomed by many applicants. Local planning authorities may charge for providing discretionary services under Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003. Where charges are made, they must not exceed the cost of providing the service.
3. The pre-application charges introduced in 2009 represented partial recovery of the costs associated with the Council providing the advice, rather than full recovery. Annual increases of 5% have been made to the pre-application charges in recent years, but the current charges still do not reflect full cost recovery.
4. Members will be well aware of the considerable spending pressures this Council faces and therefore the importance of recovering costs where it is appropriate and reasonable to do so.
5. Following a full review of the pre-application planning advice service, it is recommended that many of the charges are increased to recover a greater proportion of the actual cost to the Council for providing the service. Some pre-application advice currently provided free of charge, is proposed to remain free of charge at the present time.

#### EXISTING PLANNING ADVICE SERVICE

6. Providing planning advice is an extremely important and valued part of the Development Management service.
7. Development Management presently ensures that a duty planning officer is available to meet customers in person, Monday-Friday, during office hours. Duty planning officers endeavour to answer customer's enquiries on planning matters during that first contact whenever possible, where questions relate to advice which the Council

does not charge for. Many of the customers are residents of the Borough with enquiries relating to their own property or their neighbourhood.

8. The service also receives numerous informal requests each year for advice on whether planning permission is likely to be granted for proposals before a formal planning application is submitted. Providing this advice in relation to an extension to a residential property is often relatively straightforward; major proposals however involve considerable officer time and can also involve Officers across a number of the Council's Services.
9. There are also a large number of written enquiries received by the service ranging from general questions about planning through to whether or not planning permission is required.
10. Fareham's scheme for pre-application planning advice and charges was first introduced in April 2009. With the exception of the small annual increase in the charges, the scheme has remained essentially unchanged since its introduction.

### **EXISTING PRE-APPLICATION CHARGING SCHEDULE**

11. At the present time pre-application planning advice is provided free of charge for the following proposals:

- Householder extensions and alterations, including all outbuildings, 'granny' annexes, extensions, roof extensions and alterations, hardstandings, satellite dishes, solar panels and similar energy efficiency proposals at a residential property
- Community uses which are non-profit making
- Works solely relating to trees
- Works solely relating to listed buildings
- Adverts directly related to a small businesses
- Lawful use certificates

12. This Council currently charges to provide planning advice for the following types of development:

- New residential dwellings (created through both new build and conversion)
- Provision of retail, commercial, agricultural and industrial floor space
- Provision of educational, hospital, leisure and recreational floor space
- Change of use applications
- Telecommunication/ mast proposals
- Advertisements (not relating to small businesses) and hoardings
- Variation of planning conditions (non-householder)
- Moorings/ pontoons
- Engineering operations
- Means of enclosure/ security measures (non-householder)

13. Fareham's current pre-application charges are based on the scale of the proposal (which are described as Level 1, 2 and 3 development). A fixed fee is currently charged irrespective of the time spent upon it. The amount currently charged for pre-application advice on different scales of development are set out at Appendix A.

14. Following the submission of paid for pre-application enquiries, Officers assess



proposals against Government policy and guidance, adopted and emerging policies and relevant planning history. Officers also consult with internal consultees and often undertake a site visit. Officers then provide feedback on proposals either through meetings with the enquirer or in writing. When meetings are held internal consultees may also be invited to attend.

## **REVIEW OF FAREHAM'S PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE SERVICE**

15. As explained earlier in this report, there has been no fundamental review of the pre-application planning advice service since its introduction in 2009. In undertaking this review Officers have looked at three distinct areas.
16. Firstly, Officers looked at the charges made by other Hampshire local planning authorities for providing pre-application planning advice.
17. Secondly, Officers have reviewed a number of pre-application cases of different levels where pre-application advice was provided. In reviewing these cases Officers have considered how many Officer hours, across all services, was spent in providing the advice.
18. Lastly, feedback from customers of the pre-application planning advice service have been considered. Such feedback relates to the quality of the advice, the speed with which it was provided and whether it represented good value for money in the customer's opinion.

## **PRE-APPLICATION PLANNING ADVICE CHARGES IN OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

19. In comparing the pre-application charges currently levied at Fareham with the other planning authorities within Hampshire, Officers looked at charges in respect of a number of 'hypothetical' planning proposals. The 'hypothetical' proposals chosen were: an extension to an existing residential house, 1 new dwelling, 50 new dwellings and 1000 square metres of industrial floor space.
20. The table at Appendix B, sets out Fareham's current charges at the top for the four different proposals, followed by the headline charges levied by all other local planning authorities across Hampshire for providing pre-application advice for the same proposals.
21. It should be stressed that these charges set out in the table represent 'headline' charges. Fareham's charges for example include all costs with the exception of external consultant fees. Fareham also gives customers the choice of a meeting or written response. Some local planning authorities only provide written responses and apply additional charges if customers request a meeting as well. Some authorities base their pre-application fee as a percentage of what the planning application fee would be.

## **REVIEW OF PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED**

22. In reviewing the Council's pre-application planning advice charges, a number of 'completed' cases have been reviewed. The review looked at the number of officers involved in providing advice and their time taken in doing so.
23. The Council's Finance Officers provided hourly rates (including all on costs) for Planners at different tiers within the Development Management service along with Officers within other Council services.

24. For all of the 'completed' cases reviewed, the charges levied for the pre-application planning advice, did not cover the full cost of providing the advice based on the time spent on each case using the hourly rates provided by the Council's Finance Officers.

## **FEEDBACK ON CURRENT PRE-APPLICATION SERVICE FROM PLANNING AGENTS**

25. Feedback from customers who have used the Council's pre-application advice service has been obtained through telephone surveys with planning agents, and other feedback received both in writing and verbally.

26. The broad feedback on the existing service has been:

- Level of charges do not discourage use of the service
- Speed of response good
- Choice of either meeting Planners or receiving written response appreciated
- Planners honour pre-application advice when the planning application is submitted

27. Some planning agents requested that any future pre-application scheme should look to achieve the following:

- Need to respond quickly to enquiries to encourage applicants to use the service
- Planners should visit all the sites before providing advice
- The opportunity to discuss pre-application proposals on site would be welcomed
- Internal services should be consulted on proposals and their advice shared
- Following receipt of advice, future clarification/ minor changes should not attract a further cost for applicants
- Make it possible to submit all pre-application enquiries electronically.

### *Response to the service enhancements requested by planning agents*

28. Enabling pre-application planning proposals to be submitted entirely electronically will be implemented as soon as it is practicable to do so.

29. Officers will endeavour to visit sites before any advice is provided, in connection with enquiries where a fee has been paid. Consideration will also be given to where it would be practical for pre-application planning discussions to take place on site.

30. It is the aim of the pre-application service that all relevant services within Fareham Borough Council will be consulted on the proposals. The responses received from those services (with the exception of the Council's own legal advice) could be shared with users of the service.

31. The request that minor clarifications and changes following the provision of pre-application planning advice should not be required to pay a further fee is noted. If a clarification/ change is truly minor and does not require further research or consultation with other services, then this request can be accommodated. Likewise, any clarification or change which requires further research or consultation with other services or requires the provision of a further detailed response will require a further fee. A judgment will need to be taken by the Planner on a case by case basis.

32. A 'Proposed pre-application planning advice service specification', is attached at Appendix C.

## **PROPOSED PRE-APPLICATION SERVICE – PLANNING ADVICE PROVIDED FREE OF**

## **CHARGE**

33. The fact that residents can get advice free of charge when they 'drop in' to the Civic Offices is very popular and has led to a lot of positive feedback about the service. The provision of this service was developed as part of the Vanguard Intervention to ensure that the Development Management service meets the needs of our customers.
34. By proportion, householder planning applications make up the greatest number of planning applications submitted to Fareham Borough Council each year. There is a good take up of the planning advice service in respect of householder proposals, which enables planning officers to work through issues with applicants and/or their agents in advance of planning applications being submitted. The fact that residents can drop into the offices or telephone at any time during the working day means that the opportunity exists to obtain advice at an early stage before proposals are drawn up.
35. In addition to this, the fact that it is possible for applicants and agents to speak directly to Planners means that many customers can obtain advice through their first point of contact. This in turn reduces the number of written requests for advice the Council receives. It is recommended that the Council continues to provide planning advice to residents looking to alter or extend their homes free of charge.
36. It is further recommended that pre-application planning advice relating to the following continue to be provided free of charge at the present time:
- Community uses which are non-profit making
  - Works solely relating to trees
  - Adverts directly related to a small business
  - Lawful use certificates
  - Works solely relating to listed buildings

### *Advice on matters relating to Listed Buildings and other Heritage Assets*

37. With regard to listed buildings in particular, it is evident that a lot of advice has previously been provided to listed building owners free of charge, which often involved the Conservation Planner undertaking site visits to the properties involved. A review will be undertaken shortly looking at how advice could be provided on listed buildings and other heritage assets in future and whether a charge should be levied for providing this advice.

## **PROPOSED PRE-APPLICATION SERVICE – PLANNING ADVICE FOR WHICH A CHARGE IS MADE**

38. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020, the Council received 63 requests for pre-application planning advice, for which a fee was paid. Of these 63 requests, 10 related to 'Level 1 Development', 20 related to 'Level 2 Development' and 33 'Level 3 Development' (as defined at paragraph 13 of this report). The fees paid in connection with these 63 requests total £12,605.
39. From the review of a sample of 'completed' cases, it is evident that this Council did not recover the full cost of providing the pre-application planning advice. It is therefore considered appropriate to increase the charges for providing pre-application planning advice.

40. At the same time, it is proposed to introduce a new charging structure. The reason for this is that whilst the cost of dealing with smaller scale proposals can be predicted with some degree of accuracy, for larger scale schemes an assessment needs to be taken on a case by case basis. By way of example, under the Council's current charging scheme the fee for providing pre-application planning advice on a scheme of 15 houses is the same as it would be for providing advice on a scheme of 1,500 houses.
41. As the scale and complexity of the proposals increase it becomes considerably more difficult to set a fixed fee which ensures that the Council achieves cost recovery for the advice it provides. To address this the new charging schedule proposes a 'Price on Application' (POA) approach to charges for the more complex/ larger scale proposals. In these cases, the Council would provide applicants with a projection of the likely number of Officer hours which would be spent on the project and base the charge upon this. Such an approach should ensure that cost recovery is achieved with the larger, more time and cost intensive schemes.
42. Whilst it is considered appropriate to increase the level of charges, it is important to ensure that the extent of any increase does not discourage customers from using the pre-application planning service. A careful balance in this respect therefore needs to be struck.
43. In order to establish the costs of providing pre-application planning advice, this Council's Finance Officers advised that the following reflects the hourly rates (including all relevant on costs) for a range of Officers within Fareham Borough Council:
- Planner/ Local Scale 6 post: £60
- Senior Planner/ Local Scale 8: £75
- Principal Planner/ Local Scale 10: £90
- Head of Service: £115
44. Based on the information provided by the Council's Finance Officers, the Officer time spent on previous pre-application planning advice cases and having had careful regard for the level of charges set by other local planning authorities within Hampshire, a proposed set of new charges is set out at Appendix D of this report.
45. Officers have reviewed the last 10 pre-application planning advice requests which have been received by the Council and calculated what fee would be payable under the new charges proposed at Appendix B. Of the 10 requests, 4 paid a fee of £158.40, 5 paid a fee of £316.80 and 1 paid a fee of £422.40; a total of £2639.80 was paid for the 10 requests. Under the proposed charging structure, the fees payable for the first 9 requests described would be £3,350. The final request for multiple proposals on a site would have attracted a fee of £1,000.

### **Further Service Enhancements**

#### *Planning Performance Agreements*

46. The need to respond quickly to pre-application planning enquiries is recognised by the Council. The ability to achieve this relies on the actions of the Council, external consultees and the enquirers themselves. To this end Officers will explore whether

this Council should make use of 'planning performance agreements'.

47. A planning performance agreement is a project management tool which the local planning authorities and applicants can use to agree timescales, actions and resources for handling particular applications. They can cover the pre-application and application stages and can also extend through to the post-application stage.
48. Planning performance agreements can be particularly useful in setting out an efficient and transparent process for determining large and/or complex planning applications. They encourage joint working between the applicant and local planning authority and can also help to bring together other parties such as statutory consultees.
49. A planning performance agreement is agreed voluntarily between the applicant and the local planning authority prior to the application being submitted and can be a useful focus of pre-application discussions about the issues that will need to be addressed.

#### *Design Codes- Welborne and other large scale developments*

50. There is also likely to be demands placed on the pre-application planning advice service as a result of proposed allocations within the emerging Fareham Local Plan 2036, and the progression of the Welborne development. With some larger scale developments, the pre-application planning advice service may need to be involved in other planning work including the preparation and review of Design Codes. The potential resource implications to the Council of these additional areas of work will be subject to a separate report to the Executive in the near future.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

51. If the charges are not increased for providing pre-application planning advice, the Council will need to continue funding this part of the service from other revenue budgets.

#### **CONCLUSION**

52. The Executive is invited to approve the Proposed pre-application planning advice service specification set out in Appendix C and to recommend to Council the Proposed pre-application planning advice charges set out at Appendix D.

#### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Lee Smith (Ext 4427)

## Fareham's current pre-application planning advice charges

### Level 3 development - £158.40

- provision of 1 or 2 dwellings (including staff accommodation)
- provision of retail, commercial, agricultural and industrial floor space up to 99 m<sup>2</sup>
- provision of educational, hospital, leisure and recreational floor space up to 99 m<sup>2</sup>
- change of use applications involving floor space up to 99 m<sup>2</sup>
- individual telecommunication equipment and masts applications (not including prior approval submissions)
- advertisements and hoardings
- variation of planning conditions (non householder)
- moorings/ pontoons
- engineering operations
- means of enclosure/ security measures (non householder)

### Level 2 development - £316.80

- provision of 3-14 dwellings or the provision of residential development on a site of between 0.1-0.49 hectares in area
- provision of retail, commercial, agricultural and industrial floor space between 100m<sup>2</sup> - 999m<sup>2</sup>
- provision of educational, hospital, leisure and recreational floor space between 100m<sup>2</sup> - 999m<sup>2</sup>
- change of use applications relating to sites or buildings between 100 and 999 m<sup>2</sup>
- telecommunication equipment and masts applications for 10 or more sites (not including prior approval submissions)

### Level 1 development - £422.40

- provision of 15 or more dwellings or residential development of a site more than 0.5 hectares in area
- provision of retail, commercial, agricultural and industrial floor space more than 1000m<sup>2</sup>
- provision of educational, hospital, leisure and recreational floor space more than 1000m<sup>2</sup>
- change of use applications relating to sites or buildings exceeding 1000m<sup>2</sup>

1. In addition to the above costs, there are instances where Officers need to seek advice from outside the Council for which an additional charge is levied. Those seeking the planning advice are asked to meet these costs before the external advice is sought.

2. For each request for a follow-up meeting or more written comments, a further fee is charged on the following basis:

- Level 1 developments - **£211.20 (£176 + £35.20 VAT)**
- Level 2 developments - **£158.40 (£132 + £26.40 VAT)**
- Level 3 developments - **£105.60 (£88 + £17.60 VAT)**

## Appendix B

### Comparison of current Fareham Borough Council pre-application planning charges with other Hampshire Authorities for a range of proposals

Local Planning Authority	Extension to a house	1 House	50 houses	1000 sqm industrial
<b>Fareham</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£158</b>	<b>£422</b>	<b>£422</b>
Basingstoke	£0	£138	£5,775	£1,617
East Hampshire	£48	£130	£2,310	£646
Eastleigh	£81.75	£275-£385	£2,110	£1,035
Gosport	£50	£131.50	£1,050	£661.50
Hart	£62.10 – £186.30	£138	£5,775	£POA
Havant	£52 - £98	£130 - £175	£1,150	£565
Isle of Wight	£50 - £200	£150 - £400	£500 - £800	£500 - £800
New Forest DC	£130	£396	£POA	£1,188
New Forest NP	£60	£125	£5,775	£450
Portsmouth	£40	£250	£600	£600
Rushmoor	£40	£240	£720	£720
Southampton	£35	£150	£700	£700
South Downs NP	£48	£240	£1,800	£900
Test Valley	£58	£144	£2,310	£647
Winchester	£0	£420	£990	£702



### Proposed pre-application planning advice service specification

#### Benefits of using our pre-application planning advice service

Providing constructive informal advice to help shape and progress development proposals is an important part of our service. It can help shape schemes positively before too much time and money has been invested. It can also enable us to identify at an early stage, schemes that the Council's Planners do not believe are likely to receive planning permission. In offering a pre-application advice service, we aim to:

- Identify adopted/emerging policies that are relevant to development proposals
- Identify relevant planning considerations
- Identify external consultees, groups and residents with whom you should engage
- Confirm 'local requirement' documents which will be needed in a submission
- Provide an indication of likely financial contributions (if any) which will be sought
- Provide, where possible, an indication of whether officers think the proposal is likely to get a favourable recommendation in the light of current policies
- Where a scheme is not considered acceptable, provide guidance on what needs to be done to address concerns.

#### Pre-application advice- proposals not subject to a charge

We will provide pre-application planning advice on these proposals free of charge:

- Householder extensions and alterations, including all outbuildings, granny annexes, extensions, roof extensions and alterations, hardstandings, satellite dishes, solar panels and similar energy efficiency proposals at a residential property
- Community uses which are non-profit making
- Works solely about trees
- Works solely about listed buildings
- Adverts directly related to a small business
- Lawful use certificates.

The level of advice the Council's Planners can offer depends on the information you provide. If you only give us basic information it is likely that we will only be able to provide broad comments and guidance. We will aim to get a written response to you within 25 working days of receiving your enquiry.

Providing pre-application advice on all other categories of development will be subject to a charge, based on the type and scale of the proposal.

#### Pre-application advice- proposals subject to a charge

Pre-application proposals should ideally as a minimum be accompanied by the following:

- A location plan clearly identifying the site

- A planning statement setting out the proposals and the main issues for which you would like views and guidance
- Photograph(s) of the site and its surroundings
- Sketch proposals of elevations/layouts to appropriate scales
- Schedules of existing buildings, uses and floor spaces

All drawings/statements etc you would like us to provide advice upon should be submitted from the outset. If you subsequently submit these to us, we may well decline to consider them without a further fee.

The quality of advice the Council's Planners can provide depends upon the information you provide. If you submit superficial statements and plans, our advice is likely to be broad, with extensive caveats. If you provide thorough plans and statements, we will be able to give more focused advice.

We are happy to provide a response to your pre-application request either at a meeting or in writing. If you would like a meeting, we will not provide you with a written response, but you are welcome to take notes of the meeting and submit them to the Planner dealing with your proposals for comment/agreement- there is no further charge for this.

Each pre-application planning advice request can only relate to one site and only one proposal will be accepted for each site. If you would like us to provide you with advice on more than one layout or proposal for the same site, you must make a separate request and pay a fee for each one.

## What do we do after receiving proposals for which a charge has been made?

We will acknowledge receipt of your proposal, letting you know the Planner who will be dealing with it and the date they will aim to respond to you by.

The Planner will assess your proposal in relation to:

- Relevant Government policy and guidance;
- Adopted and where relevant emerging planning policies;
- Any relevant planning history.

We will seek views upon the proposals from other sections within the Council where appropriate. Where you have asked us to provide feedback on your proposals at a meeting, the Planner dealing with your case may well invite internal consultees to attend.

Site visits will be undertaken as part of providing pre-application planning advice whenever it is feasible to do so. We will endeavour to accommodate requests to meet on site where it is possible to do so.

We aim to provide a response to all developments subject to a 'fixed fee' within 25 working days wherever possible.

Those pre-application proposals which are subject to POA (price on application), are likely to involve more complicated proposals with a broad range of issues to be considered. For those cases we will aim to provide an indication at the outset as to the timetable by which we will provide informal advice by.

For those pre-application proposals which are POA, the charges will be based on the likely officer time which will be spent dealing with the proposals. The Council will annually publish details of the hourly rates of officers upon which the charges will be based.

Where you have asked us to respond to your proposals in writing, you are welcome to contact the Planner to clarify any written points raised without further charge.

If you wish to submit further details for comment or wish to meet the Planner to discuss revisions after we have provided comments on your proposal, you will need to pay a further fee.

If you submit a formal planning application which is decided by the Planning Committee, the Committee will be made aware of pre-application advice provided. Similarly, the reports associated with planning applications decided by Planners, will make reference to any pre-application advice provided.

## Duty planning officers

We provide a Duty Planning Officer service between 8.45am and 5.15pm, Mondays to Fridays. The Duty Planning Officer will provide guidance on pre-application proposals for developments we do not charge for, but not for proposals subject to a charge.

## What we cannot provide

Whilst we aim to provide thorough pre-application advice, it is informal advice from officers which is not legally binding upon the Council when it makes a formal decision.

Even though Planners may indicate that in their view your proposals are acceptable they cannot guarantee that planning permission will be granted. In taking a final decision, the Planning Committee must consider a wide variety of material planning considerations, and must decide how much importance should be given to each of the planning considerations.

If there is a material change in circumstances or new information comes to light after the date the Council provides its informal advice, this may well have implications for informal pre-application planning advice previously provided.

## Proposed pre-application planning advice charges

<b>Residential</b>	<b>Fee Payable</b>
Extensions or other alterations to an existing dwelling including ancillary development within its curtilage	Free
1 – 9 dwellings*	£250 for first dwelling + £50 for every additional dwelling thereafter
10 – 49 dwellings*	£750 for first ten dwellings + £10 for every additional dwelling thereafter
50+ dwellings*	£POA
New dwellings but where numbers not known	£POA
Elderly persons accommodation, retirement living developments, sheltered apartments, residential care homes falling within Use Class C2,  - 1-9 bedspaces  - 10 – 50 bedspaces  - More than 50 bedspaces	  £250  £500  £750
Other residential uses <i>(including hotels, residential institutions, houses in multiple occupation, etc)</i>	£POA

\* = including change of use of existing floorspace

### **Non-residential**

Provision of floorspace (gross internal area), change of use of existing floorspace (gross internal area) or change of use of land (gross area):  - Up to 100 m2  - 101 – 499 m2  - 500 – 999 m2	  £200  £250  £500
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- More than 1,000 m2 where it relates to proposed uses with Classes B1, B2, B8, or a mix of these uses	£700
- More than 1,000 m2 where it relates to any uses outside of Classes B1, B2 or B8	£POA

**Other**

Small scale development not falling into any of the above categories <i>(for example: engineering works, new shop fronts, moorings, means of enclosure, renewable energy plant on existing business premises)</i>	£200
Installation or replacement of telecommunications mast	£200 per site
Minor amendments to an extant planning permission	£100
Advertisements / signage:	
- For the purposes of a community use which is non-profit making (not including education providers)	Free
- On business premises less than 100 m2 gross internal floor area	Free
- All other adverts	£150
Any development or works being carried out by a community use which is non-profit making (not including education providers)	Free
Follow up advice	50% of the original pre-application planning advice fee/ £POA

**Notes:**

1. £POA (Price on Application) indicates that a fee will be calculated on a case by case basis, based on a schedule of rates published by the Council and updated annually.

2. Where advice is sought in relation to mixed use proposals, the fee for each element of the scheme should be calculated using the table above and then added together.
3. Where advice is required from external consultants or consultees to whom a payment must be made, the applicant will be expected to meet these costs and they will be in addition to the pre-application advice fee set out above.