

**122 PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO PLANNING APPLICATION FEES
IN ENGLAND (CONSULTATION)**
Report DRR 10/00139

A consultation document on Proposals for Changes to Planning Application Fees had been received with a closing date of 7th January 2011, a copy of which had been circulated with the officer report.

Currently planning fees were set nationally although not all applications attracted a fee. The consultation paper put forward two options:-

- i) To decentralise the responsibility of setting fees to local planning authorities (this was the preferred option in the paper); or
- ii) Maintain the current fee option.

The proposals for fee changes were on the basis that a local authority would be able to set its own fee levels but should be non profit making. The fee would cover only handling, processing and determining those applications which attracted a fee. It was not proposed to change the type of applications that did not currently attract fees. Comments were also being sought on allowing local planning authorities to decide whether to give applicants a 'free go' when resubmitting an application following refusal or withdrawal and to set a higher fee for retrospective applications.

The Chief Planner had set out proposed responses to the consultation questions for approval and explained the background to the comments. Councillor Michael, Chairman of the Development Control Committee, attended to speak to the item, which because of the deadline had not been able to be considered by her Committee. She supported the decentralisation of fee charges and the responses proposed. The Chairman suggested that the response to Question 1 on whether the Council agreed that LPAs should set their own fees should be more positive.

RESOLVED that the recommended responses to the consultation on planning fees as set out in the report be endorsed subject to Question 1 being "Yes, but while on the face of it this is an attractive change, in practice because the fees will operate on a cost recovery basis, it will not change the percentage of the planning service which will be covered by fee income."