

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date: 13 March 2017

Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Time: 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Richard Lewis (Chairman)
Glenvil Greenwood-Smith (Vice Chairman)
Steven North (Leader of the Council)
Glenn Harwood MBE (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Tony Boto Marika Hillson
Wendy Brackenbury Andy Mercer
Val Carter Phillip Stearn
Roger Glithero JP

458. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Brackenbury, Helen Harrison, Dudley Hughes JP and Sarah Peacock.

459. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

460. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Item	Nature of Interest	DPI	Other Interest
Roger Glithero JP	Housing White Paper: DCLG Offer to Increase Planning Fees	May be making a planning application in the future		Yes

461. QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.3.

462. FOOD SAFETY AND HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2017/18

The Health Protection Manager presented a report which introduced the Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plan, which was a statutory requirement of both the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive.

The proposed interventions identified in the service plan would allow the Council to target those risks that had been identified in the local business community but still allow the service to help businesses to develop and grow.

R.26 RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

That, subject to the identified typographical amendments being made, the Food Safety and Health & Safety Service Plan 2017/18 be approved (pages 380 to 408).

(Reason: To ensure compliance with legislation.)

463. HOUSING WHITE PAPER: DCLG OFFER TO INCREASE PLANNING FEES

The Head of Planning Services presented a report which sought approval to confirm to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that the Council intended to increase its planning fees by 20% from July 2017 in line with an opportunity offered through the Housing White Paper.

The Council was required to respond by 13 March 2017 if it intended to take up the opportunity to increase its fees and given the DCLG's deadline, a holding response had already been sent to them. The formal decision of this Committee would be sent to them to confirm the Council's position after this meeting.

The government had been considering the possibility of allowing local planning authorities to set their own planning fees but was now offering authorities an opportunity to increase planning fees by 20%. This was on the basis that the additional funding raised was ring-fenced to provide improvements to planning services. It was estimated that for ENC the additional income generated from higher planning fees would be £121,280.

Members raised their concerns at the possible impact the increase in fees and charges would have on individual householders and small builders. They were keen to look at ways to support them whilst continuing to support growth and the service industry and protecting jobs. The Head of Planning Services confirmed that the full details of the offer were still awaited from the DCLG and he was happy to explore what options could be available.

It was moved and seconded that the Council should accept the offer made by the DCLG and that the Finance Sub-Committee be delegated to examine the possible development of a scheme to support small builders and householders following the increase in fees and charges.

On being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Council wishes to increase planning fees and charges by 20% from July 2017 in line with the DCLG's proposals arising from the publication of the Housing White Paper '*Fixing our broken housing market*'.
- (ii) To delegate to the Finance Sub-Committee that they examine the possible development of a scheme to support small builders and householders to mitigate the increase in fees and charges.

(Reason: To enable the Council to respond to the DCLG's request that local planning authorities confirm their intention to increase planning fees in line with newly offered government freedoms.)

464. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

A report was received from Councillor Gill Mercer, the Council's appointed representative on the Northamptonshire Police and Crime Panel.

RESOLVED:

That the report on the Northamptonshire Police and Crime Panel be received.

(Reason: To ensure compliance with the Council's Constitution.)

Chairman