

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCE, INNOVATION AND PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Key Decision

1 AMENDMENTS TO BUILDING CONTROL FEES

Summary

This report identifies errors in the calculation of the Building Control Fees for 2019/2020 and provides a correct version of the fees table.

1.1 Proposed amendments

1.1.1 A number of calculation errors have been identified with regard to the Building Control fees published on the Partnership website, in particular:

- Flats – differences in plan charge, inspection charge, building notice and regularisation charge
- Conversions – differences in building notice and regularisation charge
- Loft conversions – differences in building notice and regularisation charge
- Alterations – differences in building notice and regularisation charge

1.1.2 The Building Control charges were agreed by FIPAB on 9 January 2019, with a start date of 1 April 2019. During the summer of 2019 it became apparent that the Building Control fees agreed by FIPAB and Cabinet contained calculation errors.

1.1.3 The Building Control fees table has been updated and the errors corrected. However, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, agreement is sought for the updated and corrected Building Control Fees Table, which is attached at Annex 1.

1.1.4 In order to minimise any risk associated with the fee inaccuracies, the Building Control website has been updated to state that fee information can be provided on request. However, this is a less efficient way of managing the service and although approval of the correctly calculated fees will only be in operation for the remainder of the 2019/20 financial year, it is considered worthwhile to regularise the position both in terms of working practice and to ensure the process is based on the correct position.

1.2 Legal Implications

- 1.2.1 The Council is currently charging fees that have been calculated incorrectly; in nearly all cases the incorrect fee charged is lower than it should be. Whilst this does not adversely affect the customer financially, the fact that the fees contain errors does present a reputational, and potentially challengeable, issue for the Council.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.3.1 The incorrect fees are, in the main, lower than the correct fees. This means that there has been a small loss of income for Building Control.

1.4 Risk Assessment

The correct Building Control fees would alleviate any risk.

1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.6 Recommendations

- 1.6.1 It is recommended to Cabinet to **APPROVE** the following amendments with effect from 1 November 2019:

- 1) Adopt the correct Building Control fees schedule 2019/2020 as attached at **[Annex 1]**.

Background papers:

Nil

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