



<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>PROPERTY CERTIFICATE &amp; NON STATUTORY CHARGES FEE INCREASE</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Prosperity
Outcome	Actively develop and promote the economic and social development of the area
Lead Officer	Head of Health and Built Environment

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	None
Included in Current Year Estimates	<b>NO</b>
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to consider the review of fees with respect to both property certificates and non-statutory charges.

## 2.0 Background: Property Certificate Charges

The current fees charged for Property Certificates were introduced across Northern Ireland on 1 January 2004 and there have been no reviews or price increases since.

To provide consistency across all 11 Councils, Building Control NI (BCNI) reviewed the current fees and established that there should be an inflationary increase as from **1<sup>st</sup> April 2020**. Discussions took place with the Law Society and they indicated that they did not have any concerns with the proposed increases. SOLACE were also informed of the proposal to ensure consistency in fee charging and they have since advised BCNI that they are content with the minimal inflationary increases, subject to the matter being reported to and receiving approval from their respective Councils.

It has also been recommended in mitigating against having to introduce future annual inflationary costs that a 4 year inflationary fee review cycle take place. This will mean a further review would not be required until 2023, unless there were significant changes to the Council Property Certificate process.

These minimal increases are necessary to enable Councils to maintain adequate resources to ensure that the service is delivered in a prompt, efficient and professional manner.

The current and proposed fee structure is detailed below:

<b>Current and Proposed Property Certificate Charges</b>		
	<b>Existing Council Charges</b>	<b>Proposed Council Charges 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020</b>
Property Certificate, 10 Year Search <sup>1</sup>	£60.00	<b>£70.00</b>
Property Certificate, Follow Up Search to 1973 <sup>1</sup>	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Property Certificate, Full Search to 1973 <sup>1</sup>	£85.00	<b>£95.00</b>
Property Certificate, Specified 10 Year Search <sup>1</sup>	£60.00	<b>£70.00</b>

It is proposed to introduce these new charges as from **1<sup>st</sup> April 2020**

### 3.0 **Background: Building Control - Non Statutory Charges (Fee Increase)**

The table below indicates the non-statutory charges that Building Control apply to administer and produce the requested information. These charges are required to be advertised as part of the Councils Publication Scheme and are presently on the Council website.

In reviewing the Property Certificate Fee as detailed above it was agreed by all within BCNI to review all non-statutory charges which had not been reviewed since 2015. Applying simple inflationary rates and factoring increased staff costs this increases the standard fee accordingly from £25 to £30 (excluding property certificates).

<b>Current and Proposed Non Statutory Charges</b>		
	<b>Existing Council Charges</b>	<b>Proposed Council Charges 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020</b>
Confirmation of 'Exemption' from making a Building Control application <sup>2</sup>	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Duplicate or Archived Retrieved Copy of Completion Certificate	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Photocopy of original approval or completion certificate requested under Fol/EiR	No Charge	No Charge
Comfort Letter (Completion before 1994) <sup>3</sup>	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Additional/Revised stamped set of 'Approved' Plans (where drawings/plans have been provided)	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Confirmation of address letter	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Review of Archived Records	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Legal Enquiries (i.e.Work Stages)	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
VAT Exemption Letter (for HMRC)	-	<b>£30.00</b>
Withdrawn application (after validation and before Approval / Notice of Rejection issued or PONE) <sup>4</sup>	£25.00	<b>£30.00</b>
Copy of archived drawings / plans (where Review of Archived Records is required the above fee is also applicable)	- - -	A0 size <b>£5.00</b> A1 size <b>£5.00</b> A2 size <b>£5.00</b>

### **3.0 Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Environmental Services Committee recommends to Council the increase in the Council Property Certificate and Non-Statutory Charges as detailed above as with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.