

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET – 4 SEPTEMBER 2018

Recommendation from the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel on 9 August 2018:-

SELF BUILD AND CUSTOM HOUSEBUILDING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
CONSULTATION

Members considered the report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) on the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding eligibility criteria consultation.

The Council (as a relevant authority) has a duty to maintain and publicise a Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register for (a) individuals and (b) associations of individuals, who seek to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority's area for their own Self-build and Custom Housebuilding. Linked to this, the Council has a duty to grant permission for sufficient land suitable for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding to meet the demand on the register.

The report noted that under Regulation 5 (2) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016, the Council may introduce a local eligibility test, including local connection and financial solvency criteria; and a fee for applicants to be entered onto and remain on the register.

The Panel, on 5 October 2017 were advised of the proposals to consult on local eligibility conditions and the introduction of a fee for applicants to enter onto and remain on the Register. The Panel had agreed at the said meeting that the eligibility conditions should be made available for six week period for consultation and that Officers would report the result of the consultation back to this Panel with a schedule of any recommended changes, as considered appropriate. The Panel noted the draft proposal for a fee to be introduced and that a final proposal would be developed by Officers and brought before it alongside the results of the consultation.

The consultation responses were summarised in Appendix A and attached to the report. Officers clarified the duty to grant planning permission which only applied to entries on Part 1 of the Register and explained that the Council has to have due regard to Part 2 of the Register but has no duty to grant planning permission.

Members considered the fees proposed and it was noted that fees varied between Councils. A number of questions were raised regarding recovering administration costs and whether the proposed fee was cost effective. The fees being introduced in October 2018 would be reviewed after one year and recalculated to ensure that the Council's estimated time taken to register a new individual and officer time would be covered.

RESOLVED

1. That the Panel considers the results of the public consultation on the proposed introduction of a local eligibility test as set out at paragraphs 4.7 to 4.8 of this report and Appendix A.
2. That the Panel agrees to recommend to Cabinet the introduction of local eligibility criteria for entry on to the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register, proposed to take effect from 31 October 2018, as set out at paragraphs 4.16 to 4.17 of this report.
3. That the Panel agrees to recommend to Cabinet for approval by Full Council the introduction of a fee of £25 for new applicants to enter on to the register, as set out in paragraphs 4.24 to 4.28 of this report, proposed to take effect from 31 October 2018.
4. That the Panel agrees to recommend to Cabinet for approval by Full Council the introduction of a fee of £25 for a new association to enter onto the register plus £10 for each individual within the association excluding the lead individual, as set out in paragraphs 4.24 to 4.28 of this report, proposed to take effect from 31 October 2018.
5. That the Panel agrees to recommend to Cabinet for approval by Full Council the introduction of an annual fee of £15 for individuals to remain on Part 1 of the register, as set out in paragraphs 4.29 to 4.31 of this report, proposed to take effect from 31 October 2018.
6. That the Panel agrees to recommend to Cabinet for approval by Full Council the introduction of an annual fee of £15 for each association plus £10 for each individual within that association to remain on Part 1 of the register, as set out in paragraphs 4.29 to 4.31 of this report, proposed to take effect from 31 October 2018.
7. That the appropriateness of the fees be subject to review 12 months after their introduction.