

Business Change Mandate (Including Budget Mandates) Proposal Number: B9

Title: Planning Service – Income Generation

All information requested must be completed on the proposed mandate to enable the Cabinet to decide whether to proceed with the proposal.

Mandate Completed by	<i>Mark Hand</i>
Date	<i>01/09/2015</i>

How much savings will it generate and over what period?
£40,000 increase in planning fee income from 16/17 onwards.
Directorate & Service Area responsible
Planning / Enterprise
Mandate lead(s)
Mark Hand

Final mandate approved by Cabinet	Date:
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1. Vision and Outcomes of the Mandate

Give a business context for the mandate. This must pick up on the vision and what the new / improved / reduced service will look like in the future including the anticipated experience of users. It must also consider any impact on the Council's key priorities and strategic outcomes. Similarly does it impact on service performance within the immediate service area or any impact on other services provided by the authority / any other providers. In doing so, the mandate must be tested against the equality impact assessment and sustainable development impact assessment and must consider impact in relation to the new Future Generations Bill.

What is the issue that the proposal is seeking to address?

Reduce the net cost of the Planning service by increasing the budgeted income line by £40k.

What evidence have you got that this needs to be addressed?

Reduced budget settlements from the Welsh Government mean that Local Authorities must seek to reduce the costs of the services provided, or where appropriate deliver the services differently or cease service delivery. Planning is a statutory function, so the service cannot be ceased.

How will this proposal address this issue

Increasing the budgeted income line for Development Management (N120) will reduce the net costs of providing the Planning service. Fee income comes from a combination of measures:

- Statutory planning application fees. These are set by the Welsh Government. As of 01/10/15 planning application fees are being increased by, on average, 15%. Based on the average annual fee income over the last five years, this 15% increase amounts to an additional £69.5k per annum;
- An additional £5k per annum is predicted based on a new charge for discharging planning conditions;
- The Council currently provides a fee-earning discretionary pre-application advice service. New legislation makes this a mandatory service, and as such the Welsh Government will set the fees. Fees proposed via a current consultation, if imposed, would result in a £5k reduction in income against current income levels;
- The increased planning fees are accompanied by new regulations that require the application fee to be refunded if applications are not determined within 24 weeks of the agreed deadline (or 16 weeks for some applications). Every effort will be made to avoid having to pay a refund, and this budget mandate assumes that no refunds are payable. It would only take one large

application to incur a refund to negate the whole £40k income increase proposed by this budget mandate.

Carl Sergeant, Welsh Minister for Planning and Natural Resources, has written to all Local Authorities in August 2015 stressing the importance of ensuring planning services are properly resourced and advising that the 15% application fee increase is expected to be used to secure planning service improvements for customers. [WG - Planning Resource 190815.pdf](#) . Consequently, while this budget mandate offers a £40k budget saving (by increasing the budgeted income and therefore reducing the net cost of the service), the remaining £29.5k is retained to fund service improvements and as a contingency given significant budget line increases in the last two years.

It is worth noting that, in collating evidence for the 2015 planning application fee increase, the Welsh Government confirmed that application fees meet just 60% of the cost of dealing with applications, which itself is only part of delivering the planning service. Consequently, even with the 15% fee increase, the service will not be cost neutral.

What will it look like when you have implemented the proposal

The Development Management income budget line will increase by £40k.

Service delivery will be unaffected by the budget mandate proposal. Some additional income will be retained for service improvements as required by the Minister.

Expected positive impacts

The net cost of the planning service will be reduced, in turn reducing the Council's overall net costs.

Expected negative impacts

Caution should be exercised in financial forward planning because application fees are directly linked to wider economic activity for example the housing market. Simply assuming a year-on-year income increase caused Local Authorities problems when the economic downturn occurred in 2008.

It should be noted that the budgeted income line for planning application fee income in 15/16 is £93k higher than the budgeted income for 14/15 and £44k higher than actual income in 14/15. This £93k increase comprises:

- £20k as a one-off increase to contribute towards overspend in Children's Services in 15/16;
- £49k to align the budget income line with actual income;
- £24k budget income line increase.

Excluding the one-off £20k amount detailed above, the 15/16 budget target is £577k, which marginally exceeds the highest income

level received in the last 5 years. (The lowest income in the five year period was £344k in 2011/12 and the mean was £464k).

Significant increases have already been made to the planning income budget target in recent years, and caution needs to be exercised over assumptions that fee income will continue to increase year on year given that fees are set by the Welsh Government, and income is heavily reliant on the wider economy.

2. Savings proposed

Show how the budget mandate will make savings against the current service budget. This must cover each year implicated. This section must also cover any other efficiency that will arise from the mandate.

What savings and efficiencies are expected to be achieved?								
Service area	Current Budget £	Proposed Cash Savings £	Proposed non cash efficiencies – non £	Target year				Total Savings proposed
				16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	
Planning application fee income	577,111	£40,000	n/a	£40,000	0	0	0	£40,000

3. Options

Prior to the mandate being written, an options appraisal will have taken place. Summarise here the outcome of the Options considered and detail the rationale on why they were disregarded. (see options appraisal guide for further information)

Options	Reason why Option was not progressed	Decision Maker
Offer a lesser saving	Corporate objective of maximising savings to offset LG settlement cuts not achieved.	MH
Offer a greater saving	Taking into account budget trends from the last 5 years, the volatility of the market, and the Welsh Government explicit requirement that application fee increases be reinvested into improving the planning service, £40k is considered to be the maximum sustainable and deliverable income increase.	MH

4. Consultation

Have you undertaken any initial consultation on the idea(s)?		
Name	Organisation/ department	Date
Dave Loder	Finance	01/09/2015
Phil Thomas and Kim Lloyd	Planning	12/08/2015
Select Committee	Economy & Development Select Committee	04/11/15
Public and other stakeholders	8 th October to 31 st November	
Cabinet (sign off to proceed)	6th January 2016	

Has the specific budget mandate been consulted on?		
Function	Date	Details of any changes made?
Department Management Team	12/08/15	None
Other Service Contributing to / impacted	28/09/15	Staff conference – no changes made
Senior leadership team		None
Select Committee	04/11/15	None – mandate supported
Public or other stakeholders	Staff Conference 28 th September 6/10/15-30/11/15 Public Consultation Period	
Cabinet (sign off to proceed)		

Will any further consultation be needed?		
Name	Organisation/ department	Date

5. Actions to deliver the mandate

Describe the key activities that will be undertaken to deliver the mandates and the action holders. This includes any actions contributed to by other services. Give the timescales to complete the work. This must also factor in any business activities that will need to be done differently or cease in order to achieve the mandate.

Action	Officer/ Service responsible	Timescale
n/a Application fees are set by WG and the decision has already been made to increase them by 15% as of 01/10/2015.	n/a	n/a

6. Additional resource/ business needs

Describe any additional finance, resource and capability needed in order to carry out the proposed mandate successfully. For example new funding, expertise e.g. marketing and knowledge etc..

Any additional investment required	Where will the investment come from	Any other resource/ business need (non-financial)
n/a	n/a	n/a

7. Measuring performance on the mandate

How do you intend to measure the impact of the mandate? This could include: speed of service; quality of service; customer satisfaction; unit cost; overall cost. For advice on developing performance measures you can contact Policy and Performance Team, for advice on unit costs speak with your directorate accountant.

Focus- Budget / Process / Staff / Customer	Indicator	Actual 2016/17	Actual 2017/18	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2019/20	Target 2016/17	Target 2017/18	Target 2018/19	Target 2019/20
Budget	Planning application fee income								
Budget	Fee refunds incurred								

8. Key Risks and Issues

Are there any potential barriers and risks that will need to be managed in delivering the mandate, including any negative impacts identified in section 1 that need to be accounted for. Also, set out the steps that will be taken to mitigate these. The risks should be scored in accordance with the [council's policy](#).

Barrier or Risk	Strategic/ Operational	Reason why identified (evidence)	Risk Assessment			Mitigating Actions	Post mitigation risk level
			Likelihood	Impact	Overall Level		

Application fee income drops	Operational	Fee levels fluctuate affected primarily by the economy and by other external factors e.g. Government subsidies for renewable energy developments	Medium	High	Medium	Effective trend- and evidence-based budget monitoring.	Medium
Application fee refunds due	Operational	New regulations allow for a fee refund if an application is not determined within a set time period	Medium	Medium	Medium	Seek applicant's agreement to extended deadline. If not agreed, ensure application is determined before refund kicks in. Ensure other stakeholders (e.g. internal and external consultees) are aware of this issue. Determine application before refund deadline.	Low
Mandatory application fees are reduced	Strategic	Fees are set by WG, so beyond MCC's control.	Low	High	Low	Recent consultation on proposed increases, so highly unlikely to now be reduced.	Low

9. Assumptions

Describe any assumptions made that underpin the justification for the option.

Assumption	Reason why assumption is being made (evidence)	Decision Maker
Application workload remains constant (and therefore fee income plus 15% increase achieves the additional income target)	Best predictions based on trends over the last 5 years.	Mark Hand

10. Monitoring the budget mandate

The budget mandates must be monitored through directorate budget monitoring. This will lead into corporate budget monitoring. In addition the action plan, performance measures and the risk assessment must be transferred into the service plans for the business area in order to monitor and challenge the delivery of the budget mandate, including the savings being achieved and the level of impact.

11. Evaluation

It is important to evaluate the impact of the mandate once it has been fully delivered to know whether it has successfully achieved what it set out to do and to ensure that findings can be used to inform future work.

Planned Evaluation Date	Who will complete the evaluation?
30/04/2017	Mark Hand

DRAFT



<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Mark Hand</p> <p>Phone no: 01633 644803 E-mail: markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>Budget mandate B09 – Planning Service – Income Generation.</p> <p>Increase Development Management income line by £40k (net) due to Welsh Government decision to increase mandatory planning application fees from 01/10/15.</p>
<p>Name of Service</p> <p>Planning</p>	<p>Date Future Generations Evaluation form completed</p> <p>13/09/2015</p>

1. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal.




Well Being Goal	How does the proposal contribute to this goal? (positive and negative)	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>Positive: reducing the net cost of the planning service will ensure the statutory service remains sustainable and jobs are retained within MCC and wealth generation externally is enabled via planning decisions. The area of work undertaken by the planning section directly and indirectly influences use of resources, wealth creation and employment, via planning policy and land use</p>	<p>Not all of the fee increase has been put forward as a budget saving, because the Welsh Minister explicitly states that the additional planning application fee income must be reinvested in service improvements, which would in turn benefit customers and stakeholders. The proposed</p>



Well Being Goal	How does the proposal contribute to this goal? (positive and negative)	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>planning decisions. Ensuring the service is financially sustainable is therefore beneficial.</p> <p>Negative: the service will be more expensive for customers, and therefore does not generate wealth for all in itself, but this is a result of a WG decision to increase application fees.</p>	<p>mandate is considered to be the maximum reasonable compromise.</p> <p>NB The Welsh Government has recognised that planning application fees do not achieve cost recovery, in fact achieving approximately only 60% of the costs incurred in determining planning applications. However, being a mandatory statutory service the fees are set by the Welsh Government so MCC cannot increase the fee further.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>Positive: The area of work undertaken by the planning section directly and indirectly influences biodiversity and ecology via planning policy and land use planning decisions. Ensuring the service is financially sustainable is therefore beneficial.</p> <p>Negative: n/a.</p>	<p>Not all of the fee increase has been put forward as a budget saving, because the Welsh Minister explicitly states that the additional planning application fee income must be reinvested in service improvements, which would in turn benefit customers and stakeholders. The proposed mandate is considered to be the maximum reasonable compromise.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>Positive: The area of work undertaken by the planning section directly and indirectly influences access to healthy lifestyle choices via planning policy and land use planning decisions. Ensuring the service is financially sustainable is therefore beneficial.</p> <p>Negative: n/a.</p>	<p>Fees are waived for people who are registered disabled and applying for planning permission to adapt their homes. (This is a requirement of the mandatory fees set by Welsh Government).</p>

Well Being Goal	How does the proposal contribute to this goal? (positive and negative)	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>Positive: The area of work undertaken by the planning section directly and indirectly influences the appearance, viability, safety and connectivity of communities via planning policy and land use planning decisions. Ensuring the service is financially sustainable is therefore beneficial to securing these outcomes.</p> <p>Negative: Increased application fee costs would adversely affect customers, however it will have greatest impact on the biggest applications which are typically submitted by large companies. For smaller scale applications, e.g. house extensions, the application fee is minimal compared to the project costs (e.g. application fee = £190, typical extension = £30k build cost).</p>	<p>Fees are waived for people who are registered disabled and applying for planning permission to adapt their homes.</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>Positive: The area of work undertaken by the planning section directly and indirectly influences the appearance, viability, safety and connectivity of communities via planning policy and land use planning decisions. Ensuring the service is financially sustainable is therefore beneficial.</p> <p>Negative: none.</p>	<p>Not all of the fee increase has been put forward as a budget saving, because the Welsh Minister explicitly states that the additional planning application fee income must be reinvested in service improvements, which would in turn benefit customers and stakeholders. The proposed mandate is considered to be the maximum reasonable compromise.</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Positive: The area of work undertaken by the post indirectly influences these matters via planning policy and land use planning decisions. The Welsh language is now a material planning</p>	<p>Not all of the fee increase has been put forward as a budget saving, because the Welsh Minister explicitly states that the additional planning application fee income must be reinvested in service improvements, which would in turn benefit customers and stakeholders. The proposed</p>

Well Being Goal	How does the proposal contribute to this goal? (positive and negative)	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>consideration. Ensuring the service is financially sustainable is therefore beneficial.</p> <p>Negative: none.</p>	<p>mandate is considered to be the maximum reasonable compromise.</p>
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>Positive: The area of work undertaken by the post indirectly influences equality and the ability of people to meet their potential, via planning policy and land use planning decisions.</p> <p>It is important to note that the increased application fees are the result of a Welsh Government decision: this is not in the control of MCC. Access to the planning service as a customer would not be disproportionately altered as a result of the protected characteristics of age, gender reassignment, race, religion or beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership. Applications to modify homes by people who are registered disabled are exempt from application fees. Charities receive a discounted fee.</p> <p>Negative: none.</p>	<p>None.</p>

2. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	How does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle?	What has been done to better to meet this principle?
 <p>Long-term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p><i>We are required to look beyond the usual short term timescales for financial planning and political cycles and instead plan with the longer term in mind (i.e. 20+ years)</i></p> <p>The fee increases are the result of a WG decision. The use of the increased fees to reduce the net cost of the planning service seeks to maintain the sustainability of provision of this vital statutory service. The budget mandate notes concerns regarding the volatility of the development industry at present as economic recovery is underway.</p>	<p>Budget trends will be closely monitored to ensure the revised income line is sustainable.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>Ensuring the planning service is properly resourced will enable effective community engagement to be maximised. Reducing the net cost of the service via increased income helps to sustain the current level of service.</p>	<p>n/a</p>
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p><i>Who are the stakeholders who will be affected by your proposal? Have they been involved?</i></p> <p>The application fee increases are the result of a WG decision, following public consultation, as part of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>The increased income line proposed as part of this budget mandate will be subject to Member and public consultation as part of the budget setting process.</p>	<p>The forthcoming budget setting consultation process.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	How does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle?	What has been done to better to meet this principle?
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The proposal seeks to avoid making cuts to the service by using additional income to reduce the net cost of service delivery. The economy is showing signs of recovery, which in turn means increased development activity and an increase in the number of complex planning applications. Ensuring that a sustainable and effective planning service remains in place is essential to aiding economic recovery and delivering the Council’s objective of building sustainable and resilient communities.</p>	
 <p>Positively impacting on people, economy and environment and trying to benefit all three</p>	<p><i>There is space to describe impacts on people, economy and environment under the Wellbeing Goals above, so instead focus here on how you will better integrate them and balance any competing impacts</i></p> <p>The work undertaken by planning service directly relates to promoting and ensuring sustainable development and its three areas: environment, economy and society. It is important to ensure this work is adequately resourced, which this proposal seeks to achieve by reducing the net cost of the service without reducing capacity.</p>	n/a

3. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	None	None	This proposal seeks to reduce the net costs of the planning service by increasing the income line by £40k. The increased income is a result of increased mandatory planning application fees, which are set by the Welsh Government.
Disability	None	None	Planning application fees are waived for people who are registered disabled and applying for planning permission to adapt their homes. (This is a requirement of the mandatory fees set by Welsh Government).
Gender reassignment	None	None	This proposal seeks to reduce the net costs of the planning service by increasing the income line by £40k. The increased income is a result of increased mandatory planning application fees, which are set by the Welsh Government.
Marriage or civil partnership	None	None	See above
Race	None	None	See above
Religion or Belief	None	None	See above
Sex	None	None	See above

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sexual Orientation	None	None	See above
Welsh Language	<p><i>Under the Welsh Language measure of 2011, we need to be considering Welsh Language in signage, documentation, posters, language skills etc.</i></p> <p>None.</p>	None	See above

4. **Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on important responsibilities of Corporate Parenting and safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect either of these responsibilities?** For more information please see the guidance note <http://hub/corporatedocs/Democratic%20Services/Equality%20impact%20assessment%20and%20safeguarding.docx> and for more on Monmouthshire's Corporate Parenting Strategy see <http://hub/corporatedocs/SitePages/Corporate%20Parenting%20Strategy.aspx>

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	None.	None as a direct result of the budget mandate proposal. Increased planning application fees may have a minor adverse impact where property extensions are needed to facilitate care, however these mandatory fees are set by Welsh Government.	n/a
Corporate Parenting	None.	None.	n/a

5. **What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

Based on the fee income over the last 5 years, the 15% increase in mandatory planning application fees, decided by the Welsh Government, is expected to equate to £69.5k additional fee income per annum. This budget mandate proposes to increase the Development Management income line by £40k. Not all of the income increase has been put forward under this mandate for several reasons. Firstly, the Welsh Minister has explicitly stated that the increased fee income must be reinvested into improving the planning service. Secondly, fee income is uncertain and has varied significantly over recent years. It is directly affected by the UK economy and housebuilding, as well as by other external factors such as changes to renewable energy feed-in tariffs which will see a significant reduction in large scale renewables applications and associated planning fee income. Thirdly, the new legislation includes a provision for application fees to be refunded if an application is not determined within a specified timescale. While every possible effort will be taken to avoid refunding a fee, it would take only one significant application fee to be refunded to negate the fee income increase. The fee income budget line has already been increased significantly over the recent years, having increased by £220k (60%) since 2010. Consequently, there is now little scope for income fluctuations.

6. **SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

This section should give the key issues arising from the evaluation which will be included in the Committee report template.

The work undertaken by Planning directly relates to promoting and ensuring sustainable development. It is important to ensure this service is adequately resourced, which this proposal seeks to achieve by reducing the net cost via increased income rather than via service cuts. Full consideration has been given to the financial implications, which are sustainable in the foreseeable future in the context of the challenging financial climate facing Local Authorities.

In terms of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, there are no direct implications as a result of this budget mandate proposal to amend the income line.

There are no implications, positive or negative, as a direct result of the budget mandate for corporate parenting or safeguarding.

7. Actions. As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible	Progress
Budget setting consultation			
Apply the increase planning application fees in line with Welsh Government.	October 2015		

8. Monitoring: The impacts of this proposal will need to be monitored and reviewed. Please specify the date at which you will evaluate the impact, and where you will report the results of the review.

The impacts of this proposal will be evaluated on:	In line with the SIP and usual budget monitoring. Full review of mandate April 2017.
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