

OFFICER DECISIONS

Below is a list of decisions taken by Officers which they have classed as significant:-

REF: **OD.014/07** **MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE**

Decision of Director of Corporate Resources

Portfolio: Finance and Performance Management

Subject Matter:

In accordance with the provisions of the Housing Act 1985, to declare the local mortgage interest rate for the period 1 April 2007 to 30 September 2007.

Summary of Options rejected

None

DECISION:

1. That, in accordance with Schedule 2, paragraph 5.2.14 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, a local interest rate for the period 1 April 2007 to 30 September 2007 be declared at 9.01%.
2. That, as the National Rate is lower than the present Local Rate, in order to comply with the Housing Act 1985, new and existing borrowers be charged the local rate of 9.01% from 1 April 2007.

Reasons for Decision:

Under the provisions of Section 438 of the Housing Act, 1985, the City Council is obliged to charge on its mortgages the higher of its local interest rate or the National rate as prescribed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). It is also obliged to declare twice a year its local interest rate.

The local interest rate is fixed for a period of six months. The previous rate of 9.01% expired on 31 March 2006 and a new rate is required for the period 1 April 2007 - 30 September 2007.

The local interest rate is calculated as the cost of a local authority's borrowing plus 1/4%. The average cost of the City Council's external borrowings in the period April 2007 - September 2007 is estimated at 8.76%. Therefore the local rate of interest would be 9.01% for this period.

The Secretary of State declared that with effect from 12 February 2007, the National Rate of interest was increased to 6.89% from 6.28%. Thus this rate remains below the City Council's own local rate of interest.

Date Decision Made :

19-Apr-07

REF: OD.015/07 BUILDING CONTROL CHARGES

Decision of Director of Development Services after consultation with the Head of Planning and Housing Services and the Environment and Infrastructure portfolio holder.

Portfolio: Environment and Infrastructure

Subject Matter:

To consider increasing Building Control Charges for 2007/08.

Summary of Options rejected

- 1) No increase in charges would not raise income and is therefore not a viable option.
- 2) A higher level of increase could lead to a loss of work due to the potential competition from the private sector.

DECISION:

To increase all Building Control Charges for 2007/08 by between 6% and 10%.

Reasons for Decision:

During 2006/07 the Building Control Service continued to make an operational loss. The Building Control Service is required to be self-financing over a three-year rolling period and these losses are covered by the operational surpluses made in previous years. It is considered that there is a need to increase all Building Control fees by between 6% and 11%. This will help ensure that the operational side of the Building Control Service is self-financing.

Under paragraph 5.2.7 of the Constitution the Director of Development Services has delegated powers to vary the agreed Scheme of Charges by plus or minus 10% should this be necessary to maintain cost recovery and income levels.

Date Decision Made :

24-Apr-07

REF: OD.016/07 DISABILITY ACCESS GRANTS

Decision of Head of Planning and Housing Services following

discussion and agreement of the Environment and Infrastructure portfolio holder.

Portfolio: Environment and Infrastructure

Subject Matter:

To consider increasing the Maximum Disability Access Grants.

Summary of Options rejected

- 1) No increase in charges would not help meet the increased costs.
- 2) A higher level to £1,700 could restrict the number of grants available within the budget.

The position will be monitored during the year to establish whether the correct level of Grant has been set and amended if necessary.

DECISION:

To increase the Maximum Disability Access Grants from £1,200 to £1,500.

Reasons for Decision:

The £1,200 maximum grant has been fixed since 1994. Costs of ramps, WCs and lifts have increased during this period. In addition, the grant is now available only to Charities and non-profit making bodies as other organisations are required to provide the facilities under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Date Decision Made :

25-Apr-07