



<b>Subject:</b>	Review of Building Control non-statutory charges
<b>Date:</b>	21 November 2025
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley - Director of Planning and Building Control
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ian Harper - Building Control Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Information relating to any individual</li><li>2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual</li><li>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)</li><li>4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter</li><li>5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained</li><li>6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction</li><li>7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</li></ol>									
<p><b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b></p> <table><tr><td>After Committee Decision</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>After Council Decision</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>Sometime in the future</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>Never</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

<b>Call-in</b>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to consider the review of charges for non-statutory functions delivered by Building Control. Part 11 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

	allows the council to charge a fee for a service that is not a statutory provision that the council is required to provide to the person, providing the cost does not exceed the costs of the provision.
1.2	The charges of fees are in the line with the Corporate Pricing Framework, Financial Regulations and the Scheme of delegation.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree the set of charges and fees for non-statutory services provided by Building Control. A list of the fees is detailed in Appendix 1. It is recommended that the additional fees come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026, in line with the budget setting process and will be reviewed after 12 months.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Members will be aware that some fees for statutory services in Building Control are set by the Department of Finance others such as licensing are set through the Licensing Committee and referred to Strategic Policy and Resources. As part of the budget setting process officers are required to review charges and fees for services provided that are not part of the Council's statutory functions.
3.2	Building Control's management team reviewed all services provided and whether fees were charged and the reason why some services were provided with no chargeable fee.
3.3	A benchmarking exercise was carried out across all local councils in Northern Ireland and some councils in Scotland and England. In most cases councils charge for the non-statutory functions, whereas none have been charged in Belfast.
3.4	Following the benchmarking exercises, the fees for non-statutory services are proposed to be revised with the introduction of some charges and an increase in others, as set out below.
3.5	<p><b>Building Control currently charge a fee for the services below but would propose a fee increase.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building Control service currently charges £30 for a property enquiry. This charge does not cover the cost for the provision of the service, based on an analysis of time spent by staff carrying out the service. Therefore, the proposal would be to increase the charge based on the hourly rate to carry out the task to £100 per single dwelling and £100 for a commercial property consisting of one unit.</li> </ol>

3.6	<p>2. Building Control currently charge an administration fee of £50 for Building Regulation applications that are withdrawn, which would include fees charged for full plan applications and building notice applications. The service propose to introduce this charge to all application types which would include, Property Certificates, Property Enquiries, Licensing applications (Entertainment, Amusement, Cinema, Petroleum, Street Trading, Pavement Café and Road Closures).</p> <p><b>Building Control do not currently charge for the services below but would propose to introduce a fee.</b></p> <p>1. Copy certificates or confirmation of postal address. There is a significant increase in the demand for copy certificates. Taking into consideration the costs incurred the Service propose to introduce a charge of £50 for both services – copy certificates and confirmation of postal address. This is in line with the charges levied by other councils.</p> <p>2. Confirmation of completion letters prior to 1994. There is no requirement to provide documentation for applications made prior to 1994, however the service receives regular requests. This would fall within the parameters of a property enquiry, with a full search being required. Therefore, a new £100 charge is proposed to match the property enquiry fee.</p> <p>3. Building Control currently offer a pre-submission consultation service which provides advice and guidance prior to the submission of a Building Regulations application. This service is primarily offered to larger commercial projects, is currently free of charge, and takes time to administrate, review in advance, meet with the applicant and provide a response. The Service would receive on average approximately 30 applications per year. Based on the officer time required using the hourly rate for an administration officer and an average hourly rate for a Building Control Surveyor to provide professional technical advice a new charge of £170 per enquiry is proposed.</p> <p>4. Additional or replacement set of approved drawings. This request can take a substantial amount of staff time as there is the requirement to compare the new set of drawings submitted with the approved drawings held on file, check for an acceptable match, and if so, stamp each drawing and post out. Taking the requirements to deliver this service and officers time into consideration a new charge of £80 per request is proposed.</p>
-----	--

	<p>5. Provision of specification notes for Energy Performance Certificates. The requests for these are limited but the work entailed would fall into similar criteria for the charge for a property enquiry, therefore a new charge of £100 is proposed.</p>
3.7	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>Based upon the suggested new fees or fee increases, an analysis of the number of applications and requests previously made, benchmarking other councils and assumptions made in relation to the levels of ongoing applications, a conservative increase of £20,000 has been added to the 2026-2027 estimates, subject to council approval of these proposed fee changes. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, to determine if application numbers are sustained given the changes in the charges and to evaluate the actual increase in income.</p>
3.8	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>There are no Equality or good relations implications from the increases in charges proposed. A rural assessment is not considered necessary.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached - List of fees</b></p>
	<p>Appendix 1 - Building Control - proposed changes to non-statutory charges</p>