Planning Briefing Note – March 2026

Planning Fees

The Scottish Government has announced the next phase of the inflation-linked increase to planning application fees which will come into effect on the 1st of April 2026. The fees for appeals to Scottish Ministers and fees for local reviews (to the local review body) have also increased linked to inflation.

The Planning fees are due to come into force on the 1st April 2026 therefore to be legally competent, this means that the current planning fees will only be applied to applications that are valid by midnight on the 31st March 2026 and not to applications that have been submitted by the 31st March 2026. This also means that applications that are already in the system and are invalid for any reason before midnight on the 31st March 2026 will also require to be the subject of the increased fee unless they are made valid by midnight of that date.

Reviews to the Local Review Body or appeals to the DPEA that are received on or after the 1st April 2026 will be subject to the relevant fee, except in the limited circumstances where fees are to be waived or reduced.

Please also note that the Planning Service needs to be given adequate time to undertake the normal validation checks. This can be several working days, depending on the scale and complexity of the application. Please bear this in mind when submitting applications and notices of reviews or appeals.

Aberdeenshire Council National Planning Improvement Framework – Year 2 Action Plan

The National Planning Improvement Framework (NPIF) is a new approach to measuring Performance, based on a self-assessment approach, involving staff, stakeholder peer review and a collaborative approach with our partner Local Authority, Scottish Borders Council.

The self-assessment framework consists of **5 themes**: People; Culture; Tools; Engage and Place; developed nationally by stakeholders from a range of perspectives and interests in planning. The themes have been identified as key to achieving a high performing planning authority. Within each of the five themes there are **12 attributes** which require a detailed narrative to update on performance, statutory indicators, continuous improvement, collaboration and stakeholder engagement.

Completing the self-assessment, developing an action plan and recognising areas of good practice as well as evaluating where further improvements can be made will ensure that Aberdeenshire Council Planning Authority has the right framework in place to continue to be a high-performing Planning Authority. Please follow the links to view the self-assessment and the

updated action plan progress report for year 2 (2025): Improvement Action Plans and Performance Assessments | Improvement Service

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