

Proposals for Changes to Planning Application Fees

Department for Communities and Local Government, November 2010

The Government's vision Freedom, Fairness and Responsibility

- **Fundamental change in the relationship between citizens and the state.**
- **Individuals and communities have more power and responsibility.**
- **Freedom from top-down controls.**
- **Extending transparency to every area of public life.**



The Coalition:
our programme
for government

Planning fees:

- **reflect the possible private benefit implicit in a planning permission**
- **based on overall cost of handling, administering and deciding applications, including related overheads**
- **set nationally by Government since 1980**
- **2009/10 466,000 planning applications generated £209 mill in fee income**

Current fee schedule

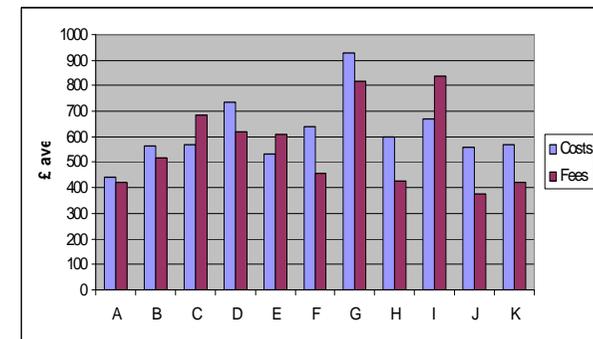
Highly complex and lacking in consistency

- **13 categories and 46 sub-categories**
- **different parameters for different categories (quantity for houses, floor space for other buildings)**
- **thresholds**

<i>Category of Development</i>	<i>Fees payable</i>
1. The erection of dwelling houses (other than development in category 6)	(a) Where the application is for outline planning permission and— (i) the site area does not exceed 2.5 hectares, £330 for each 0.1 hectare of the site area, (ii) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, £8,285 and an additional £100 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £125,000; (b) in other cases— (i) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development is 50 or fewer, £335 for each dwellinghouse, (ii) where the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development exceeds 50, £16,565 and an additional £100 for each dwellinghouse in excess of 50 dwelling houses, subject to a maximum in total of £250,000.

Problems with nationally set fees

- **Fail to take account of local variation in application profiles & costs**
- **Fees insufficient to recover costs, 10 - 15% shortfall on average**
- **Taxpayer subsidy of planning applications**
- **Fees exceed costs in some authorities**
- **Some cases applicants are overpaying**
- **Only way to overcome this variation is to allow local authorities to set their own fees**



Planning Costs and Fees, Arup for DCLG, Nov 2010

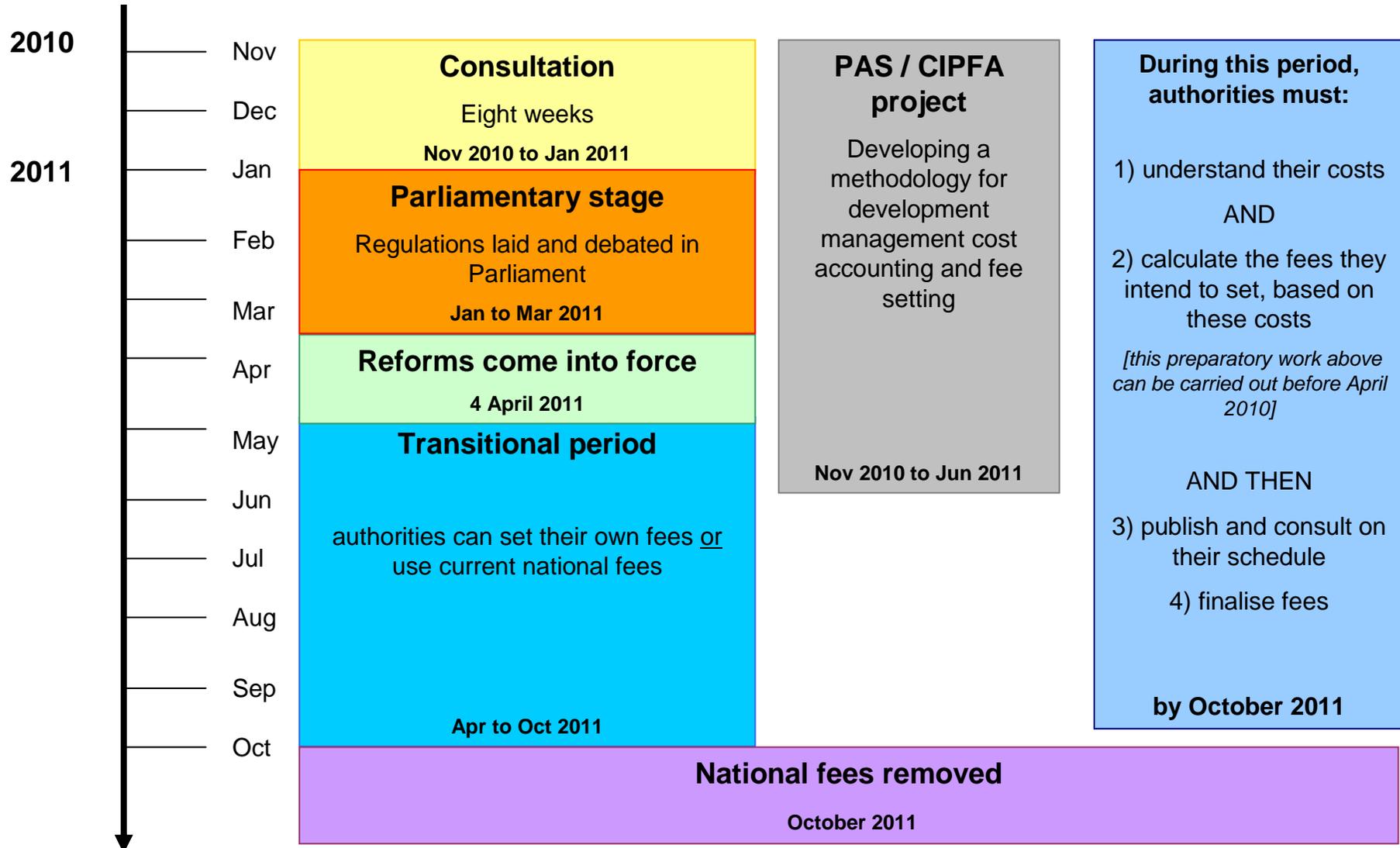
- **Decentralise responsibility for setting planning application fees, including fee categories**
- **Allow authorities to charge for some applications which do not require a fee**
 - **resubmitted “free go”**
 - **higher fees can be charged for retrospective applications**
- **Not minded to change exemptions for Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, TPOs**

Impact of decentralisation

- **Fees will be more closely based on costs – and therefore fairer**
- **Authorities will be accountable for fees – they are not currently**
- **Authorities will be incentivised to keep their costs to a minimum by the greater transparency of a decentralised system**
- **Planning needs to be properly and sustainably funded. Fee shortfalls impact upon the quality of planning service**
- **Fees likely to go up by around 10% in the short term in some local authorities. We expect fees to be reduced in authorities which are “over-recovering”**

- **Local planning authorities will need to:**
 - **understand costs and establish fees based on those costs**
 - **set fees that reflect full cost recovery**
 - **consult on their fee schedule**
- **Local Authorities cannot:**
 - **make a profit to subsidise other parts of planning**
 - **cross-subsidise (e.g. householder / major)**
- **Local planning authorities will be expected to:**
 - **put in place safeguards**
 - **ensure accountability**

Timetable for change





Preparing for locally set fees



Microsoft
PowerPoint Presentati

- **Discussion at your tables**
 - **decentralisation**
 - **costs**
 - **new charges**
- **Capture debate on the templates**
- **Spend around 15 / 20 minutes on each topic**
- **Be prepared to feedback top 3 highlights**

A fee is currently payable for:

- 1) Applications for:
 - Full or outline planning permission
 - Non-material changes to planning permission
 - Approval of reserved matters
 - Certificates of lawfulness of existing or proposed use or development
 - Consent to display advertisements
 - Determination as to whether prior approval will be required for permitted development
- 2) Requests for confirmation that conditions attached to a grant of planning permission have been complied with
- 3) Site visits to a mining or landfill site

Exemptions and charges

A fee is currently not payable for:

- 1) Applications for listed building consent
- 2) Applications for conservation area consent
- 3) Applications for works to trees covered by a tree preservation order
- 4) Applications that are resubmitted following withdrawal or refusal
- 5) Applications for development to dwellinghouses, or buildings to which members of the public are admitted, for the purpose of providing means of access for disabled people (or securing the safety, health or comfort of disabled people, in the case of dwellinghouses)
- 6) Applications for development which is allowed under permitted development rights where those rights have been removed by an Article 4 direction or a condition
- 7) Second applications (made following the granting of planning permission) relating to development of the same character or description on the same site
- 8) Applications relating to the same use class which are made necessary because of a condition
- 9) Applications to consolidate subsisting minerals planning permissions