

Title of Report:	Pre Application Discussions (PADs)- Charge Revision for VAT
Committee Report Submitted To:	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	28 October 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee YES/NO	No

Linkage to Council Plan (2026-31)	
Strategic Theme	Governance, Quality & Continuous Improvement
Outcome	Council maintains its performance as the most efficient of NI's local authorities
Lead Officer	Head of Planning

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	26/27 budget
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	both
Code	5301
Staffing Costs	included

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:

Assessment (DPIA)	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
-------------------	------------------------------	-----	-------

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** This Report is to advise of fee increase for Pre-Application Discussions (PADs) to reflect the cash cost inclusive of Value Added Tax (VAT).

2.0 Background

- 2.1** The current PADs process became effective in September 2024. It was accompanied by a Fee Schedule. Different charges are applied for Local Category Minor Scale, Local Category Medium Scale and Major Scale Developments. The Fee Schedule is silent on the matter of VAT.
- 2.2** An internal review has identified that unlike planning application fees, PAD application fees do not fall under the statutory planning role. As this element of the service is discretionary any fees fall within the scope of VAT and are therefore subject to VAT at standard rate (20%).
- 2.3** The Council is required to retrospectively surrender VAT to HMRC on the PAD fees paid to date.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1** The Planning Department is proceeding to update the PAD Fee Schedule to include VAT. The Fee Schedule advises that the charges specified are inclusive of VAT.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1** **It is recommended** that the Planning Committee note the charge revision for Pre-Application Discussions (PADs) to include VAT- see Appendix 1.



Fee and Service Schedule for Pre-Application Discussion

Local Category Minor Scale of Developments		
Proposal	Charge	Process
Advertisements, alterations and extensions to dwelling house(s), ancillary development within the curtilage of a dwelling house, works to TPO trees or trees in a Conservation Area, single residential unit.	£144	Written advice within 20 working days.
Minor scale Local Development that includes demolition in a Conservation Area, Listed Building Consent or Hazardous Substance Consent	£360	Maximum 1 hr meeting with a Planning Officer where the applicant/agent present their proposal to the planning officer and others in attendance (no statutory consultees in attendance) Written advice within 10 working days from date of meeting.
Local Category Medium Scale Developments		
Proposal	Charge	Process
All other Local Category development not listed as minor scale above, including associated listed building consent, demolition in a conservation area consent, hazardous substance consent.	£390	Maximum 1hr meeting with a Planning Officer where the applicant/agent present their proposal to the officer and others in attendance (no statutory consultees in attendance) Written advice within 20 working days from date of meeting.
Major Scale Developments		
Proposal	Charge	Process
All Major Category of development	£642	An unaccompanied site inspection. 2no. maximum 1hr meetings or 1no. maximum 2 hr meeting with a Senior Planning Officer and others in attendance. Written advice within 25 working days of last meeting.
All charges are inclusive of VAT @ 20%.		