

Title	Amendments to the Custom and Self-Build Register Process
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Wards of the District directly affected	All
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	
Background Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custom and Self-Build Progress Report 2018 • Custom and Self-Build SPD

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes (1,036)
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
n/a	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	17/07/19	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	17/07/19	Dave Barber
CMT	17/07/19	Chris Elliott/Andy Jones/Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	17/07/19	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	17/07/19	Andy Jones
Finance	17/07/19	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	22/07/19	Cllr John Cooke
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) requires all planning authorities to maintain a register of people who are seeking to acquire a serviced plot of land for their own self-build and custom housebuilding.
- 1.2 Warwick District Council maintains such a register but currently does not charge any fee. This report seeks approval to make changes to the process, including adding a local connection test and to charge a fee for applicants to enter the register and an annual fee to remain on it.

2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Executive adopts the proposal to set local eligibility criteria which enables the register to be kept in two parts, as per section 4 of Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Executive gives permission to charge applicants a fee to enter and to remain on the Warwick District Council's custom and self-build register. The proposed fees are set out in section 5 of Appendix 1.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 We currently have a register that has 370 entrants who are seeking to acquire a serviced plot of land for custom and self-build housing. This information forms the demand which the Local Authority needs to consider when determining planning applications, amongst other functions.
- 3.2 In 2018, Warwick District Council published a progress report (Appendix 2) which is a summary of the data held in the register and demonstrates to what extent demand for custom and self-build is being met within Warwick District.
- 3.3 The proposed changes will ensure that those on the register have a genuine connection with the District, and the introduction of a local connection test is in line with The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016.
- 3.4 The proposed charge for entry and to remain on the register will enable the council to ensure that the register is robust and consists of entrants who have a genuine interest to acquire a serviced plot, and will cover the reasonable costs of the authority in administering the register.
- 3.5 It will also allow us to ensure resource is available to engage more thoroughly with registrants, alert them to opportunities regarding plot purchase and self-build methods, and more broadly facilitate the effective maintenance of the register.

4. **Policy Framework**

4.1 **Fit for the Future (FFF)**

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council’s FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
The improved use and maintenance of the Register will help facilitate the provision of custom and self-build plots.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
Impacts of Proposal		
The proposal when adopted will assist staff in assessing applications for entry into the custom and self-build register.	The proposal sets out a clear criteria to help applicants understand the requirements to be entered on the custom and self-build register.	The proposal which includes the introduction of a fee will recover the cost of entering a person on the register, permitting a person to remain on the register and complying with the statutory duty.

4.2 **Supporting Strategies**

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies. The Local Plan is one of the key strategies, cutting across many of the FFF strands.

4.3 **Changes to Existing Policies**

This proposal adheres to the regulations set out by the government for Custom and Self-Build housing and as such does not change any existing policies.

4.4 **Impact Assessments**

No impact assessment was required.

5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1 The government has supported local authorities to meet their statutory duties through a grant. The costs of assessing applications will be covered within this budget framework.

6. **Risks**

6.1 The council has already implemented a register in accordance with the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016). The proposal set out in Appendix 1 seeks to clarify the councils approach for entry into the register and as such the risk for accepting this proposal is low.

7. **Alternative Option(s) considered**

7.1 The Executive could approve to only introduce a charge and not set local eligibility criteria however this would prevent the council from understanding the level of local demand for custom and self-build.

7.2 The Executive could approve to set local eligibility criteria only and not charge any fee. However, this would mean that the Council would not be receiving the reasonable administrative costs in managing the register and would be unable to conduct any additional help or engagement.

7.3 The Executive could decide not to charge any fee and set local eligibility criteria but doing so will obstruct the council to determine the genuine level of demand for Custom and Self-Build housing across the district.

8. **Background**

8.1 As required by The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, Warwick District Council maintains a register of individuals/ groups of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land for their own self-build or custom housebuilding. This register helps the council to understand the demand for custom and self-build housing in the district which needs to be taken into account in planning policy.

- 8.2 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 placed a duty on Local Authorities to grant sufficient planning permission in respect of serviced plots to meet the demand as evidenced in the register. This means as the number of entrant's increase, so does the demand.
- 8.3 The Custom and Self-Build register is currently on base period 4 which runs from 30th October to 31st October. A progress report was published in 2018 which presented data from when the register was first established up until base period 3, demonstrating how the council is meeting the statutory duty. The proposal set out in this report will ensure that the council is meeting this duty in the most efficient way, and improve the quality of service.