

Council announces changes to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) processing for householders

Communications team 18 March 2024

Householders who have become liable for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments due to mistakes made when completing paperwork will soon be able to appeal to a new panel.

New measures to review previous CIL cases were announced by Acting Leader, Councillor Jeff Brooks at a meeting of the Executive on Thursday (14 March).

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge set out in legislation which means councils receive payments from developers towards infrastructure needs created by any new development. Anyone building their own house, residential annexes or extending their homes may be exempt from CIL payments but must first complete paperwork to be formally assessed as being exempt.

Where the paperwork was not filled out correctly those householders have found themselves liable to CIL charges and subsequent enforcement action if these weren't paid.

Explaining the issue, [Acting Leader Jeff Brooks](#) said:



"This has been a difficult and stressful time for those residents who have found themselves literally paying the price for mistakes on the paperwork. The complex forms, provided by the Government, are overly confusing and easy to get wrong. Coupled with there being no internal appeals process householders were left with no opportunity to address mistakes made and complete the paperwork correctly. To correct this, we are introducing new processes to allow householders to apply to have charges reviewed where they mistakes were made or they think they have been unfairly assessed."

At the meeting, it was announced that the Council will:

- Introduce a process to refund and/or cancel CIL payments, surcharges, and interest charges that householders were forced to pay or are still liable to pay, where they simply filled out their forms incorrectly or were late completing the documentation. This will be done by introducing an enforcement policy which will enable householders, who believe they have been unfairly assessed, to apply to have such charges cancelled retrospectively.
- Within the next six weeks, publish a process and the eligibility criteria for any householders who have undertaken development that has become CIL liable due to mistakes they may have made following the process to apply to a panel of members and Officers at this Council to have their CIL charges reviewed, and to have these repaid or cancelled wherever it is appropriate to do so.
- Bring a report to the next meeting of the Executive, to ensure that no further demands will be made of householders who simply want to extend or re-develop their homes.

Acting Leader Jeff Brooks added:



"We have much to do as a new Administration but one thing that is non-negotiable with us is an overriding sense of fairness in how we treat our residents."

"Our new Council strategy is built upon principles that include acting with integrity and ensuring that all decisions we make are lawful, transparent, and impartial; that we will listen to our customers and do our best for them and that we will always treat people fairly."

"We move forward together, and we will deliver very good services to the people of West Berkshire always based on integrity, fairness and doing what is right."

The next meeting of the Executive is at 5pm on Thursday 16 May, 2024. [The agenda and reports will be published here](#) the week before the meeting. The meeting is open to the public to attend in person at the Council Offices in Market Street, Newbury or by streaming live and on-demand on the [West Berkshire Council YouTube channel](#).

You can watch Councillor Brooks' statement at the Executive meeting here:



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