

NEWS

Planning fees up to £70k issued correctly - council



Rebuilding part of his home left Steve Dally with a bill for £70,000 from his council

Chris Caulfield
Local Democracy Reporting Service

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Families hit with bills of up to £70,000 by Waverley Borough Council were correctly charged, its officers have said.

More than 20 homeowners were given community infrastructure levies (CIL) after being granted planning permission.

The levies are fees issued by local authorities to help them deliver the required infrastructure when new developments are built.

The council said anyone who thought they had been mischarged could apply for a review, but officers stressed every charge issued so far had been done in accordance with the law.

Traditionally, CIL is paid by developers to support an area. Common examples would be a community building as part of a major housing estate, or cash to offset impacts.

Most new developments of more than 100sq/m, or ones that create a new home, are potentially liable for the levy.

The majority of residential annexes, extensions and self-built homes are exempt but often the exemptions need to be applied for.

The council said it would to conduct a review into how and why so many people were sent surprise planning bills.

The highest profile was a couple charged £70,000 after being granted planning permission by the council to demolish and replace an existing extension at their Godalming home.

It was originally considered exempt but this was later changed and the couple soon received the bill, according to the [Local Democracy Reporting Service](#).

They were given 60 days to pay or their home would be at risk of repossession with the possibility of imprisonment.

Council officers told a meeting on Monday: "We have not charged CIL on any development which should not have been charged.

"If the situation has changed, for example someone may have said to begin with this was a self build and they it came to light that it wasn't, then we've acted accordingly once that citation has changed.

"What has happened, and the number of really, really difficult cases that have been highlighted to members, is when people haven't followed the CIL regulations because they are so rigid."

The council said it hoped to change its CIL system as part of its local plan.

It has collected roughly £30m in CIL since 2019.

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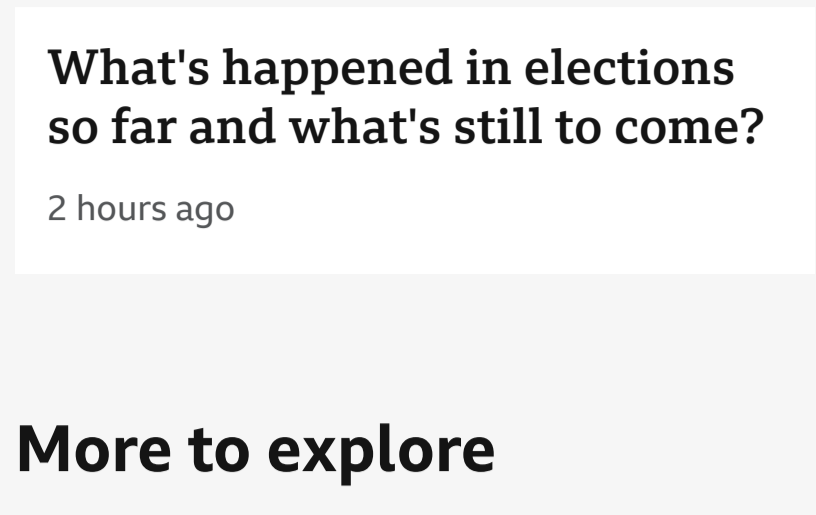
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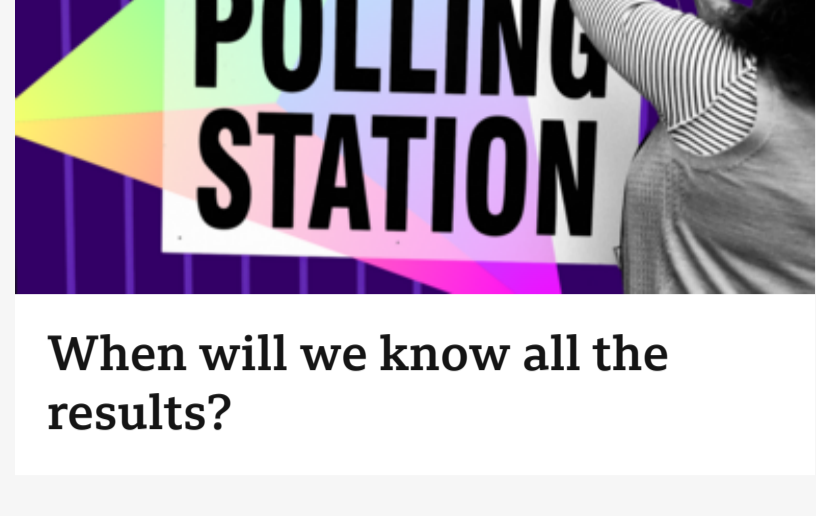
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