

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

24 FEBRUARY 2016

AGENDA ITEM D2

REPORT ON FEE FOR SCANNING AND STORAGE OF NEW BUILDING CONSENT FILES

Purpose of Report

To seek Council's approval to increase the fee for scanning hard copy building consent files.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Approve an increase in the scheduled fee for electronically scanning new building consents from \$25.00 to \$75.00 plus GST per consent.*

1. Executive Summary

Council will be aware we have commenced a project to electronically scan and then store our existing building consent files. At the same time we have begun to scan new building consent files as they are received. At the time of estimating the cost of this process a figure of \$25 per BC was estimated. Practice has now shown that this fee was optimistic. The actual work required to scan a file is more than anticipated (time and complexity) and so the fee does not recover the cost. This original cost was based on dated advice from a scanning company and recent advice from Masterton District Council.

2. Discussion

As we have moved ahead with the setup of the file scanning project we have been able to obtain much more up to date and accurate information on the process to scan a file, especially the time it takes to organise and then scan the information and the costs of equipment and software and operation of that equipment and software.

In addition we have received up dated information from MDC who are half a year ahead of Council with their scanning project. Mastertons experience has confirmed that the cost in total is more than originally estimated by both them and ourselves (they now charge \$75 per BC).

Lastly, as we have worked through the detail of the scanning system, we have in fact modified some aspects so that it has more functionality and wider future application for building control activities and within Council (e.g. the basics are now in place to extend the system to public health (liquor/food/bylaws/animal control) and planning (resource consents). It may also be able to be used by Corporate).

Given this background officers consider that an average fee of \$75 per BC is both reasonable and better reflects the actual cost. It would also align our charge with MDC.

This fee would not however reflect that some consents are larger (documentation wise) than others so it would be an averaged charge, not an actual charge per consent (full user pays). Officers have considered a variable rate which would be driven by the actual time and cost occurred on a single consent, but this would be administratively difficult to operate and likely to incur high overhead costs to make it work (calculating and levying invoices post the work being completed rather than taking funds up front). As such this is not recommended.

3. Conclusion

With actual experience, we have now reassessed the level of fee that should be charged for electronically scanning and storing BC applications. This has resulted in a recommendation to increase the charge to \$75 per consent. This is considered to be reasonable and to better reflect costs.

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