



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

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Mr David Halstead
Policy Unit
The Planning Inspectorate
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Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

3 August 2006

Our ref: Policy

Dear Mr Halstead

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (COSTS OF INQUIRIES ETC) (STANDARD DAILY AMOUNT)
REGULATIONS 2006: CHANGES TO THE FEES REGULATIONS**

I refer to your consultation letter dated 19 June 2006 in respect of proposed changes to the Fees Regulations.

The Royal Town Planning Institute supports the underlying principle of moving examinations fees towards full cost recovery. It follows that the Institute raises no basic objection in respect of the proposed changes. However, in responding to government more broadly on funding for planning services, the RTPI will continue to seek assurances that changes to the fees regulations will not adversely impact on the resources available to local planning authorities for service delivery.

In making this response, I will refer to previous correspondence from Mr David Rose of the Institute on this topic. His most recent letter of 20 December 2002 addresses a similar attempt to move the fee base towards full cost recovery by 2004/5. It must be noted that the increases at that time do not appear to have been sufficient to achieve that objective.

I will also refer briefly to discussions held in 2006 between the Institute and Mr Lee Armitage of the Inspectorate, where the topic of Inspector remuneration was discussed. The RTPI provided the opinion that the Inspectorate should pay ongoing regard to senior local government planning staff remuneration and planning consultancy fee levels. It will be necessary to ensure that Inspectors' remuneration does not slip behind broad market rates for the competences expected in their important role in the planning system.

On the basis of the above, the possible need for a further upward review of the Fees Regulations after 2008-9 should not be ruled out.

I trust that the above is clear. Please contact me on 020 7929 9490 if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,



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Rynd Smith
Head of Policy & Practice