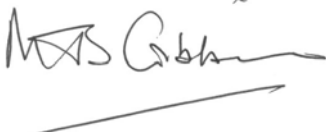
 <b>Regulatory Policy Committee</b>	<b>OPINION</b>	
<b>Impact Assessment (IA)</b>	Decentralisation of Planning Application Fees	
<b>Lead Department/Agency</b>	Communities & Local Government	
<b>Stage</b>	Final	
<b>Origin</b>	Domestic	
<b>Date submitted to RPC</b>	26/05/2011	
<b>RPC Opinion date and reference</b>	02/06/2011	RPC11-DCLG-0871(2)
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	
<p>The IA is fit for purpose. The issues raised in the previous RPC opinion have been adequately addressed in the revised IA.</p>		
<p><b>Identification of costs and benefits, and the impacts on small firms, public and third sector organisations, individuals and community groups and reflection of these in the choice of options</b></p> <p>The issues raised in the previous RPC opinion have been adequately addressed in the revised IA. We note that the Department is no longer claiming as an objective of the proposal that setting fees locally will incentivise Local Authorities (LAs) to run a more efficient service. The IA now includes accounting for staff time in the NPV calculations.</p> <p><i>Rationale.</i> The IA still does not demonstrate that there is an overall shortfall in fees that currently needs addressing. However, given that the objectives of the policy have changed to focus on LAs being allowed to recover their costs, and given that there is sufficient evidence presented to suggest that some LAs are currently under-charging and some are over-charging, the rationale for the proposal has been adequately set out.</p>		
<p><b>Have the necessary burden reductions required by One-in, One-out been identified and are they robust?</b></p> <p>The IA says the proposal is not in scope of One-in, One-out as it concerns fees and charges where no new regulatory activity is proposed. Provided any future increases have the aim of maintaining cost recovery this seems reasonable. The Department has assured us that this proposal will only result in the recovery of costs incurred as a result of processing planning applications rather than allowing LAs to recover costs relating to wider planning activities.</p>		
<p><b>Signed</b></p> 	<p><b>Michael Gibbons, Chairman</b></p>	