

84. Planning White Paper Consultation

Kieron Manning, Assistant Director – Planning

- a. presented a report to update committee on the content of the recent White Paper consultation from Central Government on reforming the planning system.
- b. referred to paragraph 2 of the report and outlined the two consultations published by the Government on 6 August relating to the Planning System.
- c. advised that the ‘Planning for the future’ White Paper was published in early August and saw significant changes at both Policy and Development Management stages. The Government had stated that it had the potential to alter the planning system more than any previous reforms since the inception of the planning system in 1947.
- d. advised that in the forward to the White Paper, the Prime Minister stated that the government’s ambition was to create a planning system which was “simpler, clearer and quicker to navigate, delivering results in weeks and months rather than years and decades”
- e. advised that since 1947 planning applications in England had been assessed on a case-by-case basis against a long-term local plan, with permission ultimately decided by committee. The new system proposed to diminish this. Land would instead be classified into three zones within a new local Plan, with outline planning permission awarded automatically if proposals met specific criteria within specific zones.
- f. explained that the White paper proposed that the following three categories would apply to all land within the a district boundary as part of the local plan allocation process:
 - i. Growth
 - ii. Renewal
 - iii. Protection
- g. referred to paragraph 4 of the report and summarised the key proposals:
 - Local Plan Proposals
 - The role of Councillors and Development Management
 - Public Engagement
 - Section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
 - Housing Targets
 - Design
 - Enforcement
 - Delivering Changes

- h. referred to paragraph 5 of the report and explained the implications of the proposed changes.
- i. advised that the consultation was open until 29 October 2020. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the government “would seek to bring forward legislation and policy changes” to implement its reforms acknowledging that “we have not comprehensively covered every aspect of the system, and the detail of the proposals would need further development pending the outcome of the consultation” The proposals would require primary legislation followed by secondary legislation and an updating of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- j. referred to the draft consultation response at Appendix A of the report and asked members to consider the response to each question prior to referral to Executive.

Question: When was the current Local Plan adopted?

Response: The current Local Plan was adopted in 2017 and was currently being reviewed, the next Local Plan would be adopted in 2022. Under the proposed changes to the Planning System work would have to commence on the following Local Plan immediately after its adoption in 2022 as the new plan was required to be in place by 2024.

Question: Was conservation areas a consideration within the proposed changes?

Response: Conservation areas were made reference to in the White Paper in general terms, they would form part of the Protection category.

Comment: Commented on the lack of available housing in the UK.

Response: There were between 800,000 and 1m houses that have been granted planning permission across the country that had not been built, yet the White Paper consultation proposed radical change to the land use planning system as the means to address what was largely an economic problem.

Question: During the development of the Local Plan would blanket design codes apply?

Response: We know that the intention would be to have 3 zones, however, it was unclear at what level and how Local Authorities would apply this.

Question: Would local residents only get a say when the Local Plan was produced?

Response: Potentially yes, although the White Paper did not provide detail so it was unclear. The aim of the proposed changes was to speed up and simplify the process at the planning application stage.

Question: During the development of the St Marks area, there was a lot of deliberation over the details for example the types of doors and windows. Would this input be taken away?

Response: It was unclear in the white paper whether the intention was that every area in the district required to be covered by a zone. If this was the case and there was a design code in place then potentially yes it could be the case.

RESOLVED that the conclusions of the report and suggested response to each question be endorsed and be referred to Executive.