

Present: Councillor Bill Bilton (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Alan Briggs, Councillor Jane Loffhagen,
Councillor Hilton Spratt, Councillor Ralph Toofany and
Councillor Pat Vaughan

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Laura McWilliams

82. Confirmation of Minutes - 18 August 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2020 be confirmed.

83. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

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.

85. Draft Housing Strategy 2020-25

Melanie Holland, Housing Strategy and Investment Manager

- a. presented a report on the draft Housing Strategy 2020-25 for consideration prior to external consultation.
- b. referred to paragraph 2.1 of the report and explained that a local authority strategy was an overarching cross-tenure document which identified local housing needs and set out how those needs would be met.
- c. advised that Member briefings took place on 3 and 4 July 2019 which sought to provide an update on the emerging housing needs evidence. Lincolns current housing market, stock condition and the opportunities for delivering new homes. A key outcome of the briefings was the need to provide further information on demand and need for affordable housing.
- d. advised that a follow up Members' workshop took place on 8 January 2020 where officers discussed the following themes in more detail to understand the Housing Strategy priorities over the next five years:
 - Maximising the supply of affordable housing
 - Maximising our existing housing assets
 - Estate improvement and resident involvement
 - Allocating council housing to those in greatest need
 - Enabling sustainable tenancies
- e. advised that the feedback from the workshop had shaped the content of the draft Housing Strategy, which also considered empirical information, the existing local policy context, the emerging response to Covid-19 and the current recession.
- f. advised that to complement Vision 2025, " Lets deliver quality housing", the objectives of the Housing Strategy for 2020-25 are:
 - Providing housing which meets the varied needs of our residents
 - Building Sustainable Communities
 - Improving Housing Standards for all
- g. referred to paragraph 4 of the report and explained the implications of Covid-19 on the housing market and the role of the Housing Strategy to aid economic recovery.

- h. advised that it was vital to regularly monitor the evidence on which the Housing Strategy was premised and produce an annual review, with revised and new priorities, which took into account the changing need and the revised policy agenda.
- i. invited members questions and comments

Question: Referred to “Making the best use of our Housing Stock” and asked for example if someone had been allocated a property would they be allowed to stay in the property if their circumstances changed?

Response: If they held a secure tenancy then they would have a legal right to remain in the property. The making the best use of our Housing Stock was about the Councils intentions to provide the right accommodation for residents.

Question: Could flats above shops on the High Street be used?

Response: City centre living did form part of the Strategy. There were aspirations but we needed to attract the funding.

RESOLVED that the draft Housing Strategy 2020-25 be supported prior to external consultation.

86. Policy Scrutiny Work Programme 2020-21 and Executive Work Programme Update

The Democratic Services Officer:

- a. presented the report ‘Policy Scrutiny Work Programme 2020-21 and Executive Work Programme Update’.
- b. presented the Executive Work Programme September 2020 – September 2021.
- c. requested councillors to submit what items they wished to scrutinise from the Executive Work Programme and policies of interest.
- d. invited members questions and comments.

Members commented that Parking on Grass Verges had not been included within the work programme.

The Democratic Services Officer explained that it had been referred to Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee. The Lincoln Tenants Panel were currently undertaking some work on this and it would be presented to Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee in January 2021.

Members stated that they were disappointed not to see this item scheduled within the work programme and asked that it be included on the Policy Scrutiny work programme. They felt that as the item had originated from Policy Scrutiny then an update should be reported back to this committee.

The Democratic Services Officer confirmed that she would liaise with the relevant Officer for a suitable time to schedule into the Policy Scrutiny Work Programme.

RESOLVED that:

1. the work Policy Scrutiny work programme be noted.

2. the Executive work programme be noted.

87. Health Scrutiny Update

The Chair of Policy Scrutiny Committee advised that the link to the Lincolnshire County Councils Health Scrutiny Committee agenda and minutes from the meeting held on 16th September 2020 and the agenda for the forthcoming meeting to be held on 14 October 2020 had been circulated to Members. He invited members to ask questions.

Members asked if the track and trace system for the Covid-19 pandemic had been discussed at the Health Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair responded that the Health Scrutiny Committee was a very fast moving committee and that most of the items on the agenda referred to matters 2 to 3 months in the past.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.