

COUNCIL

12 October 2020

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: WHITE PAPER

Report of the Interim Strategic Director for Places

Strategic Aim:	All		
Exempt Information	No		
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr G Brown, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Finance		
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Ward Councillors	All		

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council debates and comments on the Planning White Paper to inform the response of Cabinet.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Report seeks the views of Council on the Planning White Paper (Appendix A) to inform Cabinet's response on behalf of the Authority. The Report is brought as, while the response is an Executive Function, the White Paper has the potential to have serious impacts on both the development requirement and local democratic control of development within the County.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The Planning for the Future White Paper launched in August 2020 intends to reform the planning system and has a stated intention to provide a modern and streamlined approach to the complete planning process.
- 2.2 The consultation with the general public and interested parties will last until the 29 October 2020, and provides the opportunity for the Council to respond to the Government's proposals as set out in the White Paper

- 2.3 Key changes proposed include:
- 2.4 The requirement for local plans to be simplified and for three categories of land to be identified. These are growth, renewal and protect.
- 2.5 A Growth area would have outline planning approval, automatically establishing the principle of development. These areas would be designated for substantial development such as new settlements or urban extensions.
- 2.6 For renewal areas the proposals provide for a statutory presumption in favour of development. This development would have to meet specified criteria and would include increasing the density of residential areas, development in town centres and small sites in and around villages.
- 2.7 Protect areas would include areas such as green belt, conservation areas and areas of outstanding natural beauty and little would change for these.
- 2.8 These categories would be contained within local plans which would be subject to a test of sustainable development rather than soundness and would focus less on deliverability. Plans would be required to be completed within 30 months.
- 2.9 Public engagement is also a key theme. The White Paper aims to ensure that planning should be digitised and made more visual to make it easier for members of the public to engage and make comments. The White paper also provides that engagement at the application stage is going to be 'streamlined' with the majority of public involvement at the local plan stage (despite the limit on the time available to make a local plan detailed above).
- 2.10 Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would be replaced with a national single infrastructure levy. Payments under the new system would be linked to the final value development "as a nationally set, value-based flat rate charge". The amount of contributions collected nationally would be expected to cover the entire cost of the planning system and would be an increase on the current amounts collected.
- 2.11 The NPPF would become the primary source of policies for development management. Locally design codes would be prepared. These would be 'more binding' on planning decisions and their development would be supported by a new body.
- 2.12 Automatic permission could be granted for proposals deemed of high quality that reflect local character and preferences (called 'fast-track for beauty').
- 2.13 The role of planning committees would be significantly reduced, with elected members not envisaged as having a role where the principle of development has already been established.
- 2.14 Each local authority would be required to have a chief officer for design and place making.
- 2.15 There would be firm deadlines for the grant of planning, with the potential for deemed consent if a decision is not made within set timeframes.
- 2.16 Local authorities would be subject to a new performance framework which would

enable earlier intervention if 'problems' emerge with individual authorities.

2.17 Proposals will be announced for improving the resourcing of planning departments.

2.18 Importantly Councillors should note that this is all in the context of a separate consultation that closed on 1st October 2020. The proposals set out in that consultation would mean that Rutland would be required to deliver more than twice as many houses as under the present methodology.

3 CONSULTATION

3.1 The Report seeks the views of the whole Council on these proposals to enable a Cabinet to respond to the consultation by the Government.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 Council could choose not to comment on the proposals

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None in respect of the consultation. There would clearly be significant financial implications were the proposals to be implemented (for example in relation to CIL and Section 106)

6 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The Report provides Council with the opportunity to comment on the Consultation. While Planning Policy is a function of Council and the Planning Committee these are proposals from Central Government rather than Planning Policy and so are the responsibility of the Executive.

7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

7.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed as the Council is responding to the Consultation and so there are no Data Protection implications.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed as the as the Council is responding to the Consultation and so any impact on the equalities will be for central government to address.

9 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Should Council believe that there are potential community safety implications then these can be provided and inform the response to the consultation.

10 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Should Council believe that there are potential health and wellbeing implications then these can be provided and inform the response to the consultation.

11 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The proposals are significant and wide ranging and therefore it is considered important that the view of the elected representatives for Rutland is heard by Central Government in this consultation.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 There are no additional Background papers to the Report

13 APPENDICES (MANDATORY, SIMPLY STATE IF THERE ARE NO APPENDICES)

- 13.1 Planning for the Future: White Paper August 2020

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.

Appendix A. Planning for the Future: White Paper August 2020