

**Planning for the Future White Paper and
Changes to the Planning System – BDC responses**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Adam Kent
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	Yes
Non-Key Decision	Yes

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The appendices to this report contain the Council's responses to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Planning for the Future White Paper, and Changes to the Planning System consultation.
- 1.2 As result of the reforms being proposed it is likely that the intended progress and content of the Bromsgrove District Plan review (BDPR) may have to alter.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That Appendix A is submitted to MHCLG as the Councils Response to the Planning for the Future White Paper**
- 2.2 **That Appendix B is confirmed as the Councils response to the Changes to the planning System consultation**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no direct Legal implications although should some of these reforms be implemented it likely there would be new legislation for the Council to consider.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.4 **Planning for the Future White paper**

The planning for the future White Paper was published on 6th August 2020 it is split up into the pillars which in turn contain 24 proposals.

The Pillars and topics within them are

Pillar One - Planning for development (Proposals 1 -10)

- A new approach to plan-making
- Development Management Process
- New interactive, web-based map standard for planning documents
- Streamlined, more engaging plan-making process
- Speeding up the delivery of development

Pillar Two - Planning for beautiful and sustainable places (Proposals 11-22)

- Creating frameworks for quality
- A fast-track for beauty
- Effective stewardship and enhancement of our natural and historic environment

Pillar Three - Planning for infrastructure and connected places (Proposals 23-24)

- Consolidated Infrastructure Levy
- How we move into the new system

3.5 Members have been briefed in detail via the Strategic Planning Steering Group on the above, but it is worth remembering the aims of these reforms are to speed up the planning system and in particular the rate at which the planning system delivers new homes. The significant reforms which are contained within the white paper are.

- Simplified Land use plans containing only three types of allocation, **Growth Areas, Renewal Areas and Protected Areas.**
- Development Management policies set nationally.
- Simplified sustainability / environmental assessment processes.
- Abolition of the Duty to Cooperate.
- New binding standard method for establishing housing requirements.
- Areas allocated as growth areas will automatically have outline planning consent.
- More modern technology used in both plan making and decision taking.
- The requirement of Local Plans to be produced in 30 months.
- Nationally set mandatory levy to replace section 106 agreements.

The response to the white paper can be seen at appendix 1.

3.6 Changes to the Planning System consultation

Alongside the White Paper MHCLG have also proposed some shorter term changes to the planning system, some of which are in a direct response to the CV19 pandemic. Again Members have also been briefed on these proposals

via the Strategic Planning Steering Group. The significant implications of the changes to the planning system are.

- Changes to the Standard method of establishing housing needs, the new approach would see Bromsgrove's annual requirement rise from 368 as per the local plan, or 379 as per the current standard method to 694 under the new standard method.
- New policies on delivering first homes to encourage and facilitate home ownership for those currently priced out of the market.
- Support for small and medium sized developers which would raise the threshold for affordable housing contributions from sites of 11+ dwellings to sites of 40 or 50 dwellings.
- Extension of the Permission in Principle (PiP) consent regime

An officer's response has been submitted to this technical consultation to meet the deadline of 1st October, this can be seen at appendix 2, any additional responses as a result of discussion at formal meetings can be added to the initial response.

Implications for the Bromsgrove District Plan review

3.7 At this stage the full implications for the BDP review are unpredictable, that said the work undertaken to date is not wasted. It is the view of officers that however the reforms are implemented, much, if not all of the work which has been done on the review will be able to be used to inform a plan prepared under a revised planning system.

3.8 The most significant issue which will affect how the plan progresses in the future, will be the amount of housing a revised standard housing method allocates to Bromsgrove, and what if anything will replace the duty to cooperate, and any subsequent additional housing as a result.

3.9 Work on the evidence base collection and the site assessment will continue, at this stage it is not suggested that any plan review public consultation documents are prepared or published, and the website updated to acknowledge that fact.

3.10 If implemented a revised 30 month timeline for plan production will also have an impact and the current plan review. Understanding when the period for plan production begins will be important, it will be essential that the Council uses the plan production time afforded to it wisely, hence the work outlined above continuing. Currently the Council gets lots of requests for updates on the plan process. As well making it clear that the Council will not be publishing any consultation documents, its also important that when in a position to do so the Council publishes what it intends to do. Therefore a new local development scheme will need to be produced as soon as possible once the outcomes of the white paper reforms are known.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.11 There are no Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications associated with this report. Although it should be noted that the white paper contains reforms to plan making which would change the way public consultation is carried out in future.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 There are no immediate risk associated with this report, as the reforms are implemented a more thorough assessment of risk can be carried out.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A - BDC response to Planning for the Future white paper.
Appendix B - BDC response changes to the planning system

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Planning for the Future - white paper
- Changes to the planning System - consultation document

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