

# PLANNING WHITE PAPER AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Report By: Head of Planning Services

## Wards Affected

All

## Purpose

- 1.1 To set out the scale and nature of the recent batch of consultation documents on the Planning system.
- 1.2 To propose this Council's response to these documents.

## Background

- 2.1 The publication of the Planning White Paper sets out the government's proposals for the future of the Planning system.
- 2.2 The White Paper is summarised at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The associated documents for consultation are summarised as follows:-

Planning Performance Agreements	Appendix 2
Planning Fees in England	Appendix 3
Changes to Permitted Development	Appendix 4
Improving the Appeal Process	Appendix 5

- 2.4 Central to the various consultation documents are the following future issues:-

- the challenge of climate change
- supporting sustainable economic development
- increasing the supply of housing
- protecting and enhancing the environment and natural resources
- improving local and national infrastructure
- maintaining security of energy supply

- 2.5 The various papers identify the recent improvements that have been introduced into the planning system. These include the introduction of local development frameworks, improvement in development control performance, i.e. planning and

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Andrew Ashcroft, Head of Planning Services, on (01432) 383098

improved capacity in the system via training, development and the setting up of specialist agencies.

- 2.6 The documents indicate that more is needed, and in particular that
- national policy is not sufficiently clear and responsive
  - the planning system is too bureaucratic, takes too long and is unpredictable
  - individuals and communities find it difficult to be heard
  - planning systems are confusing and unclear
  - decisions are not always taken at the right level

## Report Details

- 3.1 Summaries of the key proposals in the White Paper and the associated documents are set out in Appendix 1–5 of this report.
- 3.2 These summaries also propose this Council's responses to the key questions raised by the government. It is proposed that the responses to these key questions are used as a basis for your officers to propose detailed technical responses to the more operational questions raised in the various documents.

## Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications at this stage.
- 4.2 At a high level the Planning Service has benefited significantly from the receipt of Planning Delivery Grant in recent years. This has stemmed from the Council's progress both on plan-making and development control performance. Much remains to be done on the delivery of an electronic planning service.
- 4.3 The consultation paper on planning fees, if implemented, will have an impact on the amount of fees received.
- 4.4 The government's proposals to remove further development (mainly household) from the need for planning permission may bring about a significant reduction in fees received unless this income stream is compensated elsewhere.

## RECOMMENDATION

- THAT (a) the summaries of the various consultation papers at Appendices 1-5 are noted;**
- (b) the Committee approve the proposed responses in the various appendices;**
- (c) officers submit further responses to the Department of Communities and Local Government on operational questions and issues raised in the various papers, in**

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Andrew Ashcroft, Head of Planning Services, on (01432) 383098

**consultation with the Cabinet Member – Environment and Strategic Housing.**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Planning for a Sustainable Future : White Paper - May 2007
- Planning Performance Agreements : a new way to manage large scale major planning applications - May 2007
- Planning Costs and Fees : Report - May 2007
- Changes to Permitted Development : Consultation Paper 2 – Permitted Development Rights for Householders - May 2007
- Improving the Appeal Process in the Planning System : Making it proportionate, customer focused, efficient and well-resourced – consultation – May 2007