

AGENDA ITEM 4: 'PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE' – PLANNING WHITE PAPER 2020

CONSULTATION RESPONSE

UPDATE NOTE

A Members' briefing was held on 13 October 2020 regarding the two consultations on planning reform, which were initially considered at the meeting of Cabinet on 5 October 2020. [*Number to be confirmed*] Members attended.

At the briefing session a presentation was given, providing information on the proposals in the two consultations and highlighting the key issues for Dover District. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

The following is a summary of the issues that were raised and discussed:

- Infrastructure - it was acknowledged that the existing use of S106 to agree and deliver infrastructure can in some cases hold up development. The risks and difficulties for local authorities in borrowing in advance to deliver infrastructure were discussed. The difficulties of engaging with and requiring infrastructure providers to deliver other necessary infrastructure was also raised.
- The potential impact of the proposals on the delivery of affordable housing was raised.
- In relation to the proposed zoning, comments were made about the complexities of identifying all land within one of the three zones, and the time and resource it would take to do that, as well as how it would impact upon the way settlement boundaries are considered.
- Questions were asked about the impact of the proposals on resources.
- Concern was raised that local communities and Parish Councils would not have sufficient opportunity to be involved and consulted with, as a result of the proposals to front-load consultation to the Local Plan stage and streamline the planning application process compared to the current system.
- Concern was raised about the impact of the increased housing need and how this would impact upon the timetable for the emerging Local Plan.

The majority of the comments made by Members have been addressed in the responses that have been drafted and considered by Cabinet.

It is recommended that Cabinet agrees to the following addition to the consultation response to the 'Planning for the Future' - Planning White Paper, to reinforce concerns raised about the reduced opportunities for the local community to inform and influence new development as a result of the proposed reforms.

Question 9 a) insert the following additional text:

The Council is concerned that the proposal will result in fewer opportunities for the local community to be involved and influence development in their local areas. Community consultation at the planning application stage provides valuable local information that positively influences the final outcome of development. The proposals to front-load consultation to the Local Plan stage are insufficient given there is only proposed to be a single consultation during the preparation of the Local Plan and given that such plans may not be able to deal with matters of fine detail at that stage.