

Licensing and Planning Policy Committee  
10 September 2020

**DRAFT RESPONSE TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE STANDARD METHOD FOR ASSESSING LOCAL HOUSING NEED**

**Head of Service:** Viv Evans, Head of Planning  
**Wards affected:** (All Wards);  
**Urgent Decision?(yes/no)**  
**If yes, reason urgent decision required:**  
**Appendices (attached):** Appendix 1: Draft Response to the proposed changes to the standard methodology.

**Summary**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) has published a consultation titled '*Changes to the current planning system: consultation on changes to planning policy and regulations*'. The consultation was published on 6 August 2020 and comments are invited by the end of 1 October 2020.

The consultation comprises of 4 main proposals:

- changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need
- securing of First Homes through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system
- supporting small and medium-sized builders by temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing
- extending the current Permission in Principle to major development

The draft response in Appendix 1 is focussed on the proposed changes to the standard method calculation.

**Recommendation (s)**

**The Committee is asked to:**

- (1) Note and approve the draft response to the proposed changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need
- (2) Authorise the Head of Planning to prepare and respond to the other three proposals set out in the 'Changes to the current planning system' consultation after consultation with the Chair of Licensing and Planning Policy Committee.

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### 1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The consultation '*Changes to the current planning system: consultation on changes to planning policy and regulations*' was published on 6 August 2020 and comments are invited by the end of 1 October 2020. The proposed changes are likely to have significant impact on the Council's Planning service and it is important that the Council responds accordingly outlining its concerns.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) has published a consultation titled '*Changes to the current planning system: consultation on changes to planning policy and regulations*'. The consultation was published on 6 August 2020 and comments are invited by the end of 1 October 2020.
- 2.2 The consultation comprises of 4 main proposals:
  - changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need
  - securing of First Homes through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system
  - supporting small and medium-sized builders by temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing
  - extending the current Permission in Principle to major development
- 2.3 The first seven questions in the consultation paper relate to the proposed changes to the standard method for assessing housing need. The draft response sets out the questions and the Council's draft response to each in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 It is important to note that a Government White Paper containing significant Planning reforms was published on the same day. This will be considered in a paper to a future meeting of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee.

### 3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

- 3.1 Impact Assessment
- 3.2 The proposed changes are likely to have significant impact on the Council's Local Plan and it is important that the Council responds accordingly outlining its concerns.
- 3.3 Crime & Disorder

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- 3.3.1 None arising from this report
- 3.4 Safeguarding
  - 3.4.1 None arising from this report
- 3.5 Dependencies
  - 3.5.1 None arising from this report
- 3.6 Other
  - 3.6.1 None arising from this report

## 4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The proposed changes are likely to have significant impact on the Council's Local Plan programme and likely result in unexpected additional workload that will affect internal and external resources. Officers will closely monitor proposals and consider the impacts.

**Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

## 5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The draft response in the Appendix will form the basis to the Council's response to the consultation on the proposed changes to Planning national policy and guidance.
- 5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

## 6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: Green and Vibrant, Safe and Well, Cultural and Creative, Opportunity and Prosperity, Smart and Connected, Effective Council
- 6.2 The Local Plan will contribute towards delivering the Council's Visions and Objectives identified in the Four Year Plan.
- 6.3 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 6.4 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None arising from the contents of this report.
- 6.5 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None arising from the contents of this report.
- 6.6 **Partnerships:** None arising from the contents of this report.

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### 7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

#### **Previous reports:**

- None

#### **Other papers:**

- MHCLG consultation paper '[Changes to the current planning system consultation](#)' published on the Government website on 6 August 2020.