Chichester District Council

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE PANEL

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## Update on Government Response to Proposed Plan-Making Reforms

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**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 That the Development Plan and Infrastructure Panel (DPIP) notes the update**

**3. Background**

3.1 In July 2023, the previous government consulted on proposals for a new plan-making system and sought views on the implementation of parts of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (LURA) (then a Bill) which relate to plan-making. The aim was to make local plans faster to prepare and more accessible.

3.2 DPIP considered and agreed the council’s response to the consultation on 20 September 2023 and it was subsequently submitted. The consultation received 490 responses, including 207 from local planning authorities. The government has analysed the responses and has provided its response on the way forward[[1]](#footnote-1).

1. **Outcomes to be achieved**

4.1 To brief DPIP on the changes to the plan-making system as the council will be expected to follow the new regulations and guidance in the future when producing policy documents.

**5. Proposal**

5.1 The consultation included a series of 42 questions which sought views on the proposals. Appendix 1 sets out the questions asked, a reminder of the council’s response and a summary of the government’s response and way forward, as well as potential implications for the council in future plan-making. Appendix 2 captures the changes by comparing the current system with the new proposals, focussing on each stage/ document type produced.

5.2 The government will be rolling out the new plan making system from summer or autumn 2025, producing the secondary legislation and guidance required for authorities to be able to follow the new system. A new webpage[[2]](#footnote-2) has already been published which will be the main repository for plan-making information and resources. The council will need to follow the new system when undertaking any future review of the Local Plan.

5.3 The new system will focus on speeding up the plan-making process - with the implementation of the 30-month timeline for plans to be produced, a six-month examination for plans with no proposed modifications and three gateway assessment checks. The scope of new style plans will be set out in a project initiation document (PID) and the process will include two statutory consultation periods of six and eight weeks respectively. There will be more standardisation using templates and digitisation. There will be a legal duty for prescribed public bodies to provide assistance if requested.

5.4 The changes that are not taking being taken forward include: only requiring local planning authorities to submit evidence relating to the soundness of the plan, involving an appointed assessor in the first gateway assessment, and piloting community land auctions.

5.5 Under the transitional arrangements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[[3]](#footnote-3) the council is expected to begin a plan in the new plan making system as soon as it is brought into force, to address the shortfall in housing need. The transitional arrangements also allow for plans which deliver the level of development set out in a preceding local plan (adopted since 12 March 2020) to be produced under the same NPPF. This would apply to the proposed Site Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) and emerging Southbourne Allocation DPD, with the expectation that plans will be submitted for examination under the existing 2004 Act system no later than December 2026.

**6. Resource and Legal Implications**

6.1 The resource implications for the council will become clearer once the full proposals for the rollout of a new system are known. The council will have to follow any new regulations once rolled out (subject to relevant transitional arrangements). The rollout of the new system will not be limited to ‘frontrunners’ and there are no proposals for phasing, but there will be ‘tailored support’ to authorities that bring a plan forward early in the new system.

**7. Other Implications**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Are there any implications for the following? | | |
|  | Yes | No |
| **Crime and Disorder** |  | ✓ |
| **Climate Change and Biodiversity** |  | ✓ |
| **Human Rights and Equality Impact** |  | ✓ |
| **Safeguarding and Early Help** |  | ✓ |
| **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)** |  | ✓ |
| **Health and Wellbeing** |  | ✓ |

**8. Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1: CDC response to plan-making reform consultation (sent Sept 2023) and recent government response (Feb 2025)

Appendix 2: Comparison of existing and new plan-making system

#### 9. Background Papers

9.1 [Government response to the proposed plan-making reforms: consultation on implementation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation/outcome/government-response-to-the-proposed-plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation#chapter-1-plan-content)

1. [Government response to the proposed plan-making reforms: consultation on implementation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation/outcome/government-response-to-the-proposed-plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation#chapter-1-plan-content) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024 paragraphs 234 b) and 236 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)