

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

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matt Dormer
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 creation of a new Redditch Local plan will have to begin in 2021

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**
- 2.3 **That authority is granted to officers to begin the creation of a new Local Plan for Redditch.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report at this time. If there is a need to begin preparing a new local plan in 2021 then a budget will need to be allocated for this work.

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 Planning Advisory Panel (PAP), 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 PAP. 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 Redditch's annual requirement rise from 337 as per the local plan, or 178 as per the current standard method to 368 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 Borough of Redditch Local Plan

3.7 Under the current planning regime it is possible that work would need to begin on a replacement for the Borough of Redditch Local Plan 4 (BORLP4) in 2021. The full implications of the white paper on the need to replace BORLP4 are unpredictable, although it is the view of officers that however the reforms are implemented, it is likely that the production of a new local plan for Redditch will become a necessity for the Council in 2021.

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 Redditch, and what if anything will replace the duty to cooperate, and any subsequent additional housing as a result.

3.9 It will be possible to do some early evidence collection and scene setting work for a new Redditch local plan, this work can be brought before PAP in the new year.

3.10 If implemented a revised 30 month timeline for plan production will also have an impact on the creation of a new plan. 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 it is suggested that some initial work begins on preparing a new local plan to allow the Council to implement the reforms as efficiently as possible. The Council get requests for updates on the plan making, it important that when in a position to do so the

Council publishes what it intends to do. Therefore a new local development scheme which is timetable for plan making 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 - RBC response to Planning for the Future white paper.

Appendix B - RBC 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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