

## LDF ADVISORY GROUP 7 SEPTEMBER 2011

### THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Report of the: Director of Community and Planning

Status: For consideration

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**Executive Summary:** This report summarizes and recommends a draft response to the consultation on the Government's National Planning Policy Framework which is intended to replace existing national planning policy in Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. The draft response is in Appendix A to this report.

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**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Mrs Davison

**Head of Service** Head of Development Services – Jim Kehoe

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**Recommendation:** That the comments in the Appendix form the basis of the Council's response to the consultation to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder.

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#### Background

- 1 One aspect of the Government's proposals to reform the planning system is to replace all the existing national planning policy statements and guidance (PPSs and PPGs) with a much shorter single statement of Government planning policy. This is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which has now been published for consultation.
- 2 A copy has been placed in the Members Room and it is available via the following link: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1951747.pdf>
- 3 The Government is also committed to introducing a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that is included in the draft document.
- 4 District planning policies have to be consistent with national policies and national policy is also a key consideration in determining planning applications. The NPPF will therefore be of fundamental importance to future planning in the District.
- 5 The NPPF runs to 52 pages (excluding a Ministerial Foreword and Glossary) and is structured as follows:
  - Introduction. Outlines the scope and purpose of the guidance
  - Delivering Sustainable Development. Includes a definition of sustainable development and the presumption in favour.

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- Plan Making. This includes guidance on the preparation and content of development plans.
  - Development Management. Sets out the approach to dealing with development proposals.
  - Planning for Prosperity. Contains policy on business and economic development, transport, communications and minerals.
  - Planning for People. Contains policy on housing, design, sustainable communities and green belt.
  - Planning for Places. Contains policy on climate change, flooding and coastal change, natural environment and historic environment.
- 6 The document contains a mixture of new policy and shortened versions of existing policy. The appendix to this report contains a summary of the document, focussing on areas of change from existing policy, and also contains Officer comments which are intended to form the basis for our response to the consultation.
- 7 The consultation does not close until October 17 and before then the Government is holding a series of briefing sessions to which local authorities have been invited. We will be represented at the session on September 28 and it is possible that we may want to make detailed changes to the draft response as a result of discussion at this session and also further detailed scrutiny of the document. The recommendation allows for the Portfolio holder to agree the final response.

### **Options (and Reasons for the Recommendation)**

- 8 The options are to agree the response, make changes or not to respond. The NPPF will be a key consideration in the future planning of the District and failure to respond would mean that the Council would miss out on the chance to influence its content. The draft response in the appendix is recommended for reasons set out in the report.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

- 9 No implications from responding to the consultation. However, the contents of the NPPF may have a future impact on LDF expenditure if changes are required to existing policy.

#### Legal, Human Rights etc.

- 10 Government planning policy is recognised as an important consideration in determining planning applications. Development Plans that do not comply with Government policy are likely to be found unsound.

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**Sources of Information:**                    **National Planning Policy Framework Consultation draft**  
**Draft Planning Policy Statement on Planning for Traveller Sites and Council's response.**

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