

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 LETTER TO PLANNING MINISTER NICK BOLES

This report informs Members of a letter prepared by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation to the Planning Minister Nick Boles MP on 28 January 2014 raising a number of issues relating to the Government's ongoing Planning Reforms.

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Councillor Sue Murray, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, attended a Planning Policy Seminar on 15 January 2014 and later wrote to the Planning Minister to draw attention to some of the new requirements on Local Planning Authorities and the challenges they present when preparing Local Plans. A copy of the letter is at **[Annex 1]** to this report and a recent response from the Planning Minister is at **[Annex 2]**.
- 1.1.2 The particular challenge of meeting the Duty to Cooperate, introduced by the Localism Act and now a test for Local Planning Authorities to pass when submitting plans for examination, could be assisted by more thorough guidance than is currently available in the form of the draft National Planning Policy Guidance. Practical problems, such as Local Planning Authorities being at different stages of plan-making and how to satisfactorily address cooperating with Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Greater London Authority, also remain.
- 1.1.3 Neighbourhood Plans can present difficulties for Local Planning Authority Policy Teams from a resource point of view and also in how best to incorporate these into the Local Plan.
- 1.1.4 The ongoing planning reforms and the prospect of frequent National Planning Policy Guidance updates lead to further delays in finalising Local Plans and this appears to be continuing unabated as illustrated by the recent announcement that the National Planning Policy Framework may now also be about to be reviewed.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this informative report.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this informative report.

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 There are risks associated with delaying the Local Plan preparation. The appended letter highlights these to the Planning Minister.

Background papers:

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Nil

Steve Humphrey

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