

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

05 December 2017

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

**1 PLANNING FOR THE RIGHT HOMES IN THE RIGHT PLACES –
CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

This report seeks endorsement for the response to the Department for Communities and Local Government in respect of the recent consultation.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Government published a Housing White Paper entitled 'Fixing Our Broken Housing Market' in February setting out a number of proposed planning reforms, which were reported to this Board in March. Some of these were subject to further consultation before being incorporated into a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework, first published in March 2012.

1.1.2 The latest consultation was published on 14th September with comments invited up to the 9th November. Views were sought to 19 set questions relating to a number of proposed changes including:

- A proposed approach to calculating local housing need
- Statements of Common Ground
- Planning for a mix of housing needs
- Neighbourhood Planning
- Viability assessments
- Planning fees and
- Other issues

1.1.3 The proposals raise a number of concerns, particularly in relation to the proposed approach to calculating housing needs. These have been set out in the full response appended to this report for endorsement. Bearing in mind the

importance and high profile of this subject, the response has already been sent to all Members and an opportunity was taken to make a short presentation to the Parish Partnership Panel recently.

- 1.1.4 The consultation introduces uncertainty to the Local Plan process going forward and this is explained in more detail in the following report 'Local Plan Status and Update'.
- 1.1.5 Another proposal is to introduce Statements of Common Ground to complement the Duty to Cooperate. The implications of this new requirement are examined in more detail in another report on this agenda.

1.2 Legal Implications

- 1.2.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report although the planning reforms that are the subject of the consultation will come into force when the National Planning Policy Framework is revised expected to be in the spring of 2018 and the Local Plan will have to take these into account.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.3.1 The introduction of a standardised method of calculating housing need for Local Plans will have financial implications for updating Local Plan evidence to take account of any uplift.

1.4 Risk Assessment

- 1.4.1 The delay to the Local Plan timetable as a result of the proposed changes will increase the risk of the development plan becoming out of date.

1.5 Recommendations

- 1.5.1 That Annex 1 to this report, subject to any additional comments by the Board, be recommended to Cabinet for endorsement as this Council's formal response to the consultation.

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Ian Bailey
Planning Policy Manager
Louise Reid
Head of Planning

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health