

**Extraordinary Council Meeting held by Zoom
on Monday 12th October 2020**

There were present

Cllr. B. Beeley - Chairman

Cllr. P. Byrne - Vice Chairman

Cllrs: S. Al-Hamdani L. Lancaster

 J. Curley B. Lord

 R. Darlington P. Lord

 K. Dawson K. Phillips

 L. Dawson G. Sheldon

 R. Knotts M. Woodvine

 Mr. S. Rowberry – Interim Head of Planning

Welcome from the Chairman

Cllr Beeley welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mr. Simon Rowberry from Interim Head of Planning, Oldham Council

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs. Battye, Bingley and Hudson

Declarations of Interest – None

Changes in Planning Laws

Cllr. Beeley opened the meeting referring to the copies of the White Paper and PowerPoint presentation that had been distributed to all Councillors prior to the meeting. She introduced Mr. Simon Rowberry to the meeting who then gave a presentation on the proposed changes to the Planning Laws.

Mr. Rowberry outlined the highlights of the White Paper as follows:

The Government consultation document sets out some radical and deep proposals in 3 Pillars with 24 proposals and the deadline for consultation is 31st October 2020. Most of the key points fit together but with some overlap and he explained that there was still a lot of details missing.

If the proposals go ahead some difficulties will arise. The proposals are not generally liked by Heritage and Green Belt Action groups, CBI and businesses.

This White Paper will not please everyone and may not yet go forward in its current form as it is not a Bill at the present time.

Development Management policies may be established at national level and would not reflect local characteristics so local planning would not be consulted

Local Plans should be subject to a single sustainable development test and this would change the method on how housing requirement is decided. They would identify Growth areas, renewal areas and protected areas. This proposal needs a lot more work and detail.

Plan making and decision making would be simplified and the range of applications would be significantly reduced. In Growth Areas no application would be necessary. In Renewal Areas the types of development would automatically get consent and the role of Parish Council Planning would be reduced and that of the Borough changed. The most fundamental thing in the White Paper would be a

zonal local plan with no flexibility. (Currently Oldham has some negotiating room). Neighbourhood Plans would be retained as an important means of community input and could go as low as street level but exactly what role would they have?

Improved Design

Design guidance and codes to be prepared locally with community involvement and must be more visual and rooted in local preferences and character with an officer appointed for design and place making. Historic buildings and areas must be conserved and enhanced with improvements in energy efficiency standards for buildings.

Infrastructure

The Community Infrastructure Levy (never used in Oldham) should be reformed and charged as a fixed proportion of the development value above a threshold and a nationally set rate or rates and the current system of planning obligations abolished. This could be extended to capture changes of use through permitted development rights. This levy should help to deliver affordable housing provision. Much of the proposals would use up to date technology and be much more map and plan based. The White Paper proposes to scrap Section 106 and roll it into a single infrastructure levy and the current system be abolished. The question would be on how this levy would be collected, and whether more freedom would be given to local authorities on how this levy should be spent. Existing powers and policies should be reviewed and strengthened with stronger powers on intentional breaches as it may be too easy for people to 'play the system'. There would be more emphasis on enforcement.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillors were then given the opportunity to ask individual questions on the presentation given by Mr. Rowberry

Councillor Beeley thanked Mr. Rowberry for his attendance and information.

It was then put to Councillors to decide if they wished to submit their own individual comments or collectively as a Parish Council. Cllr. Woodvine proposed that individual comments be made and collated at a Zoom meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee, seconded by Parish Councillor Al-Hamdani and agreed. This meeting was set for Tuesday 20th October 2020 at 10.00am.

Cllr. Beeley asked all Councillors to keep their comments simple, using bullet points where possible so information could be easily recorded

Deadline for comments 18th October 2020