

Cambridge City Council

Record of Executive Decision

Response to Government Consultation: Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy

Decision of: Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Infrastructure

Reference: 23/URGENCY/P&T/04

Date of decision: 19/02/23

Date Published on website: 07/03/23

Decision Type: Non-Key

Matter for Decision: To agree the response to the Government Consultation: Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options): The Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) is seeking views on how they might develop new and revise current national planning policy to support their wider objectives. Collation of feedback is via an open consultation on the changes to the text revisions of the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with these revisions seeking quick amendment to these sections. However, the consultation also discusses the potential scope of a future consultation on the NPPF, proposes other policy and legislation and includes policy and legislation related to other primary legislation and topics.

Many of the proposals link to national policy changes coming through the content Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) which is likely to gain royal assent spring 2023.

Consultation closes on 2 March 2023 and further information can be viewed on the DLUHC webpage for the consultation document:

HYPERLINK- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy>

Response to the consultation

Feedback is requested via submission of written responses to 58 questions included within the document; the councils' response is set out in Appendix 1 with responses proposed for many of the questions but not all. Within the draft response many of the proposals, such as changes to 5-year housing land supply requirements, revisions to the opening chapters and specific changes to paragraph text of the framework are supported. However, the draft response also expresses concerns around some areas such as the transitionary arrangements for plan making and the approach to national development management policies.

Note that the response is proposed to be joint by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, subject to each council's individual decision sign of process.

Alternative options

The alternative options available are:

- Agree to submit the response in Appendix 1, with possible minor amendments
- Agree an alternative on no response.

The Council could choose to not respond to consultation, but if no response is made by GCSP, DLUHC would not be made aware of the Council's views on the proposed changes to the NPPF being consulted on through the consultation.

Executive Councillor's decision: Approved the response to the consultation on Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy as set out in Appendix 1.

Delegated authority is given to the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development to agree any minor amendments to the response in order to finalise the joint response.

Reasons for the decision: The proposed response addresses issues raised by the consultation.

Scrutiny consideration: The Chair and Spokespersons of Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee were consulted prior to the action being authorised.

Report: Appendix 1 – Council's Response to Government Consultation: Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy

Conflict of interest: None

Comments: Councillor S Davies made the following comments in response: This seems like a solid piece of work. I have a couple of observations:

Q48: given the risk this poses; I felt the response could be even more strongly worded

Q53: surprised to see n/a. Given my interests, you won't be surprised to hear that I believe better (and better funded) community engagement (including but not limited to formal consultation and Neighbourhood Plans) is key to delivering Mission 9 'Pride in Place'. Many long-term residents in Cambridge are feeling increasingly detached/alienated from 'their' place as the discussion around changes to, for example, the Beehive and the Grafton Centre, demonstrates. This is something which the planning regime can and should be addressing. A useful specific change would be requiring improvements to the public visibility of planning applications, moving beyond the laminated A4 sheet on the lamp post to something more legible, such as the format used by the City of Vancouver.

Response to comments: In response to Cllr. Davies' point, the response to Q.48 was strengthened. Cllr. Davies' points highlighting the importance of community engagement were integrated into the Council's

response to Q.53. It was felt by the Lead Member that Cllr. Davies' suggestion to improving the advertising of applications would be more appropriately dealt with under the next review of the Statement of Community Involvement rather than this consultation.