

## **Top tips on Neighbourhood Planning: Post Adoption of Neighbourhood Plans**

### **1. Make sure Development Management are aware of Neighbourhood Plans and get in the habit of using them**

Policy teams can help by:

- Involving Development Management in reviewing and testing policies prior to submission to ensure policies are usable and effective.
- Adding neighbourhood plans to the relevant forms and templates, including committee reports;
- Adding a neighbourhood planning layer to the Council's mapping system;
- Clarifying the weight that should be attached to Neighbourhood Plan policies;
- Inform Land Charges when a Neighbourhood Plan has been made;
- providing a copy of neighbourhood plans and making a word version of plans available internally from which policies can be copied for officer and committee reports;

### **2. Keep LPA websites up to date and make it clear that Neighbourhood Plans are part of the Development Plan**

Neighbourhood Plans should be clearly included as part of the website pages on local planning policy, and this should identify all made and emerging plans. Guidance on how to prepare a neighbourhood plan could be recorded on separate website pages.

### **3. Establish a process to engage Qualifying Bodies in the determination of applications**

Parish Councils already have to be consulted on applications within their area and the Housing and Planning Bill introduces new requirements for Neighbourhood Forums to be consulted, bringing them into line with Parish Councils. (Many authorities already consult as part of their Statement of Community Involvement). It will not always be possible to allow Qualifying Bodies to attend pre-application discussions with applicants as they may be confidential, where this is the case the LPA should encourage the applicant to discuss plans with the Qualifying Body in advance of submission. Many authorities also conduct these in public either through a Development Management Forum or by providing briefings for members at their Planning Committees – making sure that publicity is sent to Qualifying Bodies. A Memorandum of Understanding could be used to set out the way in which the LPA and Qualifying Body will use the made plan and work together on the determination of applications in the future.

### **4. Encourage groups to include policies which will actually affect decision making**

Experience to date has shown that some policies have more of an impact in decision taking than others. Site allocations have significant implications on

decision making, but there are several other policy areas where neighbourhood planning policies can positively influence decision taking, for example policies on house type and mix, views, local character and design and local historic environment policies.

**5. Test effectiveness of emerging Neighbourhood Planning policies by considering mock applications against them**

This can be done with Development Management colleagues and Members.

**6. Neighbourhood Plan policies can help determine how CIL receipts should be spent.**

Neighbourhood plan policies which set out the priority of projects within the area can be used by Local Authorities to influence how CIL receipts might be spent. These policies can also set out how the qualifying body will use CIL receipts. The figure below from the National Planning Policy Guidance sets out the proportion of CIL receipts passed onto qualifying bodies.

Parish Council ✓ Neighbourhood Plan ✓ = 25% uncapped, paid to Parish	Parish Council ✓ Neighbourhood Plan ✗ = 15% capped at £100/dwelling, paid to Parish
Parish Council ✗ Neighbourhood Plan ✓ = 25% uncapped, local authority consults with community	Parish Council ✗ Neighbourhood Plan ✗ = 15% capped at £100/dwelling, local authority consults with community

Where there is no CIL in place, Neighbourhood Plan policies can set out the priority which Qualifying Bodies attach to the funding through S106 agreements and this may assist local planning authorities in negotiation.

**7. Include a policy on monitoring of Neighbourhood Plans in the Local Plan**

East Staffordshire's Local Plan includes a Policy NP1 which states that the LPA expects all Neighbourhood Plans to include proposals for monitoring the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Several Plans have since considered monitoring, for example the Marchington Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy to annually review the Plan and the Anglesey Neighbourhood Plan suggests a partial review after 5 to 6 years and a full review no later than 2030.

## **8. Agree who is going to monitor what and how**

Responsibility for monitoring Neighbourhood Plans rests with the LPA. However Qualifying Bodies may be able to provide data and may be best placed to monitor the progress of projects. The split in responsibility should be agreed with Qualifying Bodies, this could for example comprise the LPA leading on monitoring the strategic delivery of housing and the Qualifying Body leading on monitoring local delivery. Monitoring arrangements could be recorded in a Memorandum of Understanding between the LPA and Qualifying Body.

## **9. Monitor how Neighbourhood Plan policies are being used**

This could take the form of a spreadsheet for each made or nearly made Plan recording which policies are being used in decision making, the weight attached to them and any commentary about their effectiveness (this could include any appeal decisions). This can be used to understand which policies are/are not performing well. Findings from this should be shared with other groups to inform future Plans.

## **10. Agree criteria for monitoring the performance of Neighbourhood Plan policies with Groups.**

The criteria should align with the Local Planning Authority's criteria for determining what is a successful policy.