

LOCAL PLANS EXPERT GROUP

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

On 15 September Brandon Lewis MP, Minister for Housing and Planning, launched a panel of experts to examine what measures or reforms may be helpful in ensuring the efficient and effective production of Local Plans. The Group has now met for the first time and decided to invite views from the planning and property industry, local government and other stakeholders to assist its consideration of the issues.

The Group considers it would be most helpful if those wishing to respond could provide their responses under the following principal headings:

- a. **Content of local plans** (including requirements of the NPPF, overlap with the NPPF, ditto re. the NPPG, length, preambles, template policies, spatial detail, plan period, one plan or several, relationship with local guidance etc. – including good and bad examples)
- b. **Local plan preparation process** – could procedures be changed to provide better and quicker plan preparation? This would include matters such as the terms and flexibility of existing Regulations, the appropriateness of statutory requirements, available ‘best practice’ guides, irreducible requirements and can these be changed, scope for active case management, tests of soundness, the terms and implications of the duty to co-operate, the appropriateness of early review, modifying plans post submission, the examination process, powers of intervention, the importance of transition in any change etc.)
- c. **Agreeing strategic requirements** (including cross boundary requirements) – this could include the role of SHMAs, the appropriateness of evidence requirements and methods for calculating objectively assessed need, the potential for strategic plans, two stage plans, dispute resolution, the role of intervention, striking the relevant balance, etc.
- d. **Implementation** (to look beyond technical issues to consider any other impediments to comprehensive local plan coverage – this could include financial or behavioural constraints or practical difficulties etc.; in addition this includes identifying best practice, lessons from joint working but also potential measures that could help to ensure timely local plan coverage).
- e. **Observations** – thoughts or relevant experience about how the system is working and the need for change;
- f. **Other** – what other measures should the Group consider that might assist it to make recommendations which would contribute towards making local plan making more efficient and effective?

All views are welcome. All relevant matters are open for review and the Group has no preconceived ideas about the extent or nature of any changes to the plan making system that it might recommend. There is no word limit for the submissions but it would obviously be helpful if they were clear and concise.

Submissions should be addressed to LocalPlans@communities.gsi.gov.uk and should be received no later than close on **Friday 23 October**.

Any queries about this call for evidence or the work of the Group should be directed to the Secretariat ian.piper@communities.gsi.gov.uk.