

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DELEGATED PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION  
3 February 2012**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Wynne Jones  
Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Culture

**SUBJECT:** Welsh Government call for evidence:  
Ensuring the planning system delivers

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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**1. Summary**

1.1 The current Welsh Government (WG) call for evidence invites views on how to deliver the planning system in the future. Directed by an independent advisory group, the review seeks views on:

1.1.1 The key policy objectives that the planning system should deliver;

1.1.2 How to deliver the planning system most effectively and how to measure it;

1.1.3 The current delivery mechanisms and institutional arrangements;  
and

1.1.4 Any other evidence or examples considered relevant purpose  
behind the report

1.2 The closing date for replies is 3 February 2012.

1.3 The Council's recommended response is attached at **Appendix 1**.

**2. Proposal**

2.1 In October 2011, the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development of the Welsh Government established an independent advisory group to consider options on how to deliver the planning system in the future. This work will lead to a report, which will form part of the evidence base for a new future Welsh Planning Bill.

2.2 The First Minister indicated that the Planning Bill should reconsider roles and responsibilities, which includes the Welsh Government, local authorities, statutory consultees, town and community councils and the

Planning Inspectorate. It will build on the initial consideration of these roles in the Simpson Review that considered possibilities for closer working between local authorities.

2.3 Currently, the main ways of delivering planning services in Wales at national level is by publication of Welsh planning policy and ensuring its implementation through scrutiny of local policy and plans, calling in planning applications and adjudicating on planning appeals. Local planning authorities (LPAs) and national park authorities deliver national and local planning policy by preparing and adopting development plans and by making decisions on planning applications.

2.4 The group will not be considering the content of Planning Policy Wales (PPW), nor will it be covering permissions that are not land use related, such as entertainment licences or health and safety certificates. It will be searching for evidence to support responses about how to improve planning delivery in preparation for a Welsh Planning Act and in doing so will also be seeking the views of experts in the field and looking beyond Welsh boundaries.

2.5 The covering report poses a number of standard questions. Recommended responses to these are set out at **Appendix 1**.

### **3. Powys Change Plan**

3.1 Clearly, the delivery of the planning system, both at the national and local level, has a tremendous impact on the realisation of the Council's aspirations. This current call for evidence represents a significant opportunity to help shape the future delivery of the system.

3.2 It is difficult to quantify risks at this stage and indeed, to do so would be based on conjecture. However, it is important that local democratic accountability remains one of the key principles of any new system.

### **4. Options Considered/Available**

4.1 Powys need not respond to the call for evidence at this stage and wait for firmer proposals to come forward before engaging in this process. However, it is considered appropriate to engage in this process from the outset to give the Council the best opportunities in terms of seeking to have a consistent input into this process.

### **5. Preferred Choice and Reasons**

5.1 To engage at this stage and respond to the call for evidence as recommended at **Appendix 1**.

## **6. Sustainability and Environmental Issues / Equalities / Crime and Disorder / Welsh Language / Other policies etc**

Together with other anticipated new primary Welsh legislation relating to environmental issues, it is considered that the future Planning Act for Wales will demonstrably have an impact on all of these issues to varying degrees. However, this is difficult to quantify at this stage.

## **7. Children and Young People's Impact Statement – Safeguarding and Wellbeing**

It is unlikely that any future Planning Act for Wales will have a direct impact on these issues. If there is to be an impact, it is not possible to discern these matters at this stage.

## **8. Local Member(s)**

8.1 The proposals relate to a County wide matter and the views of individual elected Members have not, therefore, been sought.

## **9. Other Front Line Services**

9.1 Until firmer proposals come forward from WG, it is not possible to take account of how future changes might impact on other front line services.

## **10. Support Services (Legal / Finance / HR / ICT / BPU)**

10.1 Likewise, there is not considered to be any meaningful view that can be expressed at this stage in terms of impact on support services until such time as tangible proposals come forward, which are in themselves likely to be the subject of further consultation.

## **11. Local Service Board / Partnerships / Stakeholders etc**

11.1 Similarly, no quantifiable impact can at this stage be established.

## **12. Communications**

12.1 There is not considered to be a need for a communications strategy at this embryonic stage in the approach being taken by WG in producing a new Planning Act for Wales.

### 13. Statutory Officers

13.1 The views of the Strategic Director, Finance and Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) and the Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) will be sought at the appropriate time.

### 14. Members' Interests

14.1 The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

### 15. Future Status of the Report

15.1 This report is not confidential and there is, therefore, no need to consider its future status.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>That,</b>	
<b>The response set out at Appendix 1 be submitted to the Welsh Government as the formal response to the current call for evidence of Powys County Council</b>	<b>For the reasons set out in the report</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	Senior Manager – Development Management
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	By 3 February 2012

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
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**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

By following this link, the relevant documentation and background information can be found:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/planning/callforevidence/?lang=en>

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