

Environment & Housing Programme Board – report from Cllr Gary Porter

National Planning Policy Framework: discussion with the Practitioners Advisory Group

1. As part of the government's review of planning policy, designed to consolidate policy statements, circulars and guidance documents into a single concise National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), I formed part of an advisory group to provide a practitioners perspective on what the NPPF should contain. The group submitted a proposed draft NPPF to Greg Clark on the 20 May, and Cllr Mike Haines and I attended a roundtable on 8 June to discuss its contents. The proposed NPPF can be downloaded from www.nppfpractitionersadvisorygroup.org

Meeting with North East Councils

2. Cllr Clyde Loakes, Cllr Peter Britcliffe and I attended a meeting of North East Councils' Leaders on 20 May to discuss the work of the Environment & Housing Programme Board and listen to members' comments and concerns about key issues which the Board is working on. We all agreed that this was an extremely useful meeting and Members from the Board will continue to get out into the regions to inform the wider membership on the issues we are currently working on and more importantly to seek views on what we should be working on in the future.

CIWM Conference 2011

3. Cllr Clyde Loakes and Cllr Mike Haines spoke in two sessions of the Chartered Institute of Waste Management's Annual Conference on 14 and 15 June. Cllr Haines discussed the implications of the Localism Bill, the Planning Review and the demise of the formal regional planning framework, and explored how local authorities can respond positively to the new planning landscape. Cllr Loakes spoke alongside Caroline Spelman on the Waste Review; in particular highlighting its implications for local authorities and what actions will be required to deliver the Government's objectives.

Planning for growth: closer working between planning and economic development

4. Lead Members of the Environment & Housing Programme Board co-chaired a one day conference on closer working between planning and economic development on 24 May. This conference was extremely successful and various key speakers explored the latest policy developments at national level and what they mean for local areas, heard from councils who are building strong and effective Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure they are well placed to attract investment and facilitate sustainable development, provided those working in planning and economic development with practical advice and the opportunity to share experience with public and private sector practitioners, and discussed the crucial role of elected members in facilitating engagement locally and working collaboratively across boundaries.

Board to Board meeting with the National Housing Federation

5. Cllrs Andrew Gravells, Mike Haines, Tony Newman and Mayor Dorothy Thornhill met with Board members from the National Housing Federation on 25 May to discuss areas of common interest and ways of working together. This includes the joint work on the Localism Bill relating to the new duty to produce a tenancy strategy on local authorities. This was followed up by a letter I sent to Grant Shapps MP, which suggested that rather than forcing councils to create a tenancy strategy, the Localism Bill places councils under a duty to work with registered providers to consider appropriate responses to tenancy issues locally and make these options transparent to local people in any manner it considers locally appropriate.

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