

**Item 1**

**Nick Boles MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for  
Planning, Department for Communities and Local Government**

**Summary**

Nick Boles MP is speaking to the Councillors' Forum on planning issues. This is an opportunity for members to raise issues for local government.

A biography is included as **Appendix A**.

**Purpose of report**

To provide a summary overview of LGA work in relation to planning to inform the discussion.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the presentation and raise issues for local government.

**Action**

As directed by the Forum.

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**Overview**

1. There has been significant reform to the planning system under the current government including: the streamlining of national planning policy and a new emphasis on local plans with the introduction of the national planning policy framework; abolition of regional spatial strategies and the introduction of the duty to cooperate and most recently consolidation of planning guidance in a web-based resource. The government have also extended permitted development rights and introduced a new performance regime for councils dealing with major applications.

**Summary of LGA work on planning:**

2. The LGA's work on planning is focused on:

**Promoting a locally-led planning system**

- 2.1 Making the case for local democratic decision making as a means of proactively driving growth whilst ensuring that residents and businesses have a say about development that affects them. This includes:
  - 2.1.1 Evidencing and promoting the work that is taking place by councils to get plans in place, work with communities and developers to secure infrastructure, homes and development to support local economies;
  - 2.1.2 providing evidenced arguments against measures which undermine local decision making on planning; and
  - 2.1.3 developing proposals for how tools and processes within the planning system could be simplified and improved to support councils in providing a fast and effective planning service.

**Strategic planning for infrastructure and growth**

- 2.2 Addressing the positive role that councils have in planning for and leveraging in funding and investment for infrastructure and working across local authority boundaries to meet wider needs and growth ambitions.

**Supporting councils to drive improvement in planning**

- 2.3 We also have a comprehensive programme of support for councils on planning through the grant funded Planning Advisory Service (PAS). Key priorities for the programme are support for plan making, leadership of planning, councils working together on strategic planning issues and improving planning services (including support for those at risk under the new performance regime for major applications).

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To ensure the support offered by PAS is sector-led, the programme is overseen by a Board with representatives from across local government the LGA and DCLG.

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**Appendix A**

**Biography**



Nick Boles was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Planning in September 2012.

The minister is responsible for:

- planning and development
- local growth
- deregulation

He was elected as the Conservative MP for Grantham and Stamford in May 2010.

**Education**

Nick went to school at Winchester College before going on to study politics, philosophy and economics at Magdalen College, Oxford. He went on to do a Masters in public policy at Harvard University in the US after winning a Kennedy Scholarship.

**Political career**

Nick was elected to Westminster Council in 1998 and became Chairman of Housing. He was chairman of the Housing Committee from 1999 to 2001, before stepping down in 2002. In 2007, Nick was appointed as Head of David Cameron's Implementation Team, which drew up the Conservative Party's detailed plans for government.

In November 2010, he was appointed Parliamentary Private Secretary to Nick Gibb MP, the Minister of State for Schools. Nick is also a political fellow at the Institute for Government and is the founder, and a former director, of Policy Exchange, a centre right policy research institute.

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**Career outside politics**

Nick spent the first 10 years of his career in business. He worked as a merchant banker for a few years in Germany, Russia and Eastern Europe, helping state owned industries prepare for private ownership. He and a friend later formed a small group of companies supplying the DIY industry.

**Personal life**

Nick lives with his partner Shay Meshulam.