

# NATIONAL PLANNING FORUM

Draft Notes of Meeting held at Local Government House and City Hall, London

15 June 2004

Liz Peace (vice Chair) took the Chair and welcomed colleagues to the meeting. Cllr Suzie Kemp proposed and it was agreed unanimously that the Secretary write to the former Chair Cllr. Stewart Stacey and thank him for his major contribution to the work of the Forum in the past year.

1. Apologies-see attached list
2. Notes of Meeting held on 27 April 2004: Agreed
3. Matters arising: Cllr Richard Kemp raised the reference to Right to Buy on Page 2. This related to work undertaken by the LGA Housing Executive. It was agreed that Cllr Kemp would bring any reports on the topic which may be of interest to the Forum to a future meeting. And he asked colleagues on the general point to let him have examples of good practice on these issues.
4. NPF Annual Report 2003/4: This was received without discussion.
5. AOB. Land Fragmentation. This issue was raised by the POS and concerned the growing practice of marketing plots of farmland on the urban fringe. It was considered that this preyed on avarice and was detrimental to the appearance and proper management of the countryside. It was noted that travellers were now grouping to buy parcels. Discussion:
  - Govt. should regulate this. Article 4 Directions stop things getting worse but don't prevent the problem from first occurring.
  - John Stamboullian (ODPM) was dealing with this.
  - This is a Trading Standards issue.
  - Nothing new, leisure plots have been on the go for a century.
  - S215 Notices for 'nuisance' could be used to control the aftermath although not a preventative measure.
  - Adverts are very clever, advising that LPA's should NOT be contacted, making hints not promises.
  - Lord Rooker has agreed to control this
  - CPRE has applied for pp on a plot as a test case.

The NPF agreed to re-visit this in future as a main item

Egan: It was agreed that the Performance and Delivery Task Group could usefully re-visit the Egan Report with the LGA/RTPI/POS comments and see if NPF can add value in a project.

BOAT TRIP on the R Thames to view London buildings and skyline.

Meeting re-convened at City Hall, London

Cllr Suzie Kemp in the Chair

The Chair thanked the officers of the LGA for organising the river trip and urged colleagues to read the CABE handout on urban design.

PRESENTATION by Mike Ash, (ODPM)

- Very heavy workload at ODPM continues
- The Planning Act now in place
- Commencement dates to be announced shortly, core changes immediately, others asap, some late 2005.
- Finalising PPS1 over the summer.
- PPS11 & 12: Sustainability Guidance to follow shortly.
- Progress report soon on revisions and way forward for Planning Obligations
- Egan response continues
- Design Coding project progressing well. Likely to be very interesting.
- Post grad planning courses doing well, very encouraging to see.
- Planning Advisory Service now getting established, please use it.

Discussion

- Ministers monitoring performance and will make an announcement on twin tracking when they feel appropriate.
- Is system complicated or not? LPA's already making it work and guidelines and best practice notes will follow. Supplementary documents will add flesh.
- ODPM keen that LPA's have slim single document LDF's
- Local govt re-organisation should resolve any potential clash between city regions and Northern way proposals.
- PPS7 should be released before end 2004-06-24 Guide for the public to new arrangements in preparation. A guide to the guides may be a good idea!
- Are we there yet? No. Still more to be done, but a balance between what's achievable and time constraints.

Cllr Kemp thanked Mike Ash for coming for the day and for his presentation. She urged colleagues to make it work.

PRESENTATION by Paula Clayton-Smith, Planning Advisory Service.

- PAS a part of IDeA
- To be launched formally in October
- Established following initiative between ODPM and LGA
- Service is to local authorities only. Key partners are POS, RTPI, Planning Aid and others
- PAS seeks to mobilise best practice, signpost and make connections to all LPA's. One stop shop. Adding value

- Sustainable Communities agenda linking liveability, community services, environment and other issues a central theme.
- Working with EP and LPA's on major planning applications in growth areas.
- MORI survey to all LPA's on needs
- Skills training for Councillors
- Connections with e planning

#### Discussion

- PAS steering group should have councillors as well as officers.
- Mapping exercise in preparation to establish who is doing what. LGA hope to report at July Planning Executive and colleagues urged to contribute.
- Private sector should be involved in PAS, LPA's only have half the story.
- Need for process quality outcomes. Until that happens we won't see a satisfactory step change.
- The public need to be better informed if we are to achieve better outcomes
- PASD needs to make connections with the wider research agenda from which ideas can be drawn down and operationalised
- Schools are an untapped resource for fostering awareness and community planning.
- LPA's need help NOW with the basics

Cllr Suzie Kemp thanked Paula for her contribution

DATE OF NEXT MEETING 20 SEPTEMBER 2004