

PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE WORKING GROUP (PIWG)

Summary: To review the progress of Planning & Infrastructure Working Group

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee notes the report

Report by: John Mills, Planning & Landscape Lead

MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

- John Mills, Planning and Landscape Lead
- Mandy Pressland, Office Manager (providing admin support)
- Liz Hodges, Parish Council Board member (Chairman)
- Graham Hopkins, SoS Board member
- Cate Le Grice Mack, SoS Board member
- Caroline Mumford, Cotswold Voluntary Warden
- John Swanton, SoS Board member

N.B. John Swanton joined PIWG following the Board's AGM on 22 June 2021, when Mike Dean and Matt Darby stepped down. Caroline Mumford was invited to join due to her expertise in issues relating to transport.

MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The most recent meeting took place on 8 June 2021.
2. Key points of discussion:
 - the Board's draft Climate Change Strategy – PIWG endorsed: (i) the conclusions of the Executive Committee's discussion of the draft Climate Change Strategy; and (ii) the landscape-led approach to addressing climate change that is outlined in our Landscape-led Development Position Statement;
 - sustainable design – PIWG is keen to review and advocate design measures (particularly for housing) that help to both conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape and mitigate / adapt to the impacts of climate change;
 - the Board's planning performance in 2020/21 – for example, in 2020/21, we commented on 65 'major' development management consultations, which is a four-fold increase on previous years (due, in part, to the provision of admin support and the increased use of 'standard' responses).
 - the planning-related KPI for 2021/22 – this will focus on the % of development management consultations, which are above our consultation thresholds, that we provide a substantive response to by the consultation deadline.

OTHER ACTIVITY

3. Other planning-related activity since the last Executive Committee meeting on 25 May, some of which has involved PIWG, includes:

- recruiting a planning officer - we have successfully recruited an outstanding applicant, Simon Joyce, who will start with us in November 2021;
- reviewing the A417 Missing Link development consent application and drafting our representation to the Planning Inspectorate;
- preparing for the Oakley Farm planning appeal inquiry, relating to the proposed development of 250 dwellings in the Cotswolds National Landscape on the edge of Cheltenham, in which JM will be representing the Board as a 'Rule 6' party (i.e. a main party) – the inquiry will run for two weeks from 7 September 2021;
- participating in the Protected Landscapes Advisory Working Group (which advises Defra / MHCLG on planning issues relating to protected landscapes), including responding to a consultation on Proposal 6 of the Landscapes Review Final Report (i.e. the Glover Review), which proposes a strengthened place for protected landscapes in the planning system;
- responding to key planning policy consultations, including:
 - South Warwickshire Local Plan (scoping and call for sites consultation);
 - Stroud Local Plan (pre-submission consultation);
- responding to planning application consultations, including the following proposals within the Cotswolds National Landscape:
 - 110 dwellings at Winchcombe (Ref: 21/00496/FUL (Tewkesbury Borough));
 - 24 dwellings at Winchcombe (Ref: 21/20/00892/OUT (Tewkesbury Borough));
 - 60 dwellings at Stinchcombe (Ref: 2021/0325/EIAS (Stroud District)).

DECISIONS REQUIRED

4. No decisions required.

NEXT STEPS

5. The next meeting will take place on 6 October 2021. This will include reviewing:
 - the Terms of Reference, taking account of relevant issues including the Board's new Vision, the Glover Review proposals and the climate and ecological emergencies;
 - how the group can best contribute to – and maximise the beneficial impact of - the planning-related work of the Board.
6. From October onwards PIWG will be involved in the review and updating of our Renewable Energy and Neighbourhood Plans Position Statements.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- No supporting papers

SEPTEMBER 2021