

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF PLANNING POLICY ON 1 JUNE 2021

REPORT

SUBJECT: Funding to review/update made Neighbourhood Development Plans

REPORT AUTHOR: Donna Moles - Senior Planning Officer

DATE: 14 th May 2021
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EXTN: 37697

AREA: Planning Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Council continues to support Parish Councils preparing Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) and NDP reviews following adoption of the Arun Local Plan 2018 in order to help deliver the housing requirement for the Local Plan period 2011-2031.

On 19th June 2017, Cabinet resolved to granting funding of up to £5,000 per Neighbourhood Plan Group (NPG) (up to £105k in total for all parishes within ADC LPA) for any parish that is updating their Plan or creating a new Plan and will have reached a stage within 3 years (post Local Plan adoption) where a Plan is proposing an appropriate scale of housing development and this report proposes to continue the provision of this grant. In order to assist Parish Council's and those groups who intend to produce new or modified Plans as a result of the Council's decision to update the Local Plan and consequent abandonment of the Non-Strategic Sites Development Plan Document, Arun District Council will provide grant funding of up to £5,000 per parish for any town/parish that is updating their Plan and which will commence within 3 years (of this meeting date i.e. 1 June 2021) where a Plan is proposing an appropriate scale of housing development.

Arun District Council receives funding from central government to support the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and there is sufficient funding within this budget to be able to provide additional funding (over and above further government grants that are available) to support new or updated Neighbourhood Development Plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To approve grant funding of up to £5,000 per parish for any town/parish that is updating their Plan and will commence within 3 years (of the date of this meeting i.e. 1 June 2021) where a Plan is proposing an appropriate scale of housing development.
2. To delegate decisions on individual parish grant distribution to Group Head of Planning or his nominated representative.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Arun District Council has an adopted Local Plan which seeks contribution of housing allocations towards the non-strategic (i.e. sites of typically below 300 dwellings) housing requirement of 1,250 dwellings, both from Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) and a Non-Strategic Sites Development Plan Document (DPD). On 15 January 2020 the Council decided to update the adopted Arun Local Plan 2018 (ALP2018) and consequently abandoned the NSSDD. The Council currently is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply (HLS) and has also been subject to penalties under the Government's Housing Delivery Test.
- 1.2 The Council updated its Local Development Scheme in July 2020. This set the overall plan making timetable for the local plan update for plan adoption in 2023 and reflects the Council's priorities for urgently updating the Development Management policies in the ALP2018. In the interim, Parishes that would have been subject to housing allocations through the NSS DPD may now need to rely on preparing or updating their own NDP to help address the council's shortfall in housing land supply and the 5-year HLS in particular. For this reason, the Neighbourhood grant regime needs to be updated and the deadline period extended to assist any Parishes wishing to progress NDP reviews within the next 2 years to help address the current plan housing shortfall.
- 1.3 On 19th June 2017, Cabinet resolved to granting funding of up to £5,000 per Neighbourhood Plan Group (up to £105k in total for all parishes within ADC LPA) for any town/parish that is updating their Plan or creating a new Plan and will have reached a stage within 3 years (post Local Plan adoption) where a Plan is proposing an appropriate scale of housing development and this report proposes to continue the provision of this grant. To date, 3 Parish and Town Councils have claimed this grant for updating their NDP.
- 1.4 Arun District Council is at the forefront in promoting Neighbourhood Planning. To further assist our Parish and Town Councils who intend to produce new or modified Plans we are proposing to provide grant funding of up to £5,000 per town/parish for any town/parish that is updating their Plan and will commence within 3 years (from the date of this meeting i.e. 1 June 2021) where a Plan is proposing an appropriate scale of housing development.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

- 2.1 At the moment, there is no legal obligation for Arun District Council to distribute the burden funding received by MHCLG, to Parish and Town Councils. Other authorities have decided to retain the monies received and put it towards any additional costs incurred as a result of Neighbourhood Plan production. However, it is recommended that in the spirit of our working relationships with Town and Parish Councils that we allocate some of this funding. To date, 3 Parish and Town Councils have claimed grant for updating NDP which means that a remaining 18 Parishes can still apply and therefore, a total to be claimed could amount to £90,000.

- 2.2 There are no conditions attached to the burden funding received from Government, although Arun District Council needs to ensure complete transparency for clear accountability in order to provide an audit trail of where the money went and how it was spent. To this end we are seeking approval for allocating this funding of up to £5,000 per parish for any parish that is updating their Plan and will commence within 2 years (from the date of this meeting i.e. 1 June 2021) where a Plan is proposing an appropriate scale of housing development.
- 2.3 In addition to this Arun NDP grant funding, the parishes can also claim grant funding from Ministry of Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). All groups writing a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order will be eligible to apply for up to £10,000 in grant. Groups facing more complex issues can apply for specific packages of technical support where needed and may also be eligible for further £8,000 in grant.

3. OPTIONS:

The options considered are:

- A) Not provide the parish/town councils with any grant funding.
- B) Provide grant funding of up to £5000 per parish for any parish that is updating their Plan and will commence within 3 years (from the date of this meeting i.e. 1 June 2021) where a Plan is proposing an appropriate scale of housing development.

Option A does not show any commitment to working with the groups in updating the plans. Option B reflects the spirit of Localism and our continued support for the parish/town councils to guide and assist them in bringing NDPs forward.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		x
Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify) Neil Crowther - Group Head of Planning Karl Roberts - Director of Place Claire Rowlands - Finance	x	

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	x	
Legal		x
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		x
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x
Sustainability		x
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Other (please explain)		x
6. IMPLICATIONS: The decision to approve the grant support has financial implications. There are no time constraints imposed by Government within the regulations or legislation which is intended to promote flexibility, this Council can therefore set their own time frames with spending the money.		
7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: To get authorisation for funding to support new or updated Neighbourhood Development Plans and provide greater certainty on the Council's commitment to this agreed approach.		
8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: Planning practice guidance: <i>Updating a Neighbourhood Plan</i> Neighbourhood planning - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)		