



The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP
Secretary of State for Communities
and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

District Councils' Network
Local Government House
Smith Square
London
SW1P 3HZ

3 January 2012

Dear Secretary of State

PROPOSALS FOR NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING REGULATIONS CONSULTATION

The District Councils' Network (DCN) welcomes the opportunity to comment on this consultation. The DCN is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Group. It is a single voice for districts to central government and national organisations. It represents over 180 district councils.

The DCN welcomes the Government's intention to introduce regulations that are not overly prescriptive and recognise the importance and value of localism.

The DCN strongly agrees that in unparished areas the local planning authority should consider applications for the designation of a neighbourhood area.

The DCN supports the view that neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders should only be brought forward through a neighbourhood plan.

The DCN considers that the regulations should require a parish council, which wishes to determine applications to prepare, consult on and adopt a development management policy. The adoption should be subject to the approval of the local planning authority.

Providing support for and administering the new community rights will have significant resource implications for district councils. The "one in one out" principle of burdens does not appear to apply to these rights. There must be explicit commitment to the cost of supporting and administering these rights being budgeted for in the Government's New Burdens Assessment.

However it is noted that the Government has committed to providing £50m until March 2015 to support local councils in making neighbourhood planning a success. The DCN looks forward to receiving further information about how this funding will be allocated.

I hope you and your officials find these comments and the greater detail in the attached formal response, valuable. We would be happy to meet to discuss our comments so that we can all make sure that the final version of the regulations results in change for the better.

To discuss the District Councils' Network response please contact Emma Tucker (emma.tucker@local.gov.uk or 0207 664 3049).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gillian Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cllr Gillian Brown
Planning Lead
District Councils Network

cc Susan Peart, Department for Communities and Local Government