

DRAFT

Nia Haf Davies presented the report and the appendices, which contained an amended consultation draft of the Supplementary Planning Guidance (consultation draft) – 'Maintaining and Creating Unique Communities'. She noted that the decision of this Committee in April had led to appointing a partnership to undertake a critical appraisal of the consultation draft Guidance. She drew attention to the qualification and experience of both companies, noting that Owain Wyn (Borum) was present to discuss the work (Appendix 1) and to answer questions. Nia drew attention to the type of changes needed in order to be able to implement the recommendations by Burum and Cwmni Iaitth. She noted that the Joint Planning Policy Unit and the Planning Services were entirely supportive of the recommendations of the companies and the changes. While going through Appendix 3, she drew attention to the main changes which improved the flow of the document and gave more clarity about expectations linked with the process of giving consideration to the Welsh language from the screening stage to the decision-making stage.

Owain Wyn drew the Committee's attention to the following:

- i. That they had adapted tests that planning inspectors would use to assess the soundness of the development plan;
- ii. That they had identified improvements which would mean that the linguistic assessment is more similar to other forms of assessments (environmental and business) which looked at risk (not danger), the likelihood of the risk, and how serious the risk is;
- iii. That it was linguistic assessments that were needed for Statements and a report for Impact Assessments;
- iv. That the need to undertake public consultation prior to submitting a planning application for 'major' developments was an important step because it would mean that it would give applicants a clear opportunity for this type of development to engage with communities and others prior to submitting planning applications regarding the nature of the development and its impact on communities, including the Welsh language;
- v. That the impact matrix was a visible method of reaching a conclusion about the impact of the development;
- vi. More assessments would be a way of developing an evidence base and understanding about the field.

The Committee was reminded that scrutiny of the Guidance would happen in Gwynedd earlier than in Anglesey. She drew attention to the report of the Chair of Communities Scrutiny Committee Investigation Working Group (Appendix 2 and 2a) which referred to feedback received during the informal engagement period in 2016 regarding including Guidance on development and the Welsh language which currently existed in both Counties. She noted that the Working Group had requested a brief response to the matters raised at 3 that time. She referred to the draft response in column C and column Ch as a starting point, and that there was an opportunity for the Committee to enquire or make observations about the response prior to it being referred to the Working Group. Reference was made to the recommendations and in doing so, she referred to Appendix 4, which provided information about the public consultation procedure, as well as the proposed timetable for the next stages of the process.

Matters raised:

- i. A comment was received regarding the term 'Maintaining and Creating Unique Communities' - the Member was uncertain what exactly was meant by that.
- ii. It was noted that the linguistic impact which emanated from large businesses was likely to be far more than from small businesses. He believed that small businesses should not be penalised by placing an extra layer of bureaucracy on them i.e. the need for additional information and assessments to be submitted with a planning application. Small businesses are often Welsh family businesses. Furthermore, it is noted that businesses needed to take ownership also of the linguistic effect they were having.
- iii. It was acknowledged that the Guidance was a piece of work which was unique and special to Gwynedd and Anglesey. Reference was made to the fact that the companies acknowledged and praised the work of the Unit and the work of the Committee to date. It was noted that the changes which emanated from the independent evaluation undertaken involved the way the information was presented in the Guidance and how the information for the assessment was presented, rather than significant changes to the content of the Guidance.
- iv. Reference was made to a previous discussion regarding providing training opportunities on how to use the Guidance. There had been reference in the past to the system of awarding a certificate to individuals and companies which had attended a training session. Should the Guidance refer to this?
- v. A request was made for clarity regarding the text which had been included on page 39 regarding the clarity of the questions and the thresholds.
- vi. A question was asked regarding the recommendation that officers were given the right to make 'minor amendments' - what did that mean?

Response:

- i. Note the comment.
- ii. In terms of the information needed with a planning application from the Welsh language perspective, according to Policy PS 1 small businesses would not need to undertake an assessment in the form of a Welsh Language Impact Assessment or Statement as they would not reach the Policy thresholds, namely that the floor surface area of the business unit was 1,000m² or larger or that 50 or more workers were employed on the site or that the business was a large one and on an unexpected windfall site. The work of preparing the Plan had acknowledged the role of small businesses to sustain communities and they were supported in several policies.
- iii. Note the comment. Owain Wyn referred to acknowledgement in their report of the collaboration between them and the Unit in undertaking the work.
- iv. It was explained that arranging training was an operational matter and that it would not be appropriate to refer to that in the Guidance. Arrangements would be made after the Guidance was adopted in order to hold an awareness-raising session for various parties e.g. planning officers, planning agents and other individuals/companies who would advise applicants about planning permission. It is likely that the Planning Service would collaborate with external companies to create and deliver the training.
- v. It was explained that the content of the final column was a summary of the scrutiny members' opinion and that it was the respondents to the informal engagement who had

raised the matters/asked the questions in the first column in the table in Appendix 2a.

vi. It was confirmed that editorial amendments only would be made in order to ensure that the document was grammatically accurate and that any cross-referencing within the document was accurate.

Decision:

It was resolved to delegate the right to Officers to undertake minor editorial amendments to the Guidance prior to releasing it for public consultation, together with approving the right to release the Guidance for a public consultation period.

6. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: AFFORDABLE HOUSING – CONSULTATION DRAFT

A presentation by Bob Thomas highlighting the role of the Supplementary Planning Guidance and explaining the steps taken to date as part of the work of preparing the Guidance in question. It was noted that the Guidance, in draft form, had already been before the Panel in July this year. The amendments made to the Guidance following the input received during the Panel meeting and as a result of internal discussions since then were highlighted.

Matters raised:

- What exactly was the definition of an affordable house?

Response:

- A definition in terms of what was considered to be an affordable house was contained in National Planning Policy Guidance. Different considerations for different areas. Affordability was considered as 3.5 times the income of the residential unit. In terms of the need, consider which individuals were listed and assessed on the Tai Teg register.

Decision

Resolved to release the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Affordable Housing for a public consultation period.

The meeting commenced at 2:00pm and concluded at 4:00pm

CHAIRMAN