

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Director of Development and Environmental Services Planning Committee: 1 February 2006

Subject: The Planning Etc (Scotland) Bill

1.0 Purpose:

- 1.1** To update Members on progress with the Planning Bill and to recommend a change to the term "Development Control".

2.0 Background:

- 2.1** Officers have reported on a number of consultations by the Scottish Executive on Modernising the Planning system. The most recent such report (to Planning Committee 7 September 2005) outlined the content of the White Paper and Members agreed a number of responses.

3.0 Main Issues:

- 3.1** The Planning Etc (Scotland) Bill was presented to Parliament on 19 December 2005 and published the following day (available on the Scottish Parliament Website). The Bill largely reflects the content of the White Paper although one significant edition is the new duty for the planning system to promote sustainable development.
- 3.2** The Bill is being viewed as the most fundamental and comprehensive reform of the planning system since it was introduced in 1948. The Bill aims to make the system more efficient and inclusive and seeks to install planning as a key tool in supporting the Scottish economy and enabling it to grow in a sustainable way. The speedy preparation and review of local plans and strengthening of community involvement in planning will form a sound basis for decision making for development proposals.
- 3.3** Development Control is to be restyled as Development Management and the introduction of a new hierarchy for planning applications is intended to lead to more efficient and effective decision making.
- 3.4** The linkages between planning policy and development management are therefore strengthened by the bill. The new requirement for the preparation of Action Plans, along side development plans, reinforces the importance of project implementation. It is important, therefore, that these three strands of the planning process are clearly linked and managed in an integrated way.

3.5 The lead committee for progressing the Bill is the Communities Committee. Evidence is currently being sought which will lead to a Stage 1 Report being prepared in April, followed by the Stage 1 Debate in May. Thereafter Stage 2, which invites amendments, will last from June until September when the Bill will be reprinted with all amendments. Stage 3, during October and November will invite further amendments and culminate in a Stage 3 debate towards the end of November. Thereafter the Bill should become law in December 2006 with individual provisions commenced by order from early 2007.

4.0 Recommendation:

4.1 Members are asked to note that the Planning Etc (Scotland) Bill will be progressing through Parliament during 2006, culminating in enactment in December 2006. Members are also asked to agree to the change in name from Development Control to Development Management.



Dan Henderson
Director of Development and Environmental Services
Date:24/01/06

Background Papers:

1. Report entitled Modernising the Planning System – Scottish Executive White Paper, presented to Planning Committee 7 September 2005.
2. The Planning Etc (Scotland) Bill

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