

To: Planning and Climate Change Policy Board

On: 24 January 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Update on National Planning Framework 4

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following the enactment of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, the Scottish Government is taking steps to successfully implement the Act and the wider reforms of the planning system.
 - 1.2 As part of the delivery of transforming planning, the Scottish Government published a draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), which Renfrewshire Council provided a comprehensive response to in March 2022. A revised draft National Planning Framework 4 – A spatial plan for Scotland to 2045, was laid before the Scottish Parliament on the 8 November 2022.
 - 1.3 The Scottish Parliament had six weeks to scrutinise NPF4 and heard evidence from a range of stakeholders, groups and agencies on the final version of NPF4 to inform Parliament's consideration of it. The Scottish Parliament approved NPF4 on the 11 January 2023. The approved NPF4 document can be viewed on the [Scottish Government webpages](#).
 - 1.4 NPF4 is now subject to the formal development plan adoption process by the Scottish Ministers. On adoption the provisions of the Planning Act(s) will commence which will make NPF4 part of the statutory development plan which Renfrewshire Council will require to take into account as a material consideration in the preparation of the next Renfrewshire Local Development Plan and all planning applications.
 - 1.5 The Scottish Parliament and Scottish ministers have agreed to hold annual sessions on NPF4 to assess its implementation and impact.
-

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Notes the update and progress on the adoption of NPF4.
-

3. Background to National Planning Framework 4

3.1 In 2020, work started on the preparation of NPF4 and Renfrewshire Council have continually tried to shape and be fully engaged in the process of the plan's preparation.

3.2 NPF4 sets out the Scottish Government's priorities and policies for the planning system up to 2045 and for the first time incorporates Scottish Planning Policy and the National Planning Framework into a single document. For that reason, NPF4 will be very different to NPF3. It will have increased status and be part of the statutory development plan, meaning that its policies will have a stronger role in day-to-day planning decision making.

3.3 NPF4 is split into four parts:

- National spatial strategy for Scotland to 2045 – sets out an approach to tackle and adapt to climate change, restore biodiversity loss, improve health and wellbeing, build a well-being economy and create sustainable places;
- 18 national developments support the delivery of the spatial strategy - National developments relevant to Renfrewshire include:
 - Clyde Mission;
 - Central Scotland Green Network;
 - National walking, cycling and wheeling network;
 - Urban mass/ rapid transit network;
 - Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage;
 - Circular Economy Materials Management;
 - Digital Fibre; and,
 - Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure.
- National planning policy is set out in detail and consists of policies which guide development and use of land and are required to be applied in the preparation of local development plans and assessing planning applications.
- Delivery programme which sets out how NPF4 will be delivered.

3.4 NPF4 provides the national planning policy context for the assessment of all planning applications. Given the approved status of NPF4 this is now a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications.

This forms part of the assessment of planning applications before the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board. In this regard, NPF4 will be considered and referenced within the any Board Reports relating to planning applications.

- 3.5 NPF4, once formally adopted by the Scottish Ministers, will form part of the statutory development plan for Renfrewshire with the current Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan (July 2017) no longer being part of the development plan and will cease to have effect. The statutory Development Plan for Renfrewshire will therefore consist of NPF4 and the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021).
- 3.6 The adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021) and associated Supplementary Guidance provides the most up to date expression of planning policy for Renfrewshire and continues to be part of the Development Plan until it is replaced.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Following adoption of NPF4, the Scottish Ministers will provide local authorities with guidance on transitional and handling arrangements. As highlighted above, NPF4 is radically different from NPF3 and there will be implications for processes, procedures and resources in implementing the plan.
- 4.2 Further updates on the implications of implementing NPF4 will be provided to the Board in due course.

Implications of the Report

- 1. **Financial** – Unknown until guidance on transitional and handling arrangements is issued by the Scottish Ministers.
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – Unknown until guidance on transitional and handling arrangements is issued by the Scottish Ministers.
- 3. **Community/Council Planning** – Reshaping our place, our economy, and our future – NPF4 is a key document in establishing a robust land use framework, regulations and guidance for supporting, encouraging, and delivering sustainability, climate change adaption, reaching Net Zero, biodiversity gain and creating great places
- 4. **Legal** - Unknown until guidance on transitional and handling arrangements is issued by the Scottish Ministers.
- 5. **Property/Assets** – None.
- 6. **Information Technology** – None.

7. Equality & Human Rights -

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – None.

9. **Procurement** – None.

10. **Risk** – None.

11. **Privacy Impact** – None.

12. **COSLA Policy Position** - None.

13. **Climate Risk** – None.

Background Papers – [NPF4 can be viewed on the Scottish Government webpages](#)

Author: Sharon Marklow, Place Strategy Manager
Tel: 0141 618 7835; email: Sharon.marklow@renfrewshire.gov.uk