

NATIONAL PLANNING FORUM RESEARCH: THE ROLE AND STATUS OF PLANNING: TENDER AWARDED TO IDOX PLC 23/4/07 FOR DELIVERY 30/6/07

SPECIFICATION

Background

1. The National Planning Forum (NPF) is the largest cross-sectoral forum focussing on planning in England. It attracts high level representation from a wide range of organisations involved in planning and its work is supported by key players including the Planning Directorate, Communities and Local Government; the Local Government Association; British Property Federation; Environment Agency; Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI); and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Further information on the NPF is in the Annex; examples of its work are on <http://www.natplanforum.org.uk>

2. The NPF makes a major contribution to work on delivery and culture change for the planning system in England. We take as our starting point the Government's commitment to planning in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development as an activity that "*shapes where people live and work and the country we live in (and) plays a key role in supporting the Government's wider social, environmental and economic objectives and for sustainable communities*", and spatial planning as an activity that "*goes beyond traditional land use planning*". The RTPI has devised a useful definition of spatial planning (in the Effective Practice in Spatial Planning: Executive Summary: 29 January 2007) that should be used for the purpose of this commission. Spatial planning is defined as "*the practice of place shaping at the local and regional levels that aims to:*

- *enable a vision for the future of regions and places that is based on evidence, local distinctiveness and community derived objectives,*
- *translate this vision into a set of policies, priorities, programmes and land allocations together with the public sector resources to deliver them,*
- *create a framework for private sector investment and regeneration that promotes economic, environmental and social wellbeing for the area, and*
- *coordinate the delivery of the vision with other agencies and processes (eg LAAs and MAAs)."*

3. Culture change requires action and behaviour change by all sectors involved in planning. It requires planning to be seen as a positive force for change that 'shapes places', rather than a system of control. It is about planning that is an exciting profession rather than one bogged down in rules and procedures. Planning consists of a wide range of work and activity undertaken by professionals in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Change is happening already in response to both the challenges of implementing the new planning system. There are encouraging signs of progress in different sectors and areas of the country, but there is now a clear need to capitalise and expand on the progress being made.

4. The NPF has undertaken a number of initiatives to help identify common ground in the area of culture change, including commissioning research into the conditions for creative planning. More recently, the NPF Culture Change Working Group has defined key messages for the main players in a report entitled "Planning – renewing the approach" (see para 7 below). The NPF Executive Board is now seeking to commission work on the status of planning that will complement, and add momentum to, its drive to support continuing culture change. It is envisaged that the final report

will be circulated to the main opinion formers, policymakers and practitioners, and that it will have a significant impact on the future of planning in England.

Purpose of the proposed study

5. The Executive Board envisages a short, sharp piece of work split into a desk study (about 30% of the total effort), a “think piece” of creative intellectual input (a further 60% of the effort), and an action plan (the remaining 10%). The think piece should focus on the following objectives:

- identifying and summarising the key points from existing documentation and evidence on the existing role and status of planning;
- highlighting the potential for providing greater clarity of the role, and improving the status of planning in the context of current high profile planning reforms – how to deliver ‘inspiring planning’; and
- making recommendations on an agenda for the changes needed to achieve an improved status for planning, including an action plan which the NPF can take forward – making the most of its unique position as a cross-sectoral body made up of representatives from the key agencies and interests in planning.

Product

6. Three products are envisaged from this commission:

- a **brief summary of the literature review** highlighting the key issues; informing, but not dominating...
- a **report** - the most important product - a high level ‘think piece’ written to engage key leaders and decision-makers, to encourage them to commit to culture change in their organisations. It will be a succinct, powerful document explaining **why** culture change is needed and **how** to achieve it; and a separate...
- **action plan** that sets out in detail “who needs to do what” to progress the required culture change, with individual actions ascribed to key organisations or sectors.

7. The chosen consultants will be expected to use the following main sources:

PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development: Communities & Local Government (2005)

Barker Review of Land Use Planning, Final Report (Dec 2006)

Effective Practice in Spatial Planning: UCL et al for RTPI (forthcoming)

Review of Skills for Sustainable Communities: Sir John Egan (2005)

Future Planners: Demos for CPRE, RICS and RTPI (Feb 2007)

Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills: Leitch Report (Dec 2006)

The Conditions for Creative Planning: POSe for National Planning Forum (2004)*

Planning – Renewing the Approach: National Planning Forum (Jan 2007)*

[NOTE: * report can be down-loaded from the NPF web-site: <http://www.natplanforum.org.uk> - the 2004 report from “archived documents”]

Spatial Plans in Practice: Communities & Local Government (continuing)

8. A small number of other relevant policy documents, reports and information may be used - including from the following sources - but we do not envisage the need for an extensive or exhaustive literature review, or interviews, being undertaken for this commission:

UK Government [including Communities and Local Government];
Academy of Sustainable Communities;
Planning Advisory Service; and the RTPI.

9. The draft report will be presented to the full NPF for comment and inputs, with the final report being produced as a result. The presentation to the NPF should be in

Powerpoint (or similar software) and should contain the key points from the draft report and recommendations. It will be required to be presented to a meeting of the Forum in London on 21 June 2007.

10. All three products should be written in plain English, and each should have a 1 page Executive Summary. The literature review should include references to all sources used. The main report should be of no more than 3k words in electronic Word and PDF formats.

11. Once finalised, consideration will be given to the report's design in order to maximise its appeal. It will need to engage and persuade a range of audiences including key opinion formers, politicians, business, professionals and the community. Consultants may offer design ideas to complement their text, but the contract fee does not cover the cost of design, production or printing.

Timescale

12. The commission is required to be completed **by the end of June**. A dissemination strategy and programme will be commissioned separately. Tenders (including joint bids) will be invited from a list of consultants who can meet the following tight timescale (all dates in 2007):

Invitation to tender/issue of study specification	by	Fri 30 March
Tender deadline	5 pm	Mon 16 April
Tender let		Mon 23 April
Inception meeting		late April
Steering Group meeting		mid May
Receipt of final report	5pm	Fri 1 June
Presentation to the Forum	pm	Thurs 21 June
Completion of commission	5pm	Fri 29 June

13. Tenders should be e-mailed to kay.powell@ntlworld.com **by 5pm on Monday 16 April**. The documents should be brief, and should not include logos, to facilitate electronic communication for assessment purposes. A brief example of similar work that you have undertaken should be submitted electronically with the tender.

Steering Group

14. The steering group will be chaired by the NPF Chair and Chair of the Culture Change Working Group (Mark Southgate) and will comprise a sub-set of that Working Group. The report is being commissioned by the NPF Executive Board and will be signed off by them (or the Chair on their behalf) before being finalised.

Costings

15. The details on the proposed method, person or persons undertaking the work, the amount of time each will take on the assignment, their daily rate, travel and other expenses, producing the report in Word/PDF format, preparation of the presentation, and VAT if applicable. Options including the implications of involving different personnel would be helpful. Total costs are expected to be in the region of £10k.

Intellectual property rights

16. The report, summary literature review and action plan - and any drafts produced - will be the property of the National Planning Forum. The authors will be acknowledged when it is used by the NPF.

ANNEX: THE NATIONAL PLANNING FORUM

Vision

The vision of the National Planning Forum (NPF) is to be the principal cross-sectoral voice on planning issues and to be recognised as a key agent for change in delivering a better planning service.

Mission

The NPF aspires to “inspire planning” and all those involved in the planning process and in delivering the new planning agenda. It aims to help achieve quality, inspiring places that enhance productivity as well as peoples’ well-being. The Forum seeks to:

- **M1** critically inform and positively influence the planning agenda for England through a broad spectrum of interests;
- **M2** act as a bridge and extend the common ground across the Forum membership, the better to deliver sustainable development; and
- **M3** promote the acquisition and exchange of knowledge and best practice amongst Forum membership and disseminate this so that it may be widely applied.

In support of this Mission, the Forum:

- represents multi-sectoral views, aiming to reach consensus wherever possible, and informed differences of opinion where not;
- acts as a sounding board for Government initiatives;
- formulates expert advice on specific issues and emerging policies;
- promotes good practice;
- enables a two-way flow between policy and practice, involving dissemination and feedback; and
- facilitates cross-sectoral networking.

We concentrate on areas in which all sectors have a common interest, aim to be constructive in all that we do, and avoid duplication of effort.

Membership

Members are drawn from five sectors: government and its agencies, local government, business, the voluntary/third sector and the professions. Representative organisations with an interest and involvement in planning within these sectors are invited to join the Forum to contribute to its work, in order to maintain broadly equal numbers, and balance between the sectors.

Executive Board

The NPF Executive Board - which drives the work of the Forum - comprises 5 Vice-Chairs, each directly elected by members of his/her own sector, and is supported by the Secretary. One of the Vice-Chairs acts as the Forum Chair for one year, on a strict rotational basis amongst the five sector groups. The current Executive Board comprises:

Chair, and Vice-Chair (Government Agencies):	Mark Southgate, Environment Agency
Vice Chair (Professions):	Mike Hayes, RTP1
Vice Chair (Local Government):	Cllr Paul Bettison, LGA
Vice Chair (Business):	Liz Peace, BPF
Vice Chair (3 rd sector):	Simon Marsh, RSPB
Secretary:	Kay Powell