

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy

Subject: Response to 'Planning Committee reform: Draft Regulations and Guidance'

Date: 14th April 2026

Author: Development Manager

Wards Affected

Borough-wide

Purpose

To gain Portfolio Holder endorsement of Gedling Borough Council's proposed response contained in **Appendix 1** to the Government consultation on proposed reforms to Planning Committees. The consultation response is required to be submitted by 11:59 on the 23rd April 2026

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

The Portfolio Holder approves the proposed response to the consultation on proposed reforms to Planning Committees – as set out under the relevant questions reproduced in Appendix 1.

1 Background

1.1 The Government launched a consultation on changes to how Planning Committees function on 28th May 2025. The Council responded to the initial consultation, which is reproduced in **Appendix 2**, and outlines GBC's response to the 20 questions posed.

1.2	<p>Following that initial consultation the government has produced a response to the document and that can be viewed, in full, in the below link.</p> <p>Reform of planning committees: technical consultation - government response - GOV.UK</p>
	<p><u>Proposed Changes to Planning Committees</u></p>
1.3	<p>By way of background, there are number of key aspects that the government is intending to implement to speed up the planning system and this is to be achieved through measures, outlined in the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025</p> <p>Notable changes include the number of Members on Planning Committees not exceeding 13 and mandatory training being introduced for Members of the Committee. In addition, the scheme of delegation being set at a national level will allow greater determination of applications at Officer level and only certain major applications being determined at planning committee, based on two tiers of delegation summarised below.</p> <p>Schedule 1 (Tier A)</p> <p>Schedule 1 sets out the list of types of applications that must in all circumstances be delegated to officers. These includes applications for planning permission for householder, minor residential and minor commercial development, as well as a number of supplementary and technical consents such as discharge of conditions, reserved matter approvals (for non-phased development), lawful development certificates, and non-material amendments.</p> <p>Schedule 2 (Tier B)</p> <p>Schedule 2 sets out the list of types of applications that may be referred to a committee subject to the circumstances set out in Regulation 5 (for clarity, this is the 'gateway' test where the Chief Planning Officer and Chair agree to refer applications to Planning Committee or not) and must be delegated to an officer where those circumstances have not been met. These include other applications for planning permission not in Schedule 1, reserved matters approvals for phased development, variations of permissions, and special controls such as listed building and tree preservation order consents.</p> <p>The purpose of the legislation is to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- give a new power to the Secretary of State to set out which planning functions should be delegated to planning officers for a decision and which should instead go to a planning committee or sub-committee;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - give a new power to the Secretary of State to control the size and composition of planning committees; - impose a new requirement for members of planning committees to be trained, and certified, in key elements of planning.
1.4	<p>Based on the previous responses offered to the original consultation there are fewer matters open for consideration under the new consultation document, with only three questions posed.</p> <p>One of the questions outlined in the consultation document is what scale of reserved matters applications should be determined under delegated powers; all applications, phased applications or a scheme of delegation based on the number of dwelling or scale of commercial development applied for under reserved matters.</p> <p>The response to the above question and the two others are outlined in more detail in appendix 1.</p>
	<u>Implications</u>
1.5	<p>In terms of any implications for Gedling Borough Council's Planning Committee, officers have reviewed the applications considered by committee over 2024-25 against the measures set out in the consultation to help guide the Council's response. 13 applications were considered by the Council's Planning Committee over that 12-month period, of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7 applications were 'Major' applications. Some of these would have been subject to a 'triage' discussion between the Chair of Planning Committee and Head of Place Development to decide if they should be considered by Planning Committee as outlined within the question responses within Appendix 2. - 6 applications were smaller applications (generally 'Minor' applications for up to ten residential units) called in by Members, or made by the Council. These would be affected by the changes i.e. they would have been delegated for determination by planning officers rather than determined at planning committee.
1.6	<p>Although it is not yet clear which of the proposed changes the government will make, were the proposals to be implemented in full, then none of the 6 minor applications would be considered by Planning Committee, reducing the overall number of items by almost 50% and potentially resulting in a fewer number of Planning Committee meetings</p>
1.7	<p>Other key implications from the reforms will be the need to change the constitution, which would no longer align with the national scheme of delegation and would, if the deadline identified by the Government is met,</p>

	and subject to the changes required, need to be done by 30 September 2026, when the new powers are scheduled to be implemented.
1.8	<p>The reforms to the constitution would be relatively significant and would result in the cessation of the Planning Delegation Panel. This would be replaced with a 'nominated officer and nominated member' determining whether applications under tier b would meet the threshold for determination at Planning Committee based on whether or not the proposal raises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more issues of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area • one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material consideration <p>The means by which the nominated officer and nominated member decide which applications are heard at Planning Committee is for each Local Planning Authority to determine. A similar approach to the current Planning Delegation Panel e.g. a minuted weekly meeting, is likely to be the most appropriate method, although this would need to be determined at a later date.</p>
2	Proposal
2.1	It is proposed that the Council responds to the 'Planning Committee reform: Draft Regulations and Guidance' consultation with the responses to the questions as set out in Appendix 1.
3	Alternative Options
3.1	The alternative options are for Gedling Borough Council not to respond to the consultation or to amend the drafted response. There is no requirement for the Council to respond to this public consultation but doing so will inform the Government's planning reform proposals from the Council's perspective. The draft response provided has been informed by the relevant Council Officers and can be amended if the Portfolio Holder considers it necessary to do so.
4	Financial Implications
4.1	No financial implications. Cost of officer time drafting the response is met from existing budgets. Given the proposed changes are draft, it is not possible to quantify the financial implications of the proposals at this time.
5	Legal Implications

5.1	None. This is an opportunity to comment on potential Planning Committee reforms, which have not yet come into force.
6	Equalities Implications
6.1	None. This is an opportunity to comment on potential planning reforms which have not yet come into force. The consultation questions include an opportunity to comment on the potential equality implications of the proposals.
7	Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications
7.1	None. This is an opportunity to comment on potential planning reforms, which have not yet come into force. There is an opportunity, through comments on the consultation questions, to comment on the potential carbon reduction / environmental sustainability implications of the proposals.
8	Appendices
8.1	Appendix 1 – Response to the ‘Planning Committee reform: Draft Regulations and Guidance’ Appendix 2 - Proposed consultation response to the implementation of Planning Committee Reforms (2025)
9	Background Papers
9.1	Link below to the ‘Planning Committee reform: Draft Regulations and Guidance’. Planning committee reform: draft regulations and guidance - GOV.UK
10	Reasons for Recommendations
10.1	To inform the Government of the Council’s perspective on proposed planning reforms.

Statutory Officer approval

**Approved by: Scott Anderson
(Deputy S151 Officer)**

Date: ??/04/2026

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by: Natalie Osei (Deputy

Monitoring Officer)

Date: ??/04/2026

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer