

The Rt. Hon Angela Rayner M.P.
Deputy Prime Minister,
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities
and Local Government
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government
2 Marsham Street
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Councillor Bethia Thomas
Leader of the Council

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Dear Ms Rayner,

I am writing on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council in relation to HM Government's Planning and Infrastructure Bill and its proposed reforms to planning committees. While the council welcomes some of the outlined measures – especially in relation to the training provided to members – we wish to make clear our opposition to the creation of a two-tiered national scheme of delegation.

The Vale vehemently believes that planning decisions should be made in an open and transparent way with local representatives and decisionmakers being empowered to take choices that are right for their communities. We are, therefore, concerned about these reforms which, in our opinion, would undermine these principles.

In addition, it is the council's experience that the planning decisions which would be categorized as Tier A that are the most likely to be contentious and where the local knowledge provided by town and parish councils and other stakeholders is particularly relevant. We, therefore, cannot support any proposals which would limit our ability to interact and engage with residents and communities when scrutinizing these matters.

More broadly, the Vale remains unconvinced by the arguments put forward by HM Government in relation to the proposed national scheme of delegation. The current system works effectively and, therefore, we are very sceptical of these proposed changes.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Bethia Thomas
Leader of the Council