

SUBMISSION FROM ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY

Thank you for this opportunity to submit views on the National Planning Framework 2: Proposed Framework (NPF2:PF) to inform the consideration of this important document by the Local Government and Communities Committee.

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) was formed under the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and an associated Designation Order which came into force on 25 June 2008. It is responsible for the preparation of strategic development plans in the North East and is currently in the latter stages of preparing a finalised structure plan for submission to Scottish Ministers. The SDPA are seeking to embrace the Scottish Government's modernisation agenda and the finalised structure plan, when published next month, will be an expression of this.

We welcome the publication of NPF2:PF by the Scottish Government on 12 December 2008. It presents a positive view of the challenges and opportunities in the North East and reflects the priorities of the area around economic growth & diversification and sustainable development & climate change.

The draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was aligned with draft NPF2 and we will be seeking to make amendments to ensure the finalised structure plan is aligned with the NPF2:PF. However, this will largely be focused on enhancing an already close relationship.

Also welcome has been the response of the Scottish Government to the views expressed by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils as well as the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee (the predecessor of the SDPA) and others. The proposed framework is a considerable improvement on the draft and is both more balanced and forward looking. The officials involved in this project have prepared a document for which they should be congratulated.

Some will undoubtedly argue that it doesn't go far enough in one direction or another but I believe that it is well balanced and is a useful platform for implementation – a document around which we can unite and build upon.

I trust that these observations will be taken into account as the Committee (and Parliament as a whole) takes a view on the proposed framework. I also trust that the Scottish Government will be able to publish the final version in the next few months to enable the important work of implementation to move forward.

Councillor Scott Cassie
Chair, Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA