

Housing the South East: Opportunities & challenges of the new planning system

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Catriona Riddell



Out with the old, in with the new...

Government objectives:

Long term sustainable growth
& increased housing delivery

Streamlined & transparent
system

Policy tailored to local needs
and circumstances

Communities receive direct
benefit from development



The challenges & opportunities

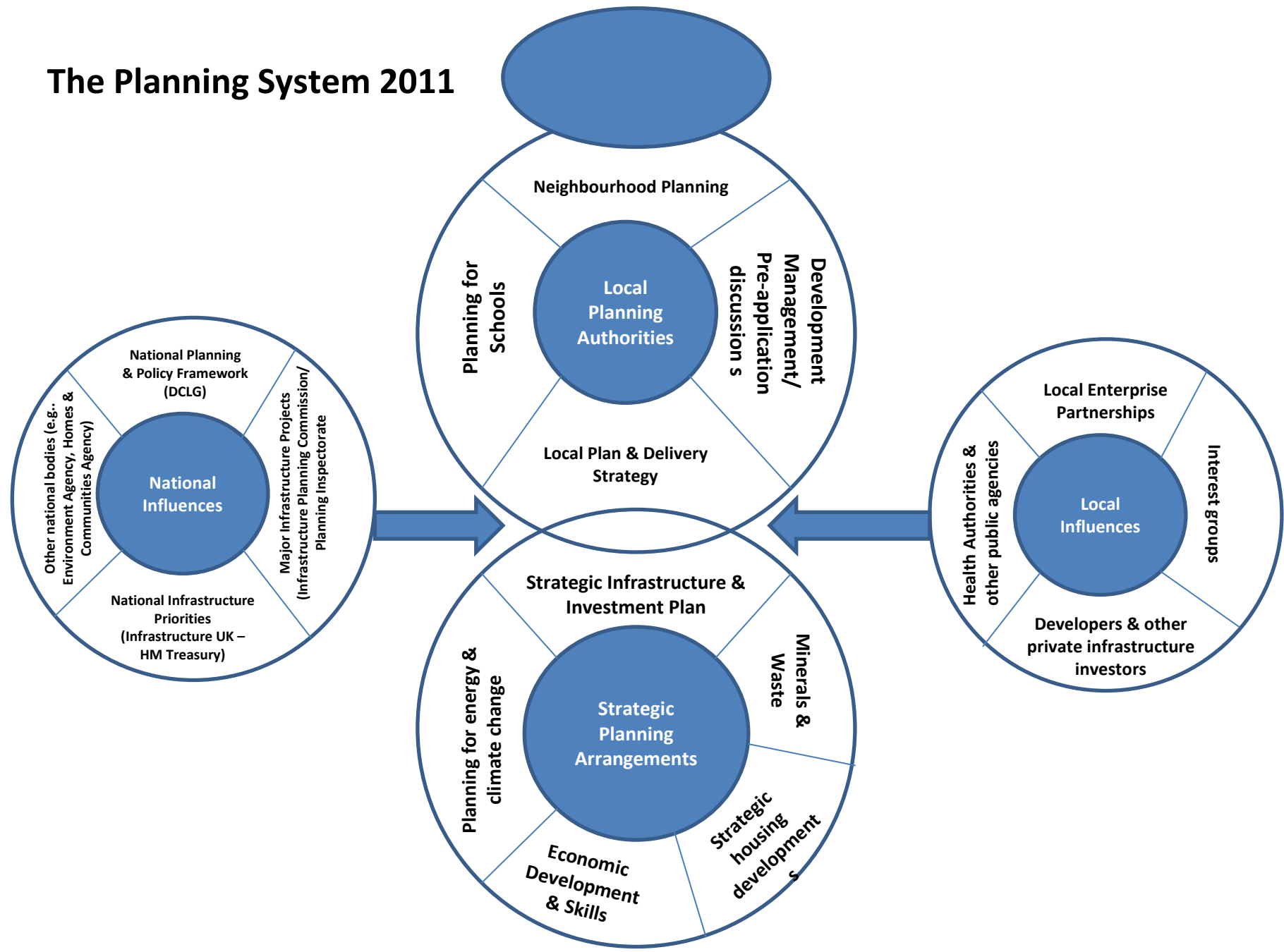
Having the right tools: pressures on resources, skills, expertise and experience

Taking responsibility & demonstrating leadership: loss of 'blame culture'

Culture change: more freedom & flexibility, less control, more risk

Managing the transition: decision-making based on future needs, not immediate pressures

The Planning System 2011



Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood plan areas to be defined by LPA

A 'constituted body' (e.g. Parish & Town Councils, Neighbourhood Forum) responsible for preparing NPs

NPs must be 'in general conformity' with strategic objectives of the local plan & national policy

Overall levels of growth (e.g. housing provision) can be increased but not reduced

NP forms part of the local plan following positive support through local referendum

Neighbourhood Planning: the challenges

Process potentially complicated & expensive for local authorities & communities.

Need to be clear at the start:

what the 'offer' is in terms of support from LPA (and others)

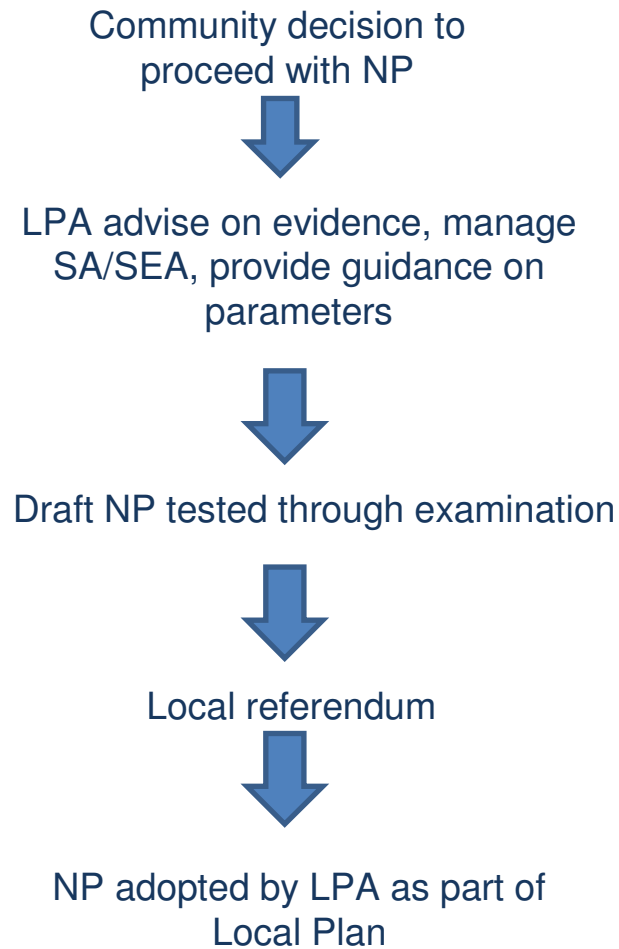
what's up for grabs and what isn't.

what the community's ambition is for their neighbourhood, including priorities e.g. infrastructure

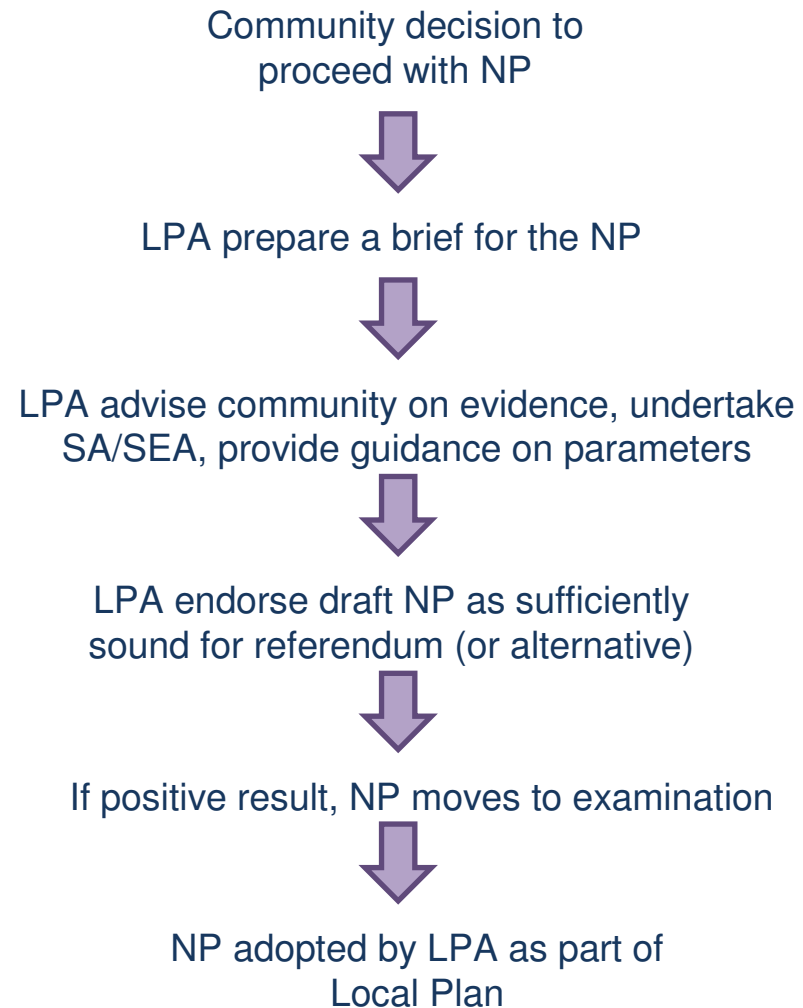
Culture change – local authorities 'letting go', communities stepping up to the challenge.

Neighbourhood Planning

Localism Bill



POS Suggested Changes



Community Right to Build

Some development will not be subject to the normal planning process

Proposals that require an EIA or affect 'European' protected sites are not eligible

Communities need to form a 'corporate body'

Proposals 'independently tested' and subject to local referendum

Issues:

Need to have sufficient detail on the development

Concerns about how to apply conditions / S106 (CRtB exempt from CIL)

Resource implications for LPAs but won't benefit from planning fees

To help increase affordable housing – small change to PPS3 to allow market housing on rural affordable sites

Local Planning

It's not all new but....

Fiscal incentives and support for growth

S106 retained but will be subject to 'statutory test'

Community Infrastructure Fund (CIL)

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

Others - Tax Increment Funding (TIF), Regional Growth Fund

Robust evidence base

Reducing local authority resources

Loss of key support structures & skills

significantly reduced national policy & guidance

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Strategic objectives

Working with partners and neighbours

Managing community expectations

clear 'shared' priorities for investment and spending

Strategic Planning

Provides a context for a co-ordinated approach for planning strategic infrastructure and development

Sets clear priorities for public expenditure and capital investment

Helps create an 'investor confident' environment

Supports an efficient use of resources and skills

Will help LPAs manage community expectations in Neighbourhood Planning

Duty to Co-operate (Clause 90)

It only deals with plan-making and not implementation

Does not apply to all tiers of local authorities

Will be difficult to enforce

Planning Officers' Society: suggested amendments:

Include all tiers of local government in LPA definition

Introduce requirement for 'strategic infrastructure assessment'

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Will help integrate spatial planning, infrastructure delivery and economic development

Business/local authority partnerships will continue to be critical in meeting long term sustainable growth

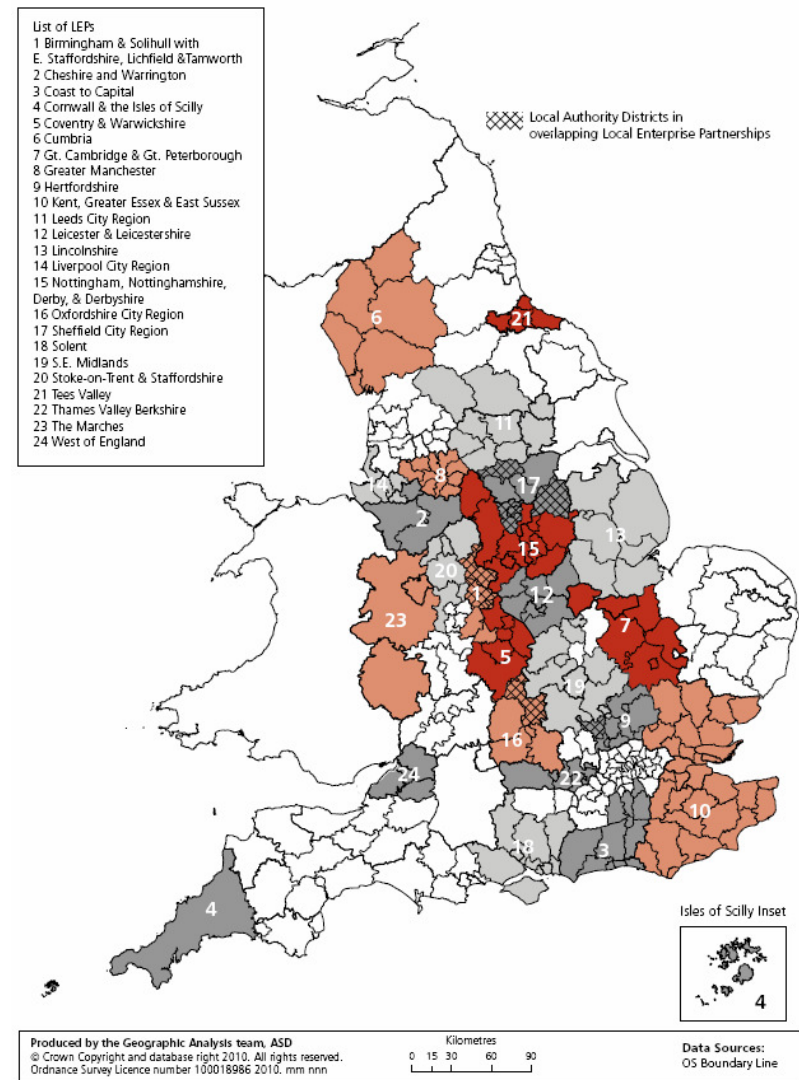
But!

Geography not necessarily appropriate for strategic planning

Non-statutory (and not subject to duty to cooperate)

Boards are not politically accountable

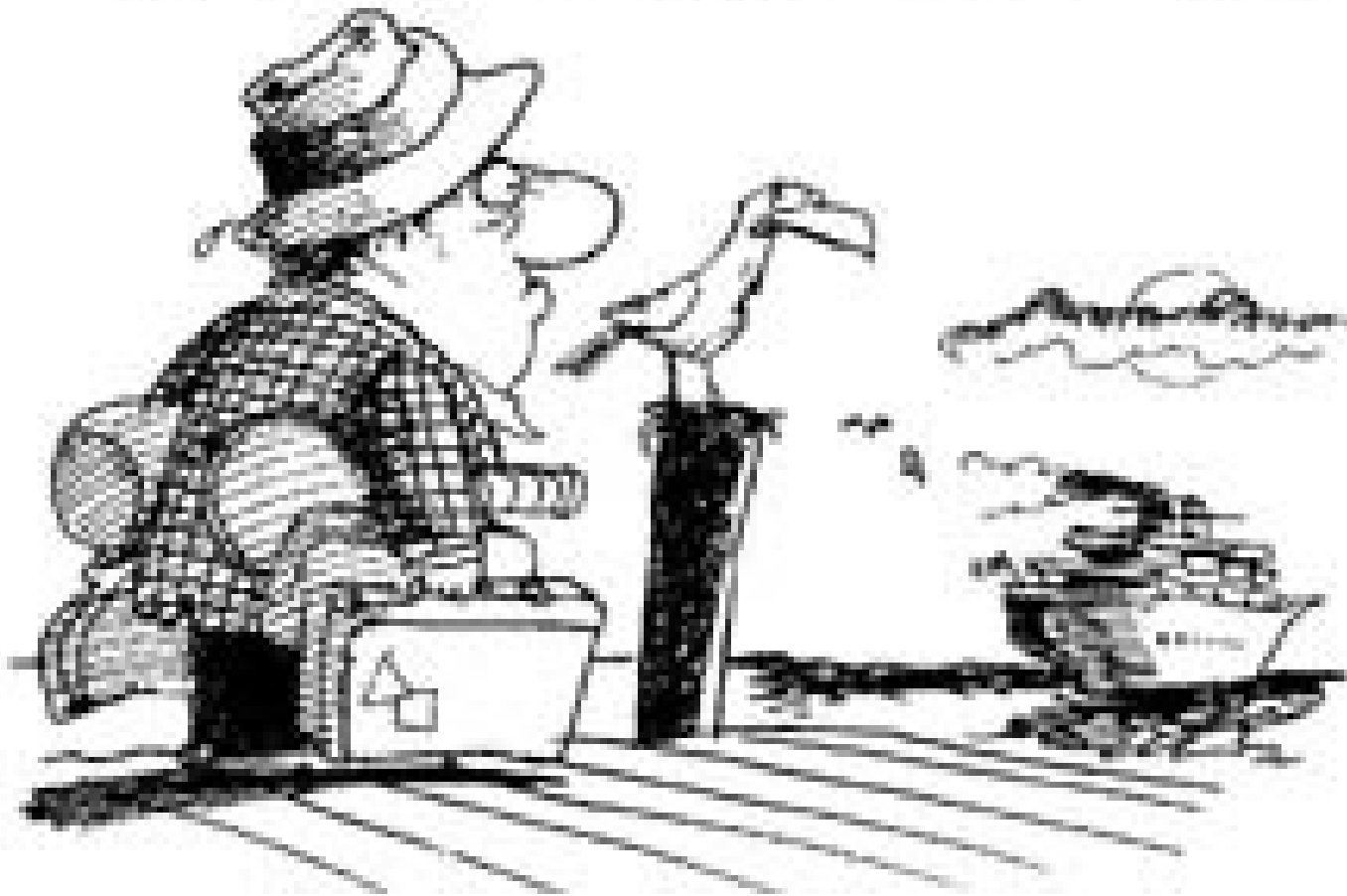
Limited resources therefore may focus on other key priorities



Recipe for success



Miss the Boat?



Thank you!

catrionariddell@btinternet.com

www.planningofficers.org.uk

