

Report To: Planning Committee

Date of Meeting: 16th April 2014

**Lead Member / Officer: Cllr. David Smith, Public Realm
Angela Loftus, Planning & Public Protection Policy
Manager**

Report Author: Claire MacFarlane, Planning Officer

**Title: Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance – Adoption of
final document**

1. What is the report about?

1.1 This report summarises responses from the recent consultation on the draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), proposed amendments to the SPG and recommends adoption enabling the guidance to be used in the determination of planning applications.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 Following adoption of the Denbighshire Local Development Plan (LDP), SPG is required to support the relevant affordable housing policies. This will provide further guidance for developers, Officers and Members. The version of the SPG proposed for adoption is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 It is recommended that Members adopt the proposed final SPG on Affordable Housing for use in the determination of planning applications.

4. Report details

4.1 Council adopted the existing Affordable Housing SPG in July 2005. However, adoption of the LDP in June 2013 introduced new planning policies relating to affordable housing and it is therefore necessary to replace the existing SPG. The SPG provides guidance on the mechanisms for securing affordable housing through new housing developments in the County.

4.2 The draft SPG was subject to public consultation for a period of 10 weeks, from 2nd December 2013 to 10th February 2014. A Report of Consultation including summaries of each response received and proposed changes is attached to this report as Appendix 2. The proposed changes are also shown as **highlighted** or ~~strikethrough~~ text in the SPG in Appendix 1.

4.3 Six responses were received through the consultation period. The majority of changes proposed are considered to be minor and are for clarification purposes. It is also proposed to i) amend the calculation used in ascertaining the affordable value of a property and ii) include a definition for 'key workers'. Further detail is included in Appendix 2.

4.4 Additional 'operational' documents are also being produced to sit alongside, but separate to, the SPG. These would not be policy documents will provide further details on, for example, template legal agreements, developer questionnaires, guidance notes etc.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1 *Corporate Priorities 2012-17*. The SPG will contribute positively to the following proposed corporate priority:

- Ensuring access to good quality housing – Providing further guidance on the LDP policy requirements will significantly contribute towards securing and delivering affordable housing throughout the County.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 Agreeing to adopt the SPG is not anticipated to create any additional cost.

6.2 Once adopted, the SPG will provide guidance for developers, Officers and Members on the mechanisms for securing affordable housing through new affordable properties and financial contributions. This will assist the Planning & Public Protection Service and Housing & Community Development Service.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

7.1 An EqIA is not considered necessary for this decision. The principle of requiring provision towards affordable housing from developers has been established through adoption of the LDP. The SPG provides further guidance on how this will be achieved. The LDP underwent a full EqIA in May 2011. A completed EqIA template is attached to this report as Appendix 3.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1 As part of the 10 week public consultation, a wide range of stakeholders were contacted directly and publicity used to advise members of the public. Further information is provided in Appendix 2.

8.2 In addition to the public consultation, internal consultation was carried out before and after this period with Officers in the Housing & Community Development Service, Development Control Section and Valuation & Estates Section.

8.3 Input on the content of the SPG has also been provided through two workshop sessions held with the LDP Members Steering Group and City, Town & Community Councils prior to the public consultation period. The responses received through the public consultation, and proposed changes to the SPG, were reported to the LDP Members Steering Group meeting on 18th March 2014.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 Any costs associated with the final guidance should be contained within existing budgets and therefore there are no obvious financial implications contained in the report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 In the absence of up-to-date guidance there is a risk the Council will be unable to effectively operate the LDP policy. This would result in a failure to secure the full amount of affordable housing available through new housing developments. The current affordable housing SPG relates to the previous UDP policy, which is significantly different to the LDP policy, and therefore cannot be relied upon to provide sufficient planning guidance in the long-term. The adoption of a new affordable housing SPG has been identified as a priority by the LDP Members Steering Group.

11. Power to make the Decision

11.1 Planning & Compulsory Act (2004).