

Report To: Planning Committee

Date of Meeting: 13th November 2013

**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 – Consultation
draft**

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report accompanies a draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document on affordable housing which, if adopted, will be used in the determination of planning applications.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. Following the adoption of the Denbighshire Local Development Plan (LDP), an updated SPG on affordable housing is required in order to provide further guidance for developers, Officers and Members. A draft SPG for public consultation is attached to this report.

3. What are the recommendations?

3.1. That Members agree the draft SPG on affordable housing as a basis for public consultation.

4. Report details

4.1. Following the adoption of the LDP on 4th June 2013, Council agreed to carry forward the existing series of SPGs, including SPG 22 – Affordable Housing. However, given the significant differences between the previous Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and LDP policies relating to affordable housing, and the need for further guidance, it is necessary to produce an updated SPG on this topic. If adopted, the SPG will be a material planning consideration when assessing planning applications.

4.2. The SPG supplements the LDP policies on affordable housing (mainly policy BSC 4) by providing further detail on how provision towards affordable housing will be secured through the planning system. It is envisaged that additional 'operational' documents will also be produced alongside, but separate to, the SPG. These would not be policy documents but could

provide further details on, for example, template legal agreements, developer questionnaires etc.

- 4.3. The public consultation period would be a minimum of 8 weeks and is anticipated to start in the first week of December 2013. However, given this would include the Christmas period, it is proposed to extend the consultation period to take account of this. The results of the consultation will be reported back to Planning Committee with a final SPG for adoption.

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 the SPG for consultation is not anticipated to create any additional cost.

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 this. The LDP underwent a full EqIA in May 2011.

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

- 8.1 No formal consultation has been carried out, but internal consultation has been carried out with officers in the Housing & Community Development Service, Development Control Section and Valuation & Estates Section.
- 8.2 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.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 Any costs associated with the 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 Purchase Act (2004).