

# APPENDIX F

## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE – 7 SEPTEMBER 2010

---

#### Title:

#### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSIONING PLAN**

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Keith Webster]**

**[Wards Affected: All]**

---

#### Summary and purpose:

This report, which was considered by the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 14 June 2010, recommends that the Council adopt an Affordable Housing Commissioning Plan. A copy of the draft Plan is attached at Annexe 1 to this report. The draft Plan sets out the Council's commitment to providing more affordable housing across the Borough in partnership; reviews affordable housing need and supply; indicates what type of affordable housing is required and where; and provides useful contacts and information for landowners, developers and agents. It outlines the help and support that Waverley and its Registered Social Landlord partners can provide in pursuance of the aim of providing more affordable housing in the Borough.

---

#### How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report relates to two of the Council's Corporate Priorities namely: **Improving Lives** – Improving the quality of life for all, particularly the more vulnerable within our society; and **Subsidised affordable housing** – Working for more affordable housing to be built and managing council housing well.

#### Equality and Diversity Implications:

The Affordable Housing Commissioning Plan recognises that the housing needs of a wide range of people should be addressed. It outlines the Council's commitment to providing affordable homes for people who have special needs or a mental health or physical disability.

#### Climate Change Implications:

The development of new homes give rise to significant climate change issues – through the use of natural resources for construction and development. There is an expectation that the developers of affordable housing will meet the requirements of the Homes and Communities to use design and control standards to ensure that new homes are eco-friendly and meet a high standard of energy efficiency and take advantage of renewable resources. Specific reference is made to these standards in the Plan.

### **Resource/Value for Money implications:**

There are no direct resource implications arising from the Affordable Housing Commissioning Plan as such. However, the Plan does refer to resources that can be used to support the development of more affordable housing – such as Council owned land; capital grants to Registered Social Landlords; the application of Commuted Sums arising through the planning system; as well as resources from the Homes and Communities Agency.

### **Legal Implications:**

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

---

### **Introduction**

1. The Council's Corporate Plan has the delivery of affordable housing as a key corporate priority. It is well recognised that there is a significant demand for affordable housing and a relatively modest supply. Over the years, the Council has used its planning powers; land, grant and partnership working Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to deliver affordable housing across the Borough. In the last five years some 299 affordable homes have been delivered.
2. As a Strategic Housing Authority, the Council is obliged to assess housing need, publish a Housing Strategy, and work to deliver housing to meet both demand and need across all tenures.
3. The Affordable Housing Commissioning Plan supports the Council's strategic housing role. It puts into one document:
  - ❖ the Council's corporate commitment to securing more affordable housing;
  - ❖ it defines what is meant by 'subsidised affordable housing'
  - ❖ a summary of housing need and housing supply, and where more affordable housing is requires most;
  - ❖ the resources that are available to help support the objective of delivering more affordable housing;
  - ❖ the expectations on developers and Registered Social Landlords; and
  - ❖ practical advice and helpful contact lists for developers and landowners.
4. It is considered to be good practice to have an Affordable Housing Commissioning Plan.
5. It is intended that this Plan will be a 'living document', which will be updated regularly as and when policies or practices change eg changes in criteria that Homes and Communities Agency use to allocate Social Housing Grant. In order to bear down on printing costs, it is proposed that the Plan will be published on the Council's website and hard copies will only be printed off as and when required.
6. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted this item on the Executive Rolling Programme and particularly asked to see the draft of this document before it was presented to the Executive.

## **Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

7. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the ambition to achieve a 40% requirement for affordable homes on S106 sites. The Committee was informed that this figure was considered achievable and in any event developers would undertake a viability assessment where such a levy would make a site unviable. This 40% figure was consistent with other local authorities in the area. However, viability was an issue that might start to be raised by developers in negotiating planning obligations.
8. Members noted that the land identified as suitable and available in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for 5000 houses in the borough was still credible, but were concerned that an increased requirement for affordable homes might discourage some landowners from selling. Members were mindful of the necessity of encouraging Parish Councils to be watchful for parcels of land suitable for affordable housing.
9. The Committee congratulated officers on an excellent document, and commended the plan, incorporating their observations and amendments, to the Executive for approval and publication.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that

1. the comments/observations of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and
2. subject to any amendments, the Affordable Housing Commissioning Plan be approved and published.

---

## **Background Papers**

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

---

## **CONTACT OFFICERS:**

<b>Name:</b>	John Swanton	<b>Telephone:</b>	01483 523361
		<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:john.swanton@waverley.gov.uk">john.swanton@waverley.gov.uk</a>
<b>Name:</b>	Matthew Evans	<b>Telephone:</b>	01483 523298
		<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:matthew.evans@waverley.gov.uk">matthew.evans@waverley.gov.uk</a>