

Subject: Affordable Housing Interim Policy

Status: For Publication

Report to: Development Control Committee **Date:** 5th December 2006

Report of: The Head of Planning Legal and Democratic Services

Portfolio

Holder: Councillor Challinor

Key Decision: NO

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency "X" In
Relevant Box

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the Committee of the proposal to introduce an interim affordable housing policy to reflect the requirements of PPG3 and draft PPS3. The draft Interim policy is attached at Appendix 1.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 Regeneration is a corporate priority the policy will ensure that areas are regenerated and that a variety of house types are provided.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In light of updated information relating to the housing land position, new evidence identifying affordable housing need in the borough and experience gained in implementing the interim housing policy, it is considered appropriate to issue an Interim Planning Policy on affordable housing.
- 4.2 Although work on the LDF is in progress, in view of the number of residential planning applications coming forward, it would be inappropriate to wait for the draft LDF before addressing these issues. Consequently this affordable housing interim policy will be applied with immediate effect and will be out to

consultation for 4 weeks following the decision of Cabinet, with representations needing to be received by the 30th January 2007.

- 4.3 This affordable housing interim policy will normally outweigh equivalent development plan policies in deciding planning applications because of its consistency with the Government's national planning policies/ draft planning polices, Regional Planning Guidance and the Structure Plan. The affordable housing interim policy will apply borough wide and will replace the reference to "local housing need" in criteria (e) of the current interim housing policy which was published in 2005. Any appropriate amendments to the policy required by the publication of the adopted version of PPS3 will be incorporated into the finalised version of this affordable housing interim policy.
- 4.4 Having regard to the policy context contained in PPG3 /, Circular 6/98 Affordable Housing, draft Planning Policy Statement 3, the supporting text to Structure Plan policy 12, a draft planning obligations statement policy prepared by Lancashire County Council and the empirical data contained in the up to date Housing Market Needs Assessment, there is a pressing need to address this issue.
- 4.5 This is particularly so, as there is no affordable housing policy in the Adopted Local Plan, as it was not an issue at the time the plan was adopted. Additionally, it has been identified that the affordable housing policy in the Preferred Options Core Strategy is not in accordance with Government Guidance. It is therefore considered necessary to include the affordable housing policy attached as an interim policy with immediate effect.

5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

- 5.1 It is important that the Council addresses the issue of affordable housing, this interim policy is essential. The Lancashire County Council Planning Obligation policy will further clarify the requirements in relation to the calculation of off site contributions.

6. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- 6.1 No comments

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 It is clear that there is a requirement to clarify the Councils position on affordable housing and its definition. This policy will ensure that the issue of affordable housing is addressed when developments meet the required thresholds.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 That the Committee provides any comments on the proposed interim policy to the Cabinet.

- 8.2 Subject to 8.1 that the policy is agreed and applied to all undetermined applications with immediate effect.
- 8.3 That a consultation on the interim policy is carried out for a period of 4 weeks.

9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 9.1 Portfolio holder / Developers Forum on the 11th December 2006

Contact Officer	
Name	Stephen Stray
Position	Senior Planning Officer
Service / Team	Forward Planning
Telephone	01706252420
Email address	Stephenstray@rossendalebc.gov.uk