



**Cabinet recommendations for consideration by Council  
at the Meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 5 December 2012**

**Cabinet – 20 November 2012**

**89 Lewes District Local Plan – Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document**

The Cabinet considered Report No 184/12 relating to the Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document in respect of the Lewes District Local Plan.

Work had begun on preparing the Core Strategy in 2009. Two formal public consultations had been held in Spring 2010 and Autumn 2011 when views were sought on the issues that the Core Strategy should address, what the Plan's objectives should be, and the different options that were being considered for different policies. The policies covered issues such as targets for housing and employment growth, where new development should take place, how to secure affordable housing, and how to plan for economic development and regeneration.

The table set out in paragraph 1.1 of the Report provided an overview of the process for producing a Core Strategy, along with the timetable that the Council and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) had been operating to.

Views expressed through the consultations had influenced the content of the Core Strategy - Proposed Submission document which set out the policies that the Council and SDNPA wished to put forward at an Examination in Public and subsequently adopt. There was a legal requirement to consult on the document, although the representations made would be considered by the Planning Inspector who conducted the Examination in Public.

The views expressed through the two formal consultations had been wide ranging and numerous. They had been a key influence on the Core Strategy and were summarised in the relevant Summary of Consultation

background documents. When the Proposed Submission document was published for consultation, the most recent Summary of Consultation document would be updated in order to explain how the views expressed had influenced the Core Strategy.

As well as the views and opinions expressed through consultations, there were other key influences that had impacted upon the content of the Strategy, further details of which were set out in paragraph 1.5 of the Report.

Production of the Core Strategy also needed to be accompanied by the Sustainability Appraisal process, which incorporated the requirement for the Plan to be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Sustainability Appraisal enabled the most sustainable policy approaches to be identified where a number of options were under consideration.

Outside of the formal consultation periods, the Council had also sought the views and opinions of other individuals, organisations and landowners/developers; and views had also been submitted from various individuals and organisations, further details of which were set out in paragraph 1.7 of the Report.

Additionally, through regular liaison meetings, Mid Sussex District Council had raised concerns over the possible allocation of the Greenhill Way site, Haywards Heath, further details of which were set out in paragraph 1.8 of the Report.

The Council and the SDNPA were also legally required to comply with the statutory “Duty to Co-operate” in preparing the Plan. The duty applied to a number of organisations, including neighbouring authorities, and had involved examining issues of cross-boundary significance and areas of common ground. Outcomes from such co-operation had helped influence the Core Strategy.

Paragraph 2 of the Report set out details of the format and content of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy and paragraph 3 drew Cabinet’s attention to specific key issues to note.

Subject to approval by the Council and the SDNPA, the joint Core Strategy would be published for consultation which, legally, was for a minimum period of six weeks. However, in order to ensure compliance with the SDNPA’s agreed consultation procedures, and to compensate for the consultation period falling over the Christmas/New Year period, a ten week period of consultation would be undertaken.

Details relating in the next steps that would be implemented following the consultation period were set out in paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 of the Report.

The Head of Planning Policy reported that the draft Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document had been considered by the Planning Committee of the SDNPA at its meeting on 8 November 2012. That Committee had

approved the Strategy for consultation and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012 subject to some minor modifications being made to the Document prior to it being formally published for consultation. The minor modifications were required to address several issues, details of which were set out in a document that the Head of Planning Policy circulated to those attending the meeting (a copy of which is contained in the Minute Book).

The Chair invited those members of the public who attended the meeting to ask questions relating to the draft Document, oral replies to which were given at the meeting.

Recommended:

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|---|-----------------------|
| <p><b>89.1</b> That the Core Strategy - Proposed Submission document, as detailed in Report No 184/12, be published for public consultation and subsequently, be submitted to the Secretary of State, subject to some minor modifications, details of which are set out in the document that the Head of Planning Policy circulated at the meeting;</p>   | <p>DPES (to note)</p> |
| <p><b>89.2</b> That the Director of Planning and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and the South Downs National Park Authority, be authorised to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) propose minor changes to the Core Strategy Document prior to its submission to the Secretary of State, and undertake the formal submission; and</li><li>(b) agree modifications to the Core Strategy during the Examination in Public. (These will be minor modifications that are deemed necessary to make the document sound. Any major modifications to be referred to Cabinet);</li><li>(c) review the text of the Document with a view to putting it into plain English where possible;</li><li>(d) include additional text at the appropriate part(s) of the Document so as to provide a fuller definition of the term “infrastructure”; and</li><li>(e) give consideration to the emerging Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan to allocate the total of 220 new dwellings, rather than the Core Strategy allocating a specific site at Ringmer and the Neighbourhood Plan allocating the rest of the Parish requirement. Such findings to be Reported to Council at its meeting on 5 December 2012; and</li></ul> | <p>DPES (to note)</p> |
| <p><b>89.3</b> That the Director of Planning and Environmental Services be authorised to approach local authorities who share a common</p>  | <p>DPES (to note)</p> |

housing market area with Lewes District to establish whether or not they are able to meet some of the Council's unmet housing needs.

Reasons for the Decisions:

To ensure that the Core Strategy is progressed towards adoption in a timely manner, thereby providing the Council and the South Downs National Park Authority with up to date policies against which to determine planning applications. (Recommendations 89.1 and 89.2 above refer).

To ensure that the Council explores all feasible options for meeting the housing need expected to arise over the Plan period. (Recommendation 89.3 above refers).

† *Councillors are requested to bring with them to the meeting Report No 184/12 which was circulated with the agenda papers for the meeting of the Cabinet on 20 November 2012. If you require a further copy of the document please contact Trevor Hayward, Committee Officer, on e-mail [trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk) or telephone 01273 484122*

**90 Finance Update**

The Cabinet considered Report No 185/12 which provided an update on financial matters that affected the General Fund Revenue Account, the Housing Revenue Account and the approved Capital Programme.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice recommended that all councillors be informed of Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. The Mid-year Report for 2012/2013, which covered the period 1 April 2012 to 30 September 2012 was set out at Appendix 2 to Report No 185/12. It confirmed that the key elements of the approved Treasury and Investments Strategy had been complied with during the first half of the year

Cabinet was invited to recommend that Council approve the Mid-year Report at its meeting on 5 December 2012. The Audit Committee would be presented with the Mid-year Report at its meeting on 3 December 2012 and any comments therefrom would be reported at the Council meeting.

The Council was a member of the Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership (C2C) and the Locate East Sussex Service in respect of which each partner had been requested to make a three year commitment. An additional budget of £20,000 for each of the three financial years from 2012/13 to 2014/15 would be required for the South East Location Service as the approved annual budget provision amounted to £10,000. As the contributions were for a fixed period they could be funded from the General Fund Working Balance.

The post of Technical Accountant which oversaw production of the International Financial Reporting Standards' (IFRS) accounts had been a fixed term appointment since the Standards had been first required over three years ago. Cabinet was requested to extend the appointment through to 31 March 2015, to be funded from the General Fund Working Balance, the cost for which amounted to £81,000.

The Chief Executive's Secretariat needed resourcing to meet growing demands on limited resources. The Council's commitment to provide high-quality public services and its unswerving commitment to customer service required a shift in the Council's approach to customer interface as the move to Southover House, Lewes, and the new Agile Working environment approached.

An Office Manger position for a fixed period of fifteen months through to 31 March 2014 would provide a resource to co-ordinate the Secretariat functions and take on the role of Customer Services Manager which was crucial in preparing for the next phase in the Nexus Programme, particularly around customer service improvements. The estimated cost of the proposal, including employer's national insurance and pension contributions, amounted to £49,000.

Recommended:

- 90.1** That the Mid-year Treasury Management Report for 2012/2013, as set out at Appendix 2 to Report No 185/12, be approved.

DF (to note)

It was further

Resolved:

- 90.2** That additional funding in the sum of £60,000 be approved to provide a three year commitment to the Locate East Sussex Service to be met from the General Fund Working Balance;

DF

- 90.3** That the continuation of the Technical Accountant position to 31 March 2015 be approved and be funded from the General Fund Working Balance;

DF

- 90.4** That the position of Office Manager through to 31 March 2014 be approved and be funded from the General Fund Working Balance; and

DF

- 90.5** That the remainder of the Report be received and noted.

Reasons for the Decisions:

A Report on funding issues in relation to the Council's General Fund Revenue Account, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme is made to each meeting of Cabinet to ensure that the Council's financial health is kept under continual review. It is essential to ensure that the Council has a sound financial base from which to respond to changing

activity levels and demand for statutory services and to ensure that, when appropriate, its finances are adjusted in response to reducing income levels and inflationary pressures on expenditure.

The Council's Treasury Management function deals with very large value transactions on a daily basis. It is essential that the Council is satisfied that appropriate controls are in place and in accordance with the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services prepared by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and adopted by the Council.

† *The Recommendation, and not the Resolutions, in the above Minute is for consideration by Council.*

*Councillors are requested to bring with them to the meeting Report No 185/12 which was circulated with the agenda papers for the meeting of the Cabinet on 20 November 2012. If you require a further copy of the document please contact Trevor Hayward, Committee Officer, on e-mail [trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk) or telephone 01273 484122*

### **93 Local Council Tax Support Scheme - Update**

The Cabinet considered Report No 195/12 which provided an update on the timetable for determining a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2013/2014.

The Council was working with the other Councils in East Sussex to develop a joint East Sussex Scheme which entailed giving consideration to different options and how they might affect local people. Broadly, the Council's approach was to try to save half of the reduction in Government funding through a Council Tax Support Scheme and the rest by taking advantage of new discount and exemption freedoms which allowed raising additional Council Tax from those with second homes or empty properties. Cabinet had agreed, in principle, to take advantage of the discount and exemption freedoms.

The statutory deadline for approving the Scheme was 31 January 2013. The intention had been for Council to adopt a draft Scheme at its meeting on 5 December 2012. However, several factors had driven the need for that date to be revised, further details of which were set out in paragraph 9 of the Report. In particular, the evaluation process had been extended in order to model the impact of the Government Transitional Grant offer, which had not been proposed at the time that the draft Scheme had been prepared and released for consultation.

There were implications for the budget setting arrangements of both the Council and the precepting authorities in the event of the Scheme being adopted at a later date, details of which were set out in paragraph 10 of the Report.

At its meeting on 7 November 2013, a Scrutiny Panel had recommended:

“That Cabinet considers the arrangement of an extra Full Council meeting at Lewes District Council in early January 2013 to consider the draft Localised

Council Tax Support Scheme; and

That Cabinet agrees that the capital limit under the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme be not reduced to £6K and remain at 16K, to be reviewed in one year.”

The Chair of the Council, who was also a member of that Scrutiny Panel, had supported the need for a Special Meeting of the Council to be held in January 2013 in order that consideration could be given to the draft Scheme.

Resolved:

- 93.1** That the amended timetable for Council to consider and decide upon a Local Council Tax Support Scheme, as detailed in Report No 195/12, be noted; and
- 93.2** That the use of the new burdens grant be noted.

It was further

Recommended:

- 93.3** That a Special Meeting of Full Council be held in early January 2013 to consider the draft Scheme; and
- 93.4** That the capital limit under the Scheme be not reduced to £6K and, instead, remain at 16K, and be reviewed in one year.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The planned time frame for completing a full equality impact analysis needs to be lengthened as a result of further modelling work to assess the Government’s Transitional Grant offer and to ensure sufficient time for consideration at a Council meeting.

The two main policy objectives of the scheme are to protect the vulnerable and to incentivise work and the Leader of the Council wishes to innovate and pioneer solutions to incentivise work alongside a respected and established company.

† *The Recommendations, and not the Resolutions, in the above Minute are for consideration by Council.*

*Councillors are requested to bring with them to the meeting Report No 195/12 which was circulated with the agenda papers for the meeting of the Cabinet on 20 November 2012. If you require a further copy of the document please contact Trevor Hayward, Committee Officer, on e-mail [trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk) or telephone 01273 484122*

## 94 Scrutiny Committee – 6 September 2012

The Cabinet considered the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 6 September 2012 as set out in Minute No 12 entitled “Preparations for a Localised Council Tax Support Scheme”.

At that meeting, the Committee had considered Report No 145/12 which provided an update on preparations for the Scheme. Councils needed to make important decisions about who would get financial support towards their council tax and how much they would receive.

It was important that any Scheme implemented was sustainable. Pensioners were protected in the new Scheme and would not receive any changes to their council tax support.

The Committee had requested Cabinet to consider whether the 25% single person discount within the Scheme be means tested. The Director of Finance reported that, since the Committee’s consideration of Report No 145/12, an amendment had been moved during the debate in the House of Lords on the passage of the Local Government Finance Bill 2012 to give councils freedom to reduce the level of single person discount to 20%. The amendment had been withdrawn. There had not been any debate on means testing such discount.

### Recommended:

**94.1** That the Director of Finance be authorised to write to the Government setting out details of the Scrutiny Committee’s Recommendation.

DF

### Reason for the Decision:

To consider the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee.

† *Councillors are requested to bring with them to the meeting the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 6 September 2012 as set out in Minute No 12 entitled “Preparations for a Localised Council Tax Support Scheme”, which was circulated with the agenda papers for the meeting of the Cabinet on 20 November 2012. If you require a further copy of the document please contact Trevor Hayward, Committee Officer, on e-mail [trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk) or telephone 01273 484122*

## 102 Meetings Timetable 2013/2014

The Cabinet considered Report No 194/12 relating to the proposed meetings timetable for the 2013/2014 municipal year.



Councillors had been consulted on the start times of Cabinet and full Council meetings in 2013/2014 and the timetable reflected the decision of Council that such meetings continue to start at 2.30pm.

Paragraphs 5 to 11 of the Report set out details of the constraints that had been taken into account when preparing the timetable.

Appendix A to the Report set out a summary of public meetings for the 2013/2014 municipal year and Appendix B provided details of the Public Meetings Timetable for the 2013/2014 municipal year by calendar month.

Recommended:

- 102.1** That the meetings timetable for the 2013/2014 municipal year, as set out in Appendices A and B to Report No 194/12, be approved and adopted subject to consideration being given to rescheduling the Council Meeting that is due to be held on Monday, 22 July 2013 to an earlier date so as to avoid the school summer holidays, some of which commence on Saturday, 20 July 2013.

CHLDS (to note)

Reason for the Decision:

To facilitate the smooth running of the Council's business in the municipal year 2013/2014.

- † *Councillors are requested to bring with them to the meeting Report No 194/12 which was circulated with the agenda papers for the meeting of the Cabinet on 20 November 2012. If you require a further copy of the document please contact Trevor Hayward, Committee Officer, on e-mail [trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:trevor.hayward@lewes.gov.uk) or telephone 01273 484122*

***(NB If the Council is minded to reschedule the Council Meeting that is due to be held on Monday, 22 July 2013 to an earlier date, say, Thursday, 18 July 2013, then, as there is a link between Cabinet and Council, it will be necessary to reschedule to preceding Cabinet meeting from 15 July to 11 July and Cabinet Callover from 24 June to 20 June).***