

Scrutiny Review – Provision of Affordable Housing in Urban Areas Draft Recommendations and Information

Recommendation One

That affordable housing is made a corporate priority at Lewes District Council

Recommendation Two

That a medium term minimum target of 500 units is set for affordable housing across the District over five years

Background:

- Number should be a minimum figure, could also have an aspirational figure. At present we build around 65 per year
- Number is based on many factors such as, Housing waiting list, Housing Needs survey, disposal of assets, public buy-in, new financial models, NHB money, opportunities for cheaper housing (flat-pack etc), regeneration opportunities and fitting in with government priorities
- Also, in Core Strategy increase from 25%-40% affordable housing
- May require separate formula for land with SDNP

Recommendation Three

Adopt an arrangement for looking at sites outside the disposal of assets plans (40 sites).

Background:

- Need to see how to deliver sites past the 40 in disposal of assets
- Package up sites when possible
- Keep ad-hoc, no formal agreement
- Speak to County – potential sites such as for sheltered housing

Recommendation Four

Consider intervening in stalled sites within the District with existing planning permission over a year old

Background:

- What is the nature of the intervention
- Builds and acknowledges on existing good work at the Council.
- Set up a project group to look at individual sites systematically (led Planning and Housing)
- Tailored solution for each site
- Identify how many sites we have
- Don't discount smaller sites

Recommendation Five

Consider the use of delivering affordable housing in and above empty shops. Provide guidance on this to landlords.

Background:

- Builds and acknowledges on existing good work at the Council.
- Look at Living over the shop initiative
- This could be done through financial mechanisms or positive planning policies
- Could undertake a survey project to assess empty shops
- Fits in with regeneration of towns
- Empty spaces above shops, not flats

Recommendation Six

Make land available for the creation of affordable housing through flat pack, self build and park homes schemes

Background:

- Builds and acknowledges on existing good work at the Council on self-build and flat-pack.
- Needs to be visually appealing
- This could be tied into the HRA and disposal of assets schemes
- Could generate income (Park Homes)
- Ensure sustainability

Recommendation Seven

Adopt a Scheme, where developers are asked to use local businesses and apprentices within new developments.

Background:

- Based on the Arun Charter Plus Scheme
- Need to run past Legal and audit
- Need details of other councils who do this, not just Arun.
- Voluntary and “in-spirit” agreement

Recommendation Eight

Consider the social value of land alongside the monetary value when assessing land value for the development of affordable housing.

Background:

- Look at other benefits such as health – link to County’s new health powers
- Ensure this is alongside, not instead of monetary value
- Important to establish what “social value” means

Recommendation Nine

Assess current finance delivery models for the delivery of new affordable housing

Background:

- With Finance, need to chase
- Use current models

Recommendation Ten

Create more resources to meet and exceed the target for affordable homes in the District

Background:

- Internal or external?

Timetable for Report

CMT 29 May (Papers to Lee by Monday 27 at Noon)
Callover Papers 10 June (Noon)
Final Report 24 June (Noon)