

LOCAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

24 March 2015 at 7.00 pm

Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

AGENDA

Membership:

Chairman: Cllr. Mrs. Hunter Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Searles
Cllrs. Ball, Butler, Dickins, Gaywood, Horwood, Piper, Mrs. Purves, Mrs. Sargeant, Scholey
and Williamson

	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 January 2015, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 8)	
2. Declarations of interest Any interests not already registered		
3. Actions from Previous Meeting	(Pages 9 - 10)	
4. Update from Portfolio Holder		Cllr Piper
5. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee (if any)		
6. Affordable Housing Policy	(Pages 11 - 22)	Alan Dyer Tel: 01732 227196
7. Fly tipping	(Pages 23 - 26)	Richard Wilson Tel: 01732 227262
8. Local List Update	(Pages 27 - 28)	Richard Morris Tel: 01732 227430
9. Update on climate change matters	(Pages 29 - 36)	Gavin Missions Tel: 01732 227332
10. Verbal update on the implementation of the Enforcement Plan		Richard Morris Tel: 01732 227430
11. Recent Government Consultations on Planning Issues	(Pages 37 - 38)	Richard Morris Tel: 01732 227430
12. Work Plan	(Pages 39 - 40)	

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing this agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.)

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

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The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)

LOCAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Hunter (Chairman)

Cllr. Searles (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Ball, Dickins, Gaywood, Horwood, Piper, Mrs. Sargeant and Scholey

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Butler and Mrs. Purves

Cllrs. Brookbank, Davison, Mrs. Davison and Mrs. Parkin were also present.

29. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 October 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to an amendment to Minute 19, last sentence of the bottom of the second paragraph being amended to read 'Affordable housing was 65/35 in favour of social rent.'

30. Declarations of interest

No additional declarations were made.

31. Actions from Previous Meeting

The action was noted.

32. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported that progress was well represented by the size of the agenda. He had been invited to speak at the Scrutiny Committee in November 2014, where the main issue of concern had been affordable housing and whether planning staffing levels were adequate. Work on the Gypsy and Traveller consultation was ongoing overshadowed by the recent Government consultation on a change in definition which could lead to more transit sites. He had visited recreation plots with the Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, and was hoping to spend some money at Bradbourne Lakes following a further meeting the next day. He drew Members attention to the change in recyclables that had commenced over Christmas, pointing out that it was now possible to recycle all plastics including tetra-packs except black pots, tubs, trays or lids, or film lids.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

With the agreement of the Committee, the Chairman brought forward agenda item 13 'Airports Commission – Preferred Options Consultation.'

33. Airports Commission - Preferred Options Consultation

Before consideration of the report, the Chairman welcomed Charles Kirwan-Taylor Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Director, and Hannah Staunton Head of Community Engagement representing Gatwick Airport. Mr. Kirwan-Taylor gave a [presentation](#) to the Committee. During the presentation he advised that Kent provided the second largest number of passengers for the airport, after London, 8% above the third, equating to 2.2 million passengers. Since 2009 over a billion pounds had been spent on improving the Airport, including better security, and improvements to the entrance, disembarkation and immigration systems. Arguments for a new second runway at Gatwick rather than extending the existing one at Heathrow included: lower cost and risk; construction had less detrimental impact on the surrounding area; it was a lower cost airport which would result in lower cost flights; less detrimental environmental impact; a more progressive noise mitigation and compensation scheme; and excellent transport links.

Members raised questions concerning train links, noise and infrastructure. In response to questions he advised that there were no committed schemes for rail links East to West, and the issue was not critical to their proposal but if they were successful they would be in a better position to raise it with the central government along with any other local ancillary requirements. It was clarified that Members were referring to the rail route that had been from Tonbridge, Edenbridge and Redhill to Gatwick but now terminated at Redhill. Ms. Staunton undertook to feedback this comment to Network Rail and report back.

Members queried why there was no offer of night time respite hours like at Heathrow, or higher and steeper approaches and also raised the issue of the more recent increase in flights and resultant noise in the south of the district for which residents lived too far away to qualify for mitigating measures such as double glazing and Council Tax rebates. Mr. Kirwan-Taylor explained that a second runway would provide night time respite as rotation could be increased and they had already said they would freeze the number of night flights. They were always looking for ways to improve performance with regards to noise including continuous descent and steeper where possible, along with monetary benefits to operators who used more modern and quieter planes. As it was already a continuous effort it was not a proposal. Introducing steeper descents was a complex process as different technical expertise of pilots was required and new flight paths had to be agreed. Work had not been taken any further forward as it was felt it may need to be revisited in light of the recent change in departures causing unforeseen noise issues and public reaction.

With reference to membership of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee (GATCOM) being refused to Sevenoaks District and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils, Mr. Kirwan-Taylor advised that Gatwick was a member but had no say on membership and encouraged the Council to reapply.

Mr Richard Streatfeild, Chairman of Chiddingstone Parish Council and the High Weald Parish Councils Aviation Action Group was allowed to address the Committee. The High Weald Parish Councils Aviation Action Group had been formed in 2013 due to the common need to campaign against excessive aircraft noise, low flying aircraft, night flights and the threat of a second runway at Gatwick Airport. The group consisted of local residents and representatives from Chiddingstone, Hever, Leigh and Penshurst Parish Councils. He reported that Gatwick provided less than 1% of jobs within the whole

of Kent so the economic benefit argument was limited. He understood that Hever Castle, a heritage site, tourist attraction and employer, were considering closing their doors to the public due to the excessive noise which according to their noise data was averaging at 64 decibels. The World Health Organisation advised that severe illness started from above 45 decibels. Causing ill health was not the act of a good neighbour. Mitigating measures such as no night flights, steeper ascents and more dispersal were urgently needed. There had been an increase in flights and intensity which had become intolerable. In relation to national benefit Heathrow would give more.

In response to a question concerning the effect on infrastructure, not just roads but housing and schools etc. Mr Kirwan-Taylor advised that not enough exploration of secondary consequences had been carried out and this was something to be raised with central government.

On behalf of the Committee the Chairman thanked Mr Kirwan-Taylor and Ms Staunton for attending the meeting.

Following the presentation Members considered the report which provided a summary of the Airports Commission's 'Preferred Options for public consultation' which was released in early November 2014 following its Interim Report in December 2013. The report also provided the comments that the Council had submitted in response to aviation related consultations in the past, and an outline response for Members to consider.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the outline response be recommended to the Portfolio Holder as the approach the Council should take in responding to the Airport Commission's consultation.

34. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee (if any)

There were none.

35. Adoption of Allocations & Development Management Plan (ADMP)

The Senior Planning Officer (Policy) presented a report which advised that the final ADMP Inspector's Report had now been published and had concluded that the plan provided an appropriate basis for the planning of the District, subject to the incorporation of thirteen Main Modifications as detailed in the report and concluded that the Council had complied with the Duty to Co-operate during the plan preparation and that it was positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy, and therefore met the criteria for soundness.

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Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet to recommend to Council that the Allocations and Development Management Plan, incorporating the Inspector's main modifications, be adopted.

36. Adoption of the Development in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Senior Planning Officer (Policy) presented a report which sought the adoption of the Development in the Green Belt SPD which had been amended following public consultation in February 2013. The guidance would help ensure consistency in decision making when determining planning applications in the Green Belt.

In response to query regarding Eynsford Parish Council's comment on the robustness of GB7, the Chief Planning Officer pointed out that this was supplementary guidance which relied on the policies in the Allocations & Development Management Plan (ADMP) which itself had been found sound, and all Officers could do was to apply it consistently.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Development in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document be adopted.

37. Adoption of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Timetable

Members considered a report which sought approval of the latest Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable. The LDS was a rolling project plan that set the work programme for the development of Local Plan (formerly Local Development Framework) documents. It no longer had to be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval but did need to be made available and published on the Council's website. The last version was agreed by Cabinet in March 2012 and was out of date.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable be agreed.

38. Proposed Updated Westerham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Conservation Officer presented a report which sought Members' support for the adoption of the updated Westerham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document. It was considered that the updated character appraisal and management plan for Westerham conservation area reflected the changing townscape in Westerham and would help local residents and other interested parties engage in the conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment and secure the long term preservation of the character of the area as an important heritage asset.

The Conservation Officer advised that the report would be presented to Cabinet in March 2015 after the formal adoption of the ADMP by Council in February, therefore the final document presented to Cabinet would differ from that before the Committee as it would require updating with regard to planning policies. The final draft would also undergo a 'facelift' and be presented to Cabinet in a more up to date and corporate format.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that subject to planning policy updates, the updated Character Appraisal and Management Plan for Westerham Conservation Area be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

39. Local Enforcement Plan

The Chief Planning Officer presented a report which introduced a Local Enforcement Plan which provided information to customers on how the Council would deal with enforcement and the powers available so that complainants and those subject to complaints would know what to expect from the service.

A Member observed that Parish Councils very often formed the 'eyes and ears' of the enforcement section, however what constituted a breach was not always well known, and he was disappointed that more work with Parish and Town Councils was not addressed in the plan. The Chief Planning Officer replied that the Council was reliant on third party information. There would be dedicated training for Councillors on how enforcement was to be rolled out, and if necessary one to one meetings. It was suggested this could be offered to the Parish Councils.

Action 1: The Chief Planning Officer address the possibility of training at the next Parish Forum.

A number of Members referred to some individual cases in their area. It was agreed that they should approach the Portfolio Holder and Chief Planning Officer outside the meeting.

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Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet to agree the Local Enforcement Plan for adoption.

40. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance

The Chief Planning Officer presented a report which set out recommendations arising from the Member/Officer workshops for the structure of a new board, guidance on the information that would need to be supplied to support bids for funding and the factors that the Council would need to take into account in making a decision. It also recommended that the Council prepare an Infrastructure Plan, which would inform the allocation of funding to schemes that supported development planned in the Allocations and Development Management Plan. It was not anticipated that the Board would meet until after May 2015. It was also noted that there should be an extra recommendation to the report for preparation of the Infrastructure Plan.

The Committee agreed with the Chairman that training before attendance on the Board should be mandatory, as it was for Licensing Hearings and Development Control Committees, and requested that the Portfolio Holder make this clear to Cabinet when considering the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Board be established to recommend to Cabinet how CIL funding should be prioritised with Terms of Reference consistent with the body of the report;
- b) the CIL pro-forma attached as Appendix A to the report, setting out the information that bidding organisations, including SDC, would need to provide, be published;
- c) the guidance on the CIL decision making process, attached as Appendix B to the report, be published; and
- d) an Infrastructure Plan be prepared, in order to inform the allocation of funding to schemes that support development planned in the Allocations & Development Management Plan (ADMP).

41. Solar Farm Proposals in the District

The information report described proposals that had come forward for development of solar farms in the District and outlined relevant local and national policy. The Chief

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Planning Officer gave an update on the Skinners Farm decision taken recently at the Development Control Committee which had been refused. It was acknowledged that there was not a local policy and that it was not explicit in the ADMP or GreenBelt guidance, but from an Officer's perspective there was enough in national planning guidance to set guidelines and be tested. It was likely that there would be an appeal.

A Member tabled pages 29 – 32 of a document entitled '[Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in Purbeck District Council](#),' suggesting that the Council could adopt a similar sensitivity criteria. It was agreed that he would look at this with the Portfolio Holder.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

42. Work Plan

Members considered the work plan. It was agreed to add an item on S. 215 notices, and take off the item on Sustainable Drainage.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.08 PM

CHAIRMAN

ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2015

Action	Description	Status and last updated	Contact Officer
ACTION 1	The Chief Planning Officer address the possibility of training at the next Parish Forum. (Minute 39) [<i>...There would be dedicated training for Councillors on how enforcement was to be rolled out, and if necessary one to one meetings. It was suggested this could be offered to the Parish Councils.</i>]	The next Parish forum will be held on 18 March where the new Enforcement Plan will be discussed and training offered. 12.03.15	Richard Morris

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY

Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee – 24 March 2015

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary:

This report reviews the implementation of Core Strategy Policy SP3 on affordable housing. It considers the outcomes in terms of delivery of affordable housing and financial contributions received. It looks at the prospects for future delivery taking account of potential developments in the pipeline and changes to Government policy, including new thresholds for provision and the introduction of the Vacant Building Credit. It notes that policy will be reviewed as part of the forthcoming review of the Core Strategy and suggests that the target for delivery be reviewed in the next Authority Monitoring Report. It recommends that the Affordable Housing SPD be updated to take account of current government policy guidance.

This report supports the Key Aim of Sustainable Economy from the Community Plan.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Piper

Contact Officer Alan Dyer Ext. 7196

Recommendation: That the report be noted and that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the amendments to the Affordable Housing SPD set out in Appendix A.

Reason for recommendation: To update the Affordable housing SPD to take account of current government guidance on thresholds for provision and the vacant building credit..

Introduction and Background

1. The Council's adopted policy on affordable housing is Core Strategy Policy SP3. It states:

In order to meet the needs of people who are not able to compete in the general housing market, the Council will expect the provision of affordable housing in all types of residential development including specialised housing. The location, layout and design of the affordable housing within the scheme should create an inclusive development.

The level and type of affordable housing required in any residential development will be assessed against the following criteria:-

- 1. In residential developments of 15 dwellings or more gross 40% of the total number of units should be affordable.**
- 2. In residential developments of 10-14 dwellings gross 30% of the total number of units should be affordable**
- 3. In residential developments of 5-9 units gross 20% of the total number of units should be affordable**
- 4. In residential developments of less than 5 units that involve a net gain in the number of units a financial contribution based on the equivalent of 10% affordable housing will be required towards improving affordable housing provision off-site**

Where an element of affordable housing is required at least 65% of the affordable housing units should be social rented, unless the Council is satisfied that an alternative mix meets a proven need.

In exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction through an independent assessment of viability that on-site provision in accordance with the policy would not be viable, a reduced level of provision may be accepted or, failing that, a financial contribution towards provision off-site will be required.

Permission will be refused where the size of the development is artificially reduced to fall below the threshold requiring provision of affordable housing.

2. Thus under the policy the following thresholds are applied:

Sites of 15 dwellings or more	40% on-site affordable housing
Sites of 10-14 dwellings	30% on-site affordable housing
Sites of 5-9 dwellings	20% on-site affordable housing
Less than 5 units	Equivalent to 10% financial contribution

However, the thresholds are subject to a provision as part of the policy that the requirement can be reduced if it is demonstrated that meeting the requirement in full would render the development non-viable. The inclusion of this "viability clause" was necessary to achieve compliance with national policy and ensure the plan was found sound.

3. The policy is supported by the Affordable Housing SPD which contains guidance on its implementation, including the use of financial contributions.

Changes to National Planning Practice Guidance

4. On 28 November 2014, the Government published changes to the National Planning Practice Guidance and a written ministerial statement was issued on planning obligations. The key changes for SDC are:

- In most areas, contributions should not be sought from developments of 10-units or less (where the combined gross floorspace is no more than 1000 sq m);
 - In designated rural areas, the Council can choose to apply a lower threshold and require financial contributions (not on-site provision) on sites of 6 units or more. Rural areas are defined under the Housing Act 1985 and in Sevenoaks District these are currently equivalent to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
 - Where planning permissions involve bringing a vacant building back into lawful use or it is demolished to be replaced by a new building, the developer should be offered a 'vacant building credit' equivalent to the building's floorspace, which can offset part of the contribution. Therefore, contributions should be proportionate to the increase in floorspace, regardless of the use of the buildings.
5. Where there is conflict between national and local policy national policy will generally take precedence if applications go to appeal. Even though the District's policy forms part of an adopted development plan it is unlikely to be supported on developments that fall below the Government's new threshold. The result is likely to be that a very large proportion of future developments that would have required either an on site or off site contribution to affordable housing under the policy will now no longer be required to contribute or only be required to make a reduced contribution. In developments of 6-10 units in designated rural areas the requirement will now be for a financial contribution rather than on-site provision.
6. In view of the adverse implications for affordable housing in the District, Cabinet on 5 March resolved to lobby Government to rescind or amend the changes.
7. While it is hoped that policy will change in the future the Council does need to adjust to the current situation and amendments to the SPD are proposed (see below)

Policy Implementation

8. The Council produces an annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) which reviews progress on the implementation of planning policies. This section draws on information from the latest AMR with some additional material.
9. The current policy was adopted in February 2011 and has applied to developments granted permission since that date, but it has taken time to impact on completed developments as there is a lag between permissions and completions and many developments completed since 2011 were permitted before the policy came into effect. Thus even in 2013/4 (two to three years after adoption of the Core Strategy) 128 out of the 264 dwellings completed (48%) were constructed under permissions granted before current policy was adopted.

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10. The impact of policy so far can be seen by looking at completions and development in the pipeline. Table 1 below taken from the latest AMR provides information contains details of new affordable housing units completed.

Table 1: Affordable Housing Units Completed

All new affordable housing units completed			
Monitoring Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
All new build housing units completed (market & affordable)	225	195	264
Number of housing units lost (market & affordable)	51	54	40
Net number of new build housing units completed (market & affordable)	174	141	224
All new build affordable housing units completed (Gross)	25	17	51
All affordable housing units lost	0	-32	0
Net number of new build affordable housing units completed	25	-15	51

11. In 2013/4 264 dwellings (gross) were completed of which 51 (19.3%) were affordable. However, 128 of the completed dwellings were permissions that pre dated current policy and, of the remainder, 95 completions were on sites of five units or less where on site contributions are not required. This leaves 41 completions on sites where the policy would suggest on site provision should be made. For 22 units (on three sites) off site contributions were received in lieu of on site provision while for the remainder provision was made in accordance with the policy, while there were also completions on 100% affordable housing sites on land owned by Housing Associations (including redevelopment of sheltered housing in Bonney Way, Swanley which showed a large loss in the previous year). Just eight units were completed on schemes requiring 40% provision under the policy (at Eden Valley School where 40% of the development is affordable).
12. This is a rather complex picture but key points are that most completions were on developments that either pre dated current policy or were too small to require on site provision.
13. The position on financial contributions received is as follows.

Table 2: Affordable Housing Financial Contributions Received

Year	Contributions Received
2011/2	£206,144
2012/3	£356,032
2013/4	£1,351,111
2014/5 (to Feb 2015)	£594,802
Total	£2,508,089

14. Contributions increased as more development has started that is subject to the policy, though the figure for 2013/4 is particularly high due to a one-off large

payment on the Mountwood and Horizons site where a financial contribution of £449,000 was agreed in lieu of on site provision. There is already some evidence of contributions received tailing off since the change in government policy in November 2014.

15. Contributions received have to be spent on affordable housing and decisions on what affordable housing projects are funded are made jointly by the Planning and Housing Portfolio Holders. To date of the funds received £2,263,541.88 has been either spent or allocated to specific projects. This includes the DIYSO shared ownership schemes in which properties on the open market have been purchased adding to the stock of affordable housing.
16. Looking to the future there are outstanding permissions for 232 affordable housing units (at 1 April 2014), including 100 at West Kent Cold Store and 22 at Morewood Close, both sites currently under construction. There are also a number of larger schemes subject to current applications, some of which have substantial affordable housing proposed as part of the scheme. These include:

Scheme	Units	Aff. Units	Comment
Salmon's Site, Sevenoaks	60	9	Viability argument put forward for less than 40%
Broom Hill, Swanley	61	24	40% provision in line with policy
United Ho. Swanley	201	30	Reduced provision based on vacant building credit and viability argument.
Reserve Land, Edenbridge	300	120	40% provision in line with policy
Fort Halstead	450	90	Viability argument put forward for less than 40%

There are also a number of substantial development sites identified in the adopted Allocations and Development Management Plan that have the potential to deliver significant affordable housing. The planning applications remain to be determined and may not all be implemented in the short term, but nevertheless a greater proportion of larger schemes in future completions increases the prospect of achieving more affordable housing. This is particularly true of greenfield schemes which will not be affected by vacant building credit.

17. In contrast the prospects for achieving future contributions to affordable housing from smaller schemes are looking much worse. The Government's new thresholds for contributions mean that the vast majority of schemes on which a financial contribution would have been required under the policy will no longer need to contribute. Schemes permitted but not started have the potential to yield up to £2.5 million but there is a high risk attached to this figure as developers are able to bring forward revised proposals that would need to be considered against the revised thresholds.

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18. The viability clause in the policy has led to developers bringing forward viability assessments in support of reduced provision. The Council has used independent consultants to review assessments and the review process has led to a variety of outcomes depending on the circumstances of the case. There have been instances where the developer's case has been accepted, but there have also been instances where the independent review has led to an increase in provision over the developer's proposals and cases where proposals have been dismissed on appeal because the developer's viability case has not stood up to scrutiny.
19. We will be reviewing our use of viability consultants over the next few months to ensure we are getting the best advice.
20. Overall the effect of the viability clause has been to reduce the contribution to affordable housing that would have been achieved compared to strict adherence to the policy thresholds. However, it would not have been possible for the Council to adopt a policy that did not include the viability clause in view of Government policy, so any comparison is somewhat hypothetical.
21. Under the Government's new thresholds individual viability assessments are likely to be a less significant factor in the consideration of future applications as the vast majority of cases that would have been subject to viability reviews will now be excluded from contributions, either because they are below the new threshold or because of the effect of vacant building credit.
22. The Core Strategy has a target of delivering 66 affordable housing units per annum. This has not been met and so far has proved to be too optimistic. In the future an increase in delivery could be expected due to larger sites in the pipeline and a greater proportion of developments coming forward that were determined under the policy. But offsetting this is the effect of the new thresholds, including vacant building credit, which mean that most new development proposals will no longer be required to contribute. It is suggested that the next Authority Monitoring Report considers potential change to the target figure taking account of whether the new government thresholds are maintained.
23. The policy has though had a substantial beneficial impact on affordable housing for which there is a high level of need in the District. Schemes have been developed and are currently proposed with levels of affordable provision in accordance with the policy requirement. Any lowering of the policy requirement would therefore lead to less affordable housing. Contributions to affordable housing have also been achieved from smaller developments that would not have otherwise made any contribution. This has included financial contributions that have enabled a range of affordable housing initiatives to be brought forward that would not otherwise have happened.

24. Affordable housing policy will need to be reviewed as part of the review of the Core Strategy which is just starting. The review will need to take account of national policy and local evidence, including an update to the viability assessment that underpins the existing policy. There is no immediate need to bring forward an earlier review of the entire policy.
25. There is, however, a need to update guidance on implementation of policy to take account of the new Government thresholds. It is suggested that this could best be done by amending the Affordable Housing SPD to clarify that contributions will not be sought from developments below the new thresholds and also to give guidance on the application of vacant building credit. For developments that are above the new thresholds Core Strategy policy will continue to apply and guidance on its implementation does not need to change.
26. Appendix A sets out proposed changes to the SPD following the approach above. These are limited factual amendments to take account of new Government policy and, subject to the views of the Committee, it is proposed that they be agreed by the Portfolio Holder.

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

27. The option of recommending changes to policy now is not recommended as it is considered preferable to review policy as part of a wider review of the Core Strategy.
28. The option of leaving the SPD unchanged is not recommended as the implementation of policy is affected by the new Government thresholds and guidance to developers will be clearer if it takes account of the new rules. A wider review of the SPD can await a general review of policy.

Key Implications

Financial

29. The financial implications of the changes to national policy in terms of reduced affordable housing contributions are set out in the report. The recommendation does not add to the expected negative impact.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

30. No implications arising from the recommendation.

Equality Assessment

31. The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

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Conclusions

32. Overall the Council's affordable housing policy has had a significant impact in improving affordable housing provision in the District, although the specific target of 66 dwellings per annum has not been met. In part this is due to a preponderance of small developments and a time lag in schemes determined under the policy being developed. A number of larger schemes are in the pipeline with the potential to increase future provision but the changes to Government policy mean that a large proportion of new developments will no longer be required to contribute or contribute to a reduced extent. Changes to the SPD are proposed to take account of change in national policy. Local policy will be reviewed as part of the forthcoming review of the Core Strategy.

Appendices

Proposed Changes to the Affordable Housing SPD

Background Papers:

[LDF Core Strategy](#)

[Affordable Housing SPD](#)

Authority Monitoring Report

Richard Morris
Chief Planning Officer

Affordable Housing SPD

Amendments due to changed National Planning Policy Guidance

Introduction

Add new para 1.3a: *In November 2014 Government policy changed to introduce new thresholds for affordable housing provision and the SPD has been amended to take this into account.*

Purpose and Status

Add to end of para 1.6: *and revised on xxxx 2015.*

National Planning Context

Delete paras 2.1 – 2.4 and replace with:

2.1 *Government policy on affordable housing is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supported by National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)..*

2.2 *On 28 November 2014 the Government amended the NPPG to introduce new minimum thresholds for affordable housing provision. These are:*

- *In most areas contributions to affordable housing should not be sought in developments of 10 units or less provided the development is also less than 1,000 sq m or less.*
- *In designated rural areas affordable housing should not be sought in developments of 5 units or less (In Sevenoaks designated rural areas correspond to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty). For developments of 6-10 units in designated rural areas only financial contributions may be sought.*

2.3 *The NPPG was also amended to introduce a “vacant building credit” to be deducted from the affordable housing requirement when vacant buildings are brought back into use or demolished as part of a scheme. The calculation of the vacant building credit is considered in section 5 below.*

2.4 *The Council recognises that its decisions need to be consistent with Government policy and it will not seek affordable housing contributions on developments below the new thresholds in the period they are in place.*

Local Planning Context

Add new para 2.7a at end of section: *Following the introduction of new minimum thresholds in the NPPG the requirements for on site provision and financial contributions will not apply to developments below the new thresholds. For developments above the new thresholds Core Strategy policy will continue to apply. This includes developments of 10 units or less that exceed 1,000 sq m. For developments of 6-10 units that do not exceed 1,000 sq m in designated rural areas the requirement will be for a financial*

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contribution based on the equivalent of 20% affordable housing (5-9 units) or 30% affordable housing (10 units).

Definitions

Delete para 3.1 -3.4 and replace with:

3.1 The NPPF defines affordable housing as follows:

“Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.”

On Site Provision

Add new second sentence to para 5.1: *The policy will not be applied to developments below the NPPG threshold and the text below should be read with this qualification.*

After para 5.3 add new sub heading: *“Vacant Building Credit”*

5.3a Calculation of the affordable housing requirement may be affected by the vacant building credit introduced in the NPPG. Vacant building credit only applies in the following circumstances:

- There is a building in existence at the time the decision is made on the application. Buildings already demolished cannot count.*
- The building must be vacant at the time of the decision. Occupied or partly occupied buildings cannot count, neither can occupied buildings that are expected to become vacant.*

- *The building must be brought back into use or demolished as part of the development. Vacant buildings on a site that do not form part of the development proposal cannot count.*

5.3b *The NPPG states that the vacant building credit should be calculated by deducting the gross vacant building floorspace from the gross floorspace of the new development. Council policy calculates affordable housing requirement in numbers of units rather than floorspace and it will apply the vacant building credit as follows:*

1. *Subtract the qualifying gross vacant floorspace from the gross proposed floorspace to obtain the net increase in floorspace of the development.*
2. *Divide the net change in floorspace by the proposed floorspace to establish the net floorspace change as a proportion of the total proposed.*
3. *Establish the affordable housing requirement in units for the development based on Core Strategy policy and the SPD.*
4. *Multiply the affordable housing requirement by the net floorspace proportion to establish a revised requirement in terms of numbers of units.*

5.3c *For example if the development is for 90 units with a gross floorspace of 8,000 sq m and the existing qualifying vacant floorspace is 2,000 sq m then the calculation is as follows:*

1. *The net change in floorspace is 6,000 sq m (8,000 – 2,000)*
2. *The net change is 75% of the gross floorspace proposed (6,000/8,000)*
3. *The original affordable housing requirement is 36 units (40% of 90)*
4. *The new requirement is 27 units (75% of 36)*

5.3d *In developments where the original affordable housing requirement is in the form of a financial contribution the calculation is similar except that the original requirement in step 3 will be a sum of money calculated following the methodology in section 6 below which will be multiplied by the net floorspace proportion to get a revised financial requirement.*

5.3e *In all cases where vacant building credit is sought the applicant will need to provide evidence that the building meets the vacancy test, provide details of the floorspace of the proposed development and the vacant building and a calculation of the revised requirement following the approach above.*

Add new sub heading “Other Matters” before para 5.4

Off Site Provision

Add new second sentence to para 6.1: *The policy will not be applied to developments below the NPPG threshold and the text below should be read with this qualification.*

Amend sub heading before para 6.4 to delete “for less than 5 units”

Development Viability

Add new second sentence to para 8.1: *The policy will not be applied to developments below the NPPG threshold and the text below should be read with this qualification.*

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FLY-TIPPING

Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee – 24 March 2015

Report of Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

This report supports the Key Aim of a clean and healthy environment.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Piper

Contact Officer(s) Ian Finch - 01959 567351

Recommendation: That the Members of the Advisory Committee note the report.

Introduction and Background

1. For the period April 2014 – February 2015, 856 incidents of fly-tipping have been reported (compared with 815 April 2013 – February 2014).
2. 592 of these incidents have been removed by the Council as having responsibility for removal (compared to 400 April 2013 – February 2014).
3. The average time taken from report to removal has been 3.6 working days (compared to 5.6 working days in the previous year). This has equated to 120 tonnes of fly-tipped waste. Of the 264 incidents reported but not removed by the Council:

184 could not be found by the crew

61 were on private land

19 were referred by Direct Services to Kent Highways for removal

4. The location of the ten highest number of fly-tipping incidents reported were in:
 - Swanley 146 incidents
 - Edenbridge 79 incidents
 - Sevenoaks 45 incidents
 - South Darenth 44 incidents
 - Horton Kirby 37 incidents
 - West Kingsdown 34 incidents
 - Eynsford 33 incidents
 - Westerham 32 incidents
 - Hartley 24 incidents
 - Shoreham 21 incidents

Agenda Item 7

5. Fly-tipping typically consists of bags of household waste and garden waste; old furniture, materials from DIY jobs, building waste: spoil, asbestos cement sheeting; tyres and large commercial waste operations.

Current Responsibilities for Removing Fly-tipped Waste

6. The Council has responsibility for clearing fly-tipped waste on its own land and household waste tipped on the highway, including the verge. Kent Highways have accepted responsibility for removing commercial waste tipped on the highway including the verge.
7. Fly-tipped waste on private land is the responsibility of the land owner to remove.
8. Kent County Council have recently undertaken a review of all fly-tipping clearance. With effect from 1st April 2015, KCC will no longer accept responsibility for removing any fly-tipped waste on highway land, unless it is obstructing the carriageway. District Councils will therefore be responsible for the removal of any fly-tipped waste on the highway where it is not obstructing the carriageway (footpaths, verges and lay-by's). This will also include public rights of way (PROW). KCC will be responsible for the disposal costs of material.

Customer Reporting of Fly-tipping

9. It has been agreed that with effect from 1st April, the single point of contact for the public to report fly-tipping will be the relevant District/Borough Council. This is to avoid the public being passed from District to County and vice versa, depending on the location and type of the fly-tipping. If it is determined that the responsibility for removal is the County Council the relevant District will refer it to Kent Highways.

Enforcement

10. The Council has, in past years, subscribed to the County, Clean Kent, enforcement team, to undertake investigation and enforcement action on fly-tipping incidents where evidence is found to identify the perpetrators. From 1st April 2015, this scheme will cease and Districts/Boroughs will have to carry out their own enforcement action.
11. At present, other than using existing Direct Services and Environmental Health staff, the Council does not have any enforcement resource. Discussions are currently underway with a neighbouring authority to see if assistance could be provided by them, using their enforcement team and using the funding previously set aside for the County enforcement resource.
12. These arrangements will be reviewed during the 2015/16 financial year to assess the operational and expenditure impacts of these new arrangements.

Key Implications

Financial

The Council's current budget for removing fly-tipped waste, based on a vehicle and crew for 3 days work per week, is £53,333.

The situation will be monitored during the 2015/16 financial year to assess any impact on expenditure from this new arrangement. If it is considered that additional resources are required a 'growth' item will be presented for consideration in the 2016/17 budget setting process.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 is actually 'silent' on responsibility for fly-tipped waste. It is clear on responsibility for litter and controlled waste, but not fly-tipping, which is 'uncontrolled' waste.

The Highways Act 1980 states the Highway Authority has a duty to ensure that the highway is safe for users.

It is clear that these revised arrangements will have an impact on District Council operations. In anticipation of an increased workload using the same Fly-tip clearance resources, the target time from report to removal has been increased from 5 to 7 days from 1st April 2015 but this will be kept under review.

Equality Assessment

There may be an impact on pedestrians, particularly with mobility concerns, if fly-tipped waste is not removed promptly from highway footpaths.

Background Papers:

Performance Information on fly-tipping 2014/15

KCC Highways, Transport and Waste Briefing Paper
January 2015

Richard Wilson
Chief Officer, Environmental & Operational Services

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LOCAL LIST UPDATE

Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee - 24 March 2015

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No.

This report supports the Key Aim of Green Environment

Portfolio Holder Cllr Piper

Contact Officer Aaron Hill Ext. 7399

Recommendation to Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee: That the report be noted.

Reason for recommendation: To update Members on progress with the Local List.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Sevenoaks Society is currently undertaking the survey work for the creation of Sevenoaks District Council's Local List for part of the Sevenoaks town area. This is a list of undesignated heritage assets that have been identified within Sevenoaks town as being of special local importance. They have been assessed against a devised criteria and the project has been managed and carried out by a team of local volunteers. The choice of buildings is subject to a scrutiny panel, which includes the Sevenoaks Conservation Officer. This project is being led by the Sevenoaks Society under the guidance and input by Sevenoaks District Council and English Heritage.
- 2 The project is going to be carried out in two tranches with the first round of surveys and moderation (of St John's, Town and Kippington wards) to be completed by December 2015. The formal public consultation on the first tranche will be carried out in March 2016 and it is intention to have the first local list SPD for the Sevenoaks town area is to be adopted by the end of 2016.
- 3 The second tranche of survey work and moderation (Eastern, Northern and Wilderness wards) is anticipated to be carried out by 2017 and subsequently consulted on and adopted by 2018.
- 4 It is anticipated that the Local List, once established, could be added to with appropriate buildings from around the District which meet the criteria. This could be part of the development control process, conservation area appraisals and any local survey initiatives similar to that managed by the Sevenoaks Society.

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- 5 The list will be available on the Sevenoaks Council website for public information and will be incorporated internally within Gismo system for planning officers. A training session on the Local List will be held for planning officers to explain the value and importance of the Local List within the development control function.
- 6 Locally listed buildings once adopted will be classed as Heritage Assets and will be afforded protection under policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations & Development Management Plan.

Background Papers: [Allocations and Development Management Plan.](#)

Richard Morris

Chief Planning Officer

CLIMATE LOCAL SEVENOAKS – UPDATE REPORT

Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee – 24 March 2015

Report of Chief Housing Officer

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

This report supports the Key Aim of delivering climate-related objectives in the District Council's Community Plan, associated legal requirements, and wider sustainability strategy.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Avril Hunter

Contact Officer Gavin Missons Ext. 7332

Recommendation to the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee: That Members note the report at Appendix A.

Introduction and Background

- 1 In 2012, Climate Local Kent (CLK) was introduced and this set out Kent's commitment to drive, inspire and support action to tackle climate change. The District Council subsequently agreed to support CLK through action at District level.
- 2 In 2013, the District Council adopted its own strategy, entitled Climate Local Sevenoaks (CLS), and this set out scaled-down targets and commitments at District level, whilst still corresponding with wider county-wide objectives.
- 3 In February 2015, the District Council produced its first progress report against CLS and this is attached at Appendix A (Climate Local Sevenoaks – Progress Report No. 1).

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications to consider.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications to consider other than requirements set out in statute.

Agenda Item 9

Equality Assessment

There are no equality issues to consider. There are positive impacts in relation to community impact and outcomes, resources, value for money, and wider sustainability.

Appendices Appendix A – Climate Local Sevenoaks (Progress Report No. 1)

Background Papers: Climate Local Sevenoaks
(http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/127280/Climate-Local-Sevenoaks.pdf)

Climate Local Kent
(http://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/22676/Climate-Local-Kent-report-2014.pdf)

Pat Smith
Chief Housing Officer

CLIMATE LOCAL SEVENOAKS - Progress Report No. 1

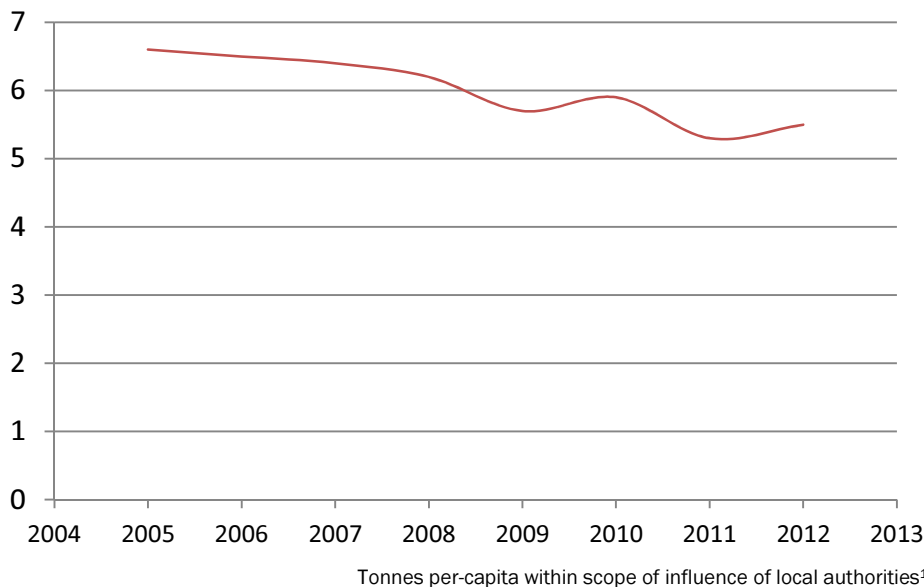
SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLAN (2013-28) - TARGET: 'To achieve 75% of actions contained in Climate Local Sevenoaks'

February 2014

1. We will work towards a cut in emissions which will contribute to an overall reduction of 34% in Kent's emissions (2.6% annually).

Benchmark data (DECC, 2010): 5.7t per-capita emissions within the scope of influence of local authorities

2005 – 6.6t
 2006 – 6.5t
 2007 – 6.4t
 2008 – 6.2t
 2009 – 5.7t
 2010 – 5.9t (benchmark)
 2011 – 5.3t (-10.17%)
 2012 – 5.5t (+3.77%)



Note: Data for 2013 and 2014 not yet available from DECC.

In a 2-year period (2010-2012), and against a target reduction of 5.2%, the District has seen a 6.4% reduction (average reduction of 3.2% pa against a target of 2.6%) in per-capita emissions within the scope of influence of local authorities.²

¹ Table at: \\Client\\$\\$\SDC\Community Services\Housing\Housing Policy Team\carbon emissions per capita climate local report feb 14

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-emissions-estimates>

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ACHIEVED: 100%

2. We will encourage renewable energy installations and want to see the District increase energy from renewable sources by 10% by 2020.

In 2012/13 and 2013/14, there were 5 large-scale renewable, decentralised or combined heat and power schemes granted planning permission.

There were also 204 Feed-in-Tariffs (FIT) installations across the District, all of which were domestic PV solar panels.

The District Council also received 5 planning applications for renewable energy installations.³

The District Council provided 310 energy packs and these include a wide-range of information on renewable, decentralised, and combined heat and power measures.

100% of new-build affordable homes were secured and/or built to Sustainable Code Level 3 or above, which includes renewable energy technologies.⁴

In 2014, we introduced a bespoke District Council energy switching scheme to allow residents and businesses to switch tariffs fully online or through a dedicated telephone contact centre. A number of the site's suppliers offer energy through renewable sources, thereby contributing to this objective.

ACHIEVED: 100%

3. We will work towards retrofitting of homes across the District, beginning with 67 households in 2013 through the work of the Kent and Medway Green Deal Partnership.

Due to changes at national level, all of which were out of the District Council's control, the Green Deal (GD) programme has been delayed. We did not therefore set such a challenging target for 2013/14, there being little scope to deliver retrofit measures with no available funding.

In 2012/13 and 2013/14, the District Council enabled 71 retrofit cases through various other initiatives.

The District Council secured an external DECC grant of £4.2-million in partnership with Dartford Borough Council to undertake a low-carbon retrofit programme on domestic and commercial properties in the District and this will help to support low delivery numbers through the main GD programme.⁵

Note: Installations are expected to increase significantly through 2015/16 as a result of the above project and this will help to balance out numbers going forward.

The District Council continued to promote the benefits and availability of low-carbon retrofit

³ SDC Annual Monitoring Reports (2012/13 and 2013/14)

⁴ Affordable housing development programme

⁵ Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC): Green Deal Communities Scheme: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/20m-to-help-local-communities-benefit-from-green-deal>

technologies (and limited schemes) in a wide-range of ways, including energy packs, leaflets and other promotional materials, meetings and forums, energy and switching surgeries, website and social media, and face-to-face interactions with people across the District.

ACHIEVED: 75% (via other initiatives/programmes)

4. We will work with at least 42 local companies by 2015 to help them cut their energy, waste and water bills.

The District Council has produced a bespoke energy advice pack, specifically for businesses.

A thermal-imaging camera is now available for businesses to identify energy loss in their premises. This device has been advertised and promoted with various business groups and organisations to raise awareness.

In 2014, a bespoke District Council energy switching scheme was introduced. This includes a specific commercial portal to allow businesses to check and switch tariffs fully online or through a dedicated telephone contact centre.⁶

The District Council was also successful in receiving £4.2-million from Government's Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) as part of a consortium, which includes Kent County Council and Dartford Borough Council. This is being worked-up through the locally-branded 'Warmer Streets' project and commercial installations are expected to commence in Spring 2015.⁷

100 local businesses have signed up to the Trade & Papers Recycling Service, which is offered to businesses to help reduce general rubbish collection and save money.

Recycling has been actively promoted to SMEs throughout the District in a wide-range of ways.

In 2012/2013, the District Council provided commercial waste recycling services to 85 of its customers. As a result, it recovered 61.36 tonnes of commercial paper and cardboard for recycling. On average, customers saved 30% to 40% on their waste collection bills.

In 2013/2014, the District Council provided commercial waste recycling services to 111 of its customers. As a result, it recovered 84.16 tonnes of commercial paper and cardboard for recycling. On average, customers saved 30% to 40% on their waste collection bills.

There were 3 commercial and 1 community FIT installations recorded in the District.

Two STEM workshops were delivered in partnership with Kent County Council's Low Carbon team. A total of 40 businesses were in attendance.⁸

Energy efficiency schemes, initiatives and advice have been promoted to businesses through the District Council's social media Twitter account, Facebook, and its Real Business newsletters.

Further information on energy efficiency and related schemes has been made available on the District Council's website, with links through to various supporting organisations.⁹

⁶ <http://www.sevenoaksswitchandsave.co.uk/>

⁷ DECC: Green Deal Communities Scheme: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/green-deal-communities>

⁸ Steps to Environmental Management Scheme (STEM): <http://www.kent.gov.uk/business/Business-and-the-environment/steps-to-environmental-management-scheme-stem>

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Renewable energy grants were also provided to 5 rural businesses through the West Kent Leader Programme in 2012/13.¹⁰

As a major employer, the District Council has also undertaken various measures to reduce its energy, waste and water bills, including: the commencement of LED retrofit lighting throughout its main offices and Dunbrik Depot; further LEDs installed at its bus station; a rolling vehicle replacement programme to introduce cleaner more efficient vehicles helping to reduce emissions and fuel consumption; committed actions to move all offices to a paperless environment; replacement of a wide-range of machinery for low-carbon/fuel alternatives; financial and operational commitment to refurbish the Council's Dunbrik Depot vehicle workshop to include efficient vehicle testing and fleet repair facilities with modern lighting, exhaust extraction and space heating systems; and the introduction and expansion of a chargeable business paper and card recycling collection service to divert waste from landfill/incineration and assist business customers to meet their obligation to separate recyclable waste streams.

ACHIEVED: 100%

5. We will give them guidance on how climate change could affect their company and they can plan for it

As above.

ACHIEVED: 100%

6. We will support activity to reduce water consumption in the District from 160 litres to 140 litres per person per day by 2016.

The District Council provided 310 energy packs and these included a variety of water-saving devices, advice and assistance.

100% of affordable homes have been secured and/or built to Sustainable Code Level 3 or above, which will include measures to reduce water consumption.

ACHIEVED: 100%

7. We will ensure that 60% of the District's wildlife sites are being positively managed.

Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve habitat improvement project, access and biodiversity improvement e.g. re-introduction of water voles; island creation; habitat improvement; sand martin nesting site creation; access improvements; a new bird watching hide; riparian management; and reed bed management.

Bough Beech Reservoir and visitors centre - new hide and visitor access improvements; habitat improvements; creation of several ponds and scrapes and interpretation improvements.

⁹ <http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/services/housing/energy-efficiency-and-conservation>

¹⁰ West Kent Leader Programme: <http://www.westkentleader.org.uk/>

Countryside surrounding the River Eden - addressed diffuse water pollution issues in the Eden through implementation of habitat improvement.

ACHIEVED: 100%

8. We will work to ensure that 95% of the District's Sites on Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are in 'favourable' state or 'recovering'.

Adopted Planning Policy (SP11) protects sites designated for biodiversity value includes Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites and ensures they are appropriately and positively managed.

ACHIEVED: 100%

9. We will encourage an increase in volunteering with a target of a 20% increase in hours spent and a 20% increase in Sevenoaks' residents taking part in organised outdoor activities.

The District Council, West-Kent Extra, Stag Community Arts Centre, and Sevenoaks Library created over 8,000 hours of volunteering opportunities. Voluntary Action within Kent (VAWK) created 834 volunteering opportunities (this figure was inflated due to the Olympics 2012 Torch Relay and outdoor steward positions for the Paralympics at Brands Hatch).

ACHIEVED: 100%

OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT: 97%

Note:

With many of the above objectives being difficult to measure, and they each including numerous wide-ranging and often changing/developing sub-actions which are, in turn, difficult themselves to measure, it is impossible to provide exact progress in terms of measurable outcomes. Where this is the case, we have based overall progress on informed assumptions by percentage (as per the overarching 75% target).

Item 1 only includes data up to 2012 (calendar year) at present as post-2012 data is not yet available from DECC. We have therefore retrospectively applied the annual reduction target of 2.6% and still provided progress over a 2-year period, as per other objectives, though the reporting timescales are different in this particular case. Other data contained in the report covers the financial years of 2012/13 and 2013/14. Reporting cannot therefore be contained to complete and specific years, as would normally be the case with a progress report. It does, however, still provide an indication as to general progress in climate change strategy over a 2-year period.

Gavin Missons, Housing Policy

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RECENT GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS ON PLANNING ISSUES

Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee – 24 March 2015

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status: For information

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Robert Piper

Contact Officer Richard Morris Ext. 7430

Recommendation to Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee: That the Committee notes the recent government consultations on Planning issues and the Council's responses.

Reason for recommendation: To advise the Committee of the recent government consultations on Planning issues responded to by the Council.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Councillor Piper has requested that recent consultation responses on Planning issues be reported to the Committee for their information.
- 2 Since November 2014 the Council has responded to 8 government consultations on Planning related issues:
 - Housing standards review technical consultation (November 2014)
 - Planning and travellers consultation (November 2014)
 - Transport for London Bakerloo Line extension consultation (December 2014)
 - Airports Commission preferred options consultation (January 2015)
 - Starter homes for first time buyers consultation (February 2015)
 - London Borough Bromley consultation on Biggin Hill change in operational hours (March 2015)
 - Building more homes on brownfield land consultation (March 2015)
 - Speeding up negotiations on Section 106 planning obligations (March 2015)

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- 3 The full responses are available to view on the Portfolio Holder Decisions library page of the Council's website:
<http://cde.sevenoaks.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?bcr=1&sch=doc>.

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

It is not essential that the recent consultation responses are reported to the Committee, as they are available online, however the responses may be of interest to Committee members.

Key Implications

Financial

None.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

None.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Richard Morris
Chief Planning Officer

Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee Work Plan 2014/15

24 March 2015	Summer 2015	Autumn 2015	Winter 2016
<p>Council's Affordable Housing Policy including its successes and problems and viability arguments with an Authority Monitoring Report to contribute to that item</p> <p>Service Performance</p> <p>Fly tipping</p> <p>Local listing of buildings of historic interest</p> <p>Update on climate change matters</p> <p>s.215 notices</p>	<p>Pest Control Service</p>	<p>Budget: Service Reviews and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAS)</p>	

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