

Agenda Item No: **Report No:**

Report Title **Towards a more sustainable planning policy for Lewes District – statement following Cabinet consideration of the SE Plan, 6 June 2006**

Report To: **Planning Applications Committee** **Date:** **19 July 2006**

Lead Councillor: **Cllr Commin**

Ward(s) Affected: **All**

Report By: **Director of Planning and Environmental Services**

Contact Officer(s): **Lindsay Frost, Director of Planning & Environmental Services**

Purpose of Report:

To advise the Committee of the policy statement agreed by Cabinet on June 6 and its role in development control.

Officers Recommendation:

1 To note the report.

1 Information

- 1.1 At its meeting on 6 June 2006, Cabinet considered the District Council's formal response to the draft South East Plan, as approved by the Regional Assembly and recently the subject of consultation by the Minister.
- 1.2 Cabinet agreed a range of formal comments on the draft Plan, which were submitted to Government Office for the South East by the June 23 deadline. (Minute 26, 6 June 2006 refers).
- 1.3 The draft South East Plan sets the context for the preparation of the Lewes District Development Framework (LDF) and its emerging planning policies are of great importance to our planning work. We will need to review and update our planning policies in line with those in the SE Plan, and apply them to Lewes District.
- 1.4 Therefore, Cabinet decided to approve and release a policy statement called "Towards more sustainable planning policies in Lewes District", setting the direction we will need to go as we progress the LDF. A copy of the policy statement is attached as Appendix A.
- 1.5 The following actions were agreed by the Cabinet:

- Instruct our officers to embody these policy requirements in the emerging Local Development Framework.
- Ask the Planning Applications Committee to take account of the emerging policy requirements when they deal with planning applications, as the LDF progresses.
- Encourage developers to include these policy requirements into their proposals right away.

- 1.6 All major developers active in the District have been provided with a copy of the policy statement.
- 1.7 The policy statement carries little weight in planning decisions at this stage, as it is simply a Cabinet resolution, separate from the LDF process and all the associated public consultation and statutory testing of “soundness” that goes with it. It does, however, reflect the emerging SE Plan and indicates the direction in which the District Council would like to take its planning policies in the future.
- 1.8 The County Structure Plan and Lewes District Local Plan will remain the statutory development plan documents for the time being. However, as the SE Plan and the LDF progress towards statutory adoption, the new planning policy direction in the statement will become formally embedded in new policies and gain increasing weight in day to day development control decisions. Officers reports will advise on the weight to be attached in individual cases which come before the Committee.

2 Financial Appraisal

There are no direct financial implications.

3 Environmental Implications

I have completed the Environmental Implications Questionnaire and there are significant positive environmental effects arising from the more sustainable planning policies advocated in the statement.

4 Risk Assessment

- 4.1 I have completed a Risk Management Questionnaire and the major risk arising is that developers will fail to respond to, or directly challenge, the policy direction set out by the Cabinet during the LDF process.

5 Background Papers

Report 117/06 SE Plan, Cabinet, 6 June 2006

Lindsay Frost
Director of Planning & Environmental Services

06/07/06