

**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 20  
JANUARY 2009 AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 27  
JANUARY 2009.**

**SUBJECT: CONSULTATIVE DRAFT REVISED SUPPLEMENTARY  
PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND DIRECTOR OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES.**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks permission to consult on draft revised Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committees in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to Planning and Housing.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that both Committees:-**

- (i) approve the draft guidance for consultation; and
- (ii) agree that a further report is presented in May 2009 following the consultation.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Moray Council approved Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing in February 2004. This guidance sets out the Council's approach to provide for affordable housing through the planning process and the mechanisms for securing such housing. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a key priority of the Council and its Community Planning partners.
- 3.2 In 2005 the Scottish Government introduced Planning Advice Note 74 (PAN 74) on affordable housing. Pan 74 states that the benchmark for affordable housing should be 25% of new housing developments. The Moray Housing Needs Study 2007 evidenced that the need for affordable housing in Moray was increasing. As a result of both of these developments, in June 2007 the Policy Committee agreed that Officers progress the recommendations of the Housing Needs Study which included reviewing the existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (paragraph 29 of the minute refers). The aim of the

Guidance is to support the implementation of Local Plan Policy H9 “Affordable and Special Needs Housing.

#### **4. REVISED DRAFT GUIDANCE**

- 4.1 The existing Supplementary Planning Guidance set out a sliding scale, which indicates that in developments of 10 to 19 houses, 10% should be affordable, and for developments of 20 or more, 20% of houses should be affordable. The lower percentage for smaller developments works against rural areas where large housing developments are scarce. It also creates difficulties in both urban and rural areas where the provision of one affordable house may not be value for money.
- 4.2 As a result of the affordable housing shortage in Moray and Scottish Government Guidance, the revised Consultative Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (**APPENDIX I**) suggests that 25% of all sites of more than 10 houses should be affordable. The Housing Needs Study clearly indicates that the need for affordable housing in Moray is acute. Recent work by Officers has indicated that need has increased since the study. There are no significant landbanks held by the Council or Housing Associations and the primary method of securing land for affordable housing has been through the Planning System.
- 4.3 It is proposed to have a consultation period of 8 weeks. The Draft Guidance will be sent to all key stakeholders. It is also proposed to issue a press release, to post the consultation on the Council’s website and to have copies available at Access Points and libraries. A summary of the comments and proposed Council response will be submitted to a future meeting of both committees, proposing changes as appropriate and seeking approval of the finalised Guidance. If there are unresolved objections of significance then a hearing may be held. Once approved, the Guidance will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

#### **5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

The provision of affordable housing is a key priority within the Council’s Single Outcome Agreement, the Moray Community Plan and the Local Housing Strategy.

##### **(b) Policy and Legal**

The policy implications are set out in the report.

##### **(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

The cost of consultation on the revised draft is minimal and can be borne within the Housing Revenue Account.

**(d) Consultations**

Consultation on the preparation of this report has taken place with the Directors of Community Service and Environmental Services, the Chief Housing Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Development Control Manager, Principal Planning Officers Mark Cross and Gary Templeton and the Housing Strategy and Policy Manager.

**6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 Revised Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing has been drafted. The main change is the proposed increase in the threshold for affordable housing in new housing developments to the 25% suggested by Scottish Government Guidance. A process of consultation on this proposal is required.**

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Background Papers: with author  
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