

RECORD OF OFFICER EXECUTIVE DECISION

Subject: Analysis of need and impact of starter homes in Mid Sussex

Officer: Claire Tester

(1) Record of decision taken: - Analysis of the potential demand and need for starter homes is required to support the District Plan costing £8,000 (ex. VAT).

(2) Date of decision:- 8th January 2016

(3) Statement of reasons for making the decision

Legal Basis for Decision - Contracts up to £20,000

- (a) *Where the estimated value or amount of a proposed contract does not exceed £20,000 and provision has been made in the Council's annual budget for such expenditure, the Head of Service concerned shall have the authority to enter into any such contract provided the Head of Service is satisfied that the Council is receiving value for money. In the event of a Head of Service exercising their right to enter into a contract under this Rule 5 the Head of Service or other officer appointed to do so on their behalf shall prepare and retain a report detailing the reasons for the appointment of the relevant contractor having regard to the experience, competency, workmanship and the financial status of the contractor.*
- (b) *A Head of Service may at his/her discretion invite quotations in accordance with Rule 6 where the estimated value or amount of a proposed contract is £20,000 or less.*

Due to the timing of their preparation, work undertaken on previous evidence studies have not examined the potential levels of demand and need for Starter Homes or the extent to which those unable to afford to buy at full market value might be able to access a Starter Homes. Work is required to assess this.

Consultants Chilmark have a proven track record with Mid Sussex District Council in delivering evidence on the issue of housing market areas and affordable housing and defending their studies at Examination. Chilmark can meet the requirements of the brief and have the capacity to produce a report to the deadlines set.

The fee will be financed from the District Plan Examination Reserve.

(4) Alternative options considered and rejected

Appointing an alternative consultant.

Chilmark have provided a number of evidence studies to Mid Sussex on time and to a high standard. This includes work on the issue of housing market areas and affordable housing. Appointing an alternative consultant is not considered practical and is unlikely to represent best value for money as they would not be able to build upon previous studies and would not be as familiar with Mid Sussex or the District

Plan, with the potential to introduce further pressure on the tight time constraints to produce the work to the highest possible standard.

Proceeding to Examination with existing evidence studies

The issue of starter homes is likely to be matter raised by the Inspector at District Plan Examination. The evidence will provide the basis for reasonable assumptions and allow the District Council to present a robust case to the Inspector. Undertaking the work prior to the Examination will facilitate quick changes to be made if directed by Regulations or Guidance; or by the Inspector at Examination.

(5) Name of Cabinet Member with whom decision discussed

Councillor Andrew MacNaughton

(6) Any Code of Conduct Interests of the Cabinet Members

None

(7) Any relevant Code of Conduct dispensations

N/A



Signed:

Officer – Claire Tester, Head of Economic Promotion & Planning