

WDLP 31
FOR DECISION
WARD(S): ALL

WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

8 October 2003

CABINET

15 October 2003

DEVELOPERS' CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS EDUCATION FACILITIES

Contact Officer: Steve Opacic (01962 848101)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This Report addresses the 'Developers' Contribution towards Education Facilities' document, which has been produced and endorsed by Hampshire County Council (attached at Appendix 1) and proposes that the City Council agrees, in principle, to seek a contribution towards education provision for developments of 10 dwellings or more. However, there are concerns about the detailed implementation of such a scheme, in particular the effect on targets for determining planning applications quickly, and authority is therefore sought for this to be tackled at officer level.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the principle of seeking contributions in accordance with the method outlined in 'Developers' Contributions towards Education Facilities' be agreed, subject to an appropriate protocol for implementing such a scheme being agreed between officers of Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council.

WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

30 September 2003

REPORT ON THE DEVELOPERS CONTRIBUTION TOWARD EDUCATION FACILITIES

Report of the Director of Development Services

DETAIL:

- 1.0 The Strategic Planning Unit of the County Education Department has prepared a guidance note entitled 'Developers' Contributions toward Education Facilities' which sets out how contributions would be calculated in accordance with the advice in DETR Circular 1/97 on planning obligations. Circular 1/97 indicates that it is reasonable for contributions to be requested, at an appropriate level, where it can be shown that there is a need for additional educational facilities as a direct consequence of development.
- 1.1 The guidance note proposes that any development of 10 dwellings or more will be the subject of consultation with the local education authority on the requirement for an education contribution. An assessment of each school in the District has been undertaken to establish how much surplus capacity each school has. The school's 'suitability' for additional students has also been assessed, as the capacity assessment does not take full account of the need for schools to have dedicated space for specialist facilities, such as Information and Communications Technology.
- 1.2 These assessments would then be used indicate the extent to which additional capacity will be required, if any additional capacity is needed at all, to meet the expected demand. In situations where the availability of places in schools or the suitability criteria justify it, each additional dwelling will be required to make a contribution.
- 1.3 Those developments that would be excluded from this guidance note include housing for the elderly and one-bedroom units. All new dwellings plus alterations and conversions of existing dwellings which would result in the development of 10 or more dwellings, would be subject to the requirement and therefore be assessed by the Education Department.
- 1.4 In terms of functionality, the Revised Local Plan contains a Proposal (Proposal DP.12) which requires developers to make reasonable and equitable financial contributions when it is seen that the social and physical infrastructure required to meet the additional demand is not suitable. Similar provisions to Proposal DP.12 are contained in Proposal FS.3 in the adopted Local Plan. Thus no additional work would be required on the Revised Local Plan to implement this guidance note, as existing Proposals already provide for its implementation. However, a protocol would need to be agreed between the City Council and the County Education Department, outlining how the system would be operated in detail when dealing with Planning Applications.
- 1.5 In particular, there is concern amongst officers about the effect of such a scheme on the Council's ability to determine applications quickly (as required by Government targets). It is therefore recommended that the system be endorsed in principle, but

that officers be authorised to negotiate the detail of how it could be operated in a way which would not unduly delay planning decisions.

- 1.6 It is recommended that this guidance note is supported and is implemented once an appropriate implementation protocol is established between the officers of Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

2.0 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

Looking after the natural and built environment

3.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Within existing staff resources. Some additional time may be necessary to implement the procedures but this would need to be taken into account in working up implementation details. It may be possible to recoup additional costs through an administrative charge, either to the applicant or the County Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

APPENDICES:

Hampshire County Council, *Developers' Contribution toward Education Facilities*, March 2003. (unavailable electronically)