



**REPORT TO PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
5TH DECEMBER 2008**

NEW FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY

1. As Members will know, the District Council has prepared its Core Strategy document following two major public consultations :-
 - "Future Matters, Issues and Options" consultation (Dec 2006 - Jan 2007)
 - "Preferred Options" consultation (Oct-Dec 2007)
2. The Core Strategy has now been published and it is that document which the District Council intends to submit for public examination to the Secretary of State after the closing date for representations on 19th December 2008. It should be noted that this document is not another consultation document. It has been published to allow formal submissions to be made to the District Council. Any representations received as a result of publication of the Core Strategy will be considered at the public examination of the document held by an independent Planning Inspector.
3. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, this is no longer a consultation document. At the Examination, the Inspector will be checking that the Core Strategy complies with legislation and whether or not the plan is 'sound'. To be 'sound', the Core Strategy has to be 'justified', 'effective' and 'consistent' with 'national policy'. Representations have to relate to the 'soundness' of the plan. This is very different from the old system where an Inquiry was held into objections to the Local Plan.
4. It appears to your Officers that it would be difficult to identify areas where the District Council has stepped outside National Policy in the preparation of the Core Strategy and notwithstanding the fact that the Core Strategy does not address the failure to provide new homes or employment opportunities for the people in the town, it cannot be said that the Core Strategy does not comply with National Policy. It is not possible to argue with National Policy on housing and employment issues through representations on this document.
5. In all the circumstances, it is suggested that the Town Council should now simply note publication of the Core Strategy and perhaps express its disappointment that because of the new legislative arrangements, the Core Strategy is unable to deal with the urgent issues relating to housing and employment matters within the town.

For further information, please contact:

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