

APPENDIX M

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 JUNE 2008

EXECUTIVE - 8 JULY 2008

Title:

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL HOUSING STRATEGY 2005-2010

[Portfolio Holder for Housing: Cllr R J Gates]

[Wards Affected: All]

Summary and purpose:

This report recommends that the Executive approves the update to the Waverley Borough Council Housing Strategy. As this is a lengthy document copies have been placed in the Members' Room and a copy is on the Council's Website. A hard copy is available on request to Alice Baxter 01483 523096 alice.baxter@waverley.gov.uk.

Environmental implications:

There are none arising from the recommendations in this report

Social/ community implications:

The highest priority of this strategy is to facilitate the provision of affordable housing as a result of the significant need for affordable housing across the borough.

The second priority is to meet the decent homes target, due to the positive impact good quality housing has upon peoples health, educational and social well being.

E-Government implications:

It is anticipated this revised version of the housing strategy will be available through the Council website in order to:

- Increase the availability of the document.
- Allow a further update for April 2009.
- Progress reports to be made and work in a more cost effective way.

Resource and legal implications:

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

The action plan sets out a work plan, which includes an indication of resource implications.

Introduction

1. A copy of the draft Housing Strategy is available as a separate document in the Members' Room and on the Website. It should be noted that this is still in draft form and some final revisions/ amendments are yet to be made.

2. The strategy runs from 2005-10 and has been assessed as achieving 'Fit for Purpose' status by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE). Fit for Purpose status has been developed by the Department of Communities and Local Government.
3. The strategy has been informed by a wide range of studies and sources including
 - A West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment
 - The Council's Housing Needs Register, lettings and vacancy information
 - Information collected from local housing associations holding stock in the borough
 - Data from across Waverley Borough Council services, departments, plans and strategies
 - A Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment

Overview of Waverley Borough Council Housing Strategy

4. As Waverley is an area of high house prices with first time buyer accommodation and affordable housing in short supply, facilitating the provision of affordable housing is the strategy's number one priority. Waverley is also committed to ensuring all residents have a good quality home to live in, through working to meet the Government's Decent Homes targets, as well as improving energy efficiency.
5. The aims of the Strategy are wider reaching than simply bricks and mortar, with commitments to enhance the local environment, improve community safety and protect the disadvantaged and vulnerable through better use of housing. The action plan encompasses the work of officers in Housing, Planning, Finance and Environment and Leisure.
6. The Strategy sets out a plan for action for the duration of the strategy, which shows how each action will contribute towards corporate, housing and service priorities. Each item demonstrates resource implications, how progress against the action will be monitored, shows progress made, nominates a lead officer and designates a timescale. The action plan feeds directly into individual service plans and the Corporate Plan.
7. The document has been created on the Council's 'Limehouse' publishing system and includes contributions from across Council services, including officers in Housing, Finance, Planning and Environmental Services.

April 2008 Update

8. Carrying out an update has a number of advantages:
 - End of year information can be provided about performance across housing services.
 - The action plan can be updated with progress reports and achievements
 - Information about new initiatives, strategies and policies can be considered to given an up to date context for the strategy.

- The update can take account of changes including a new administration, a new Chief Executive and new staffing structures
 - The exercise will assist with preparations for an inspection to the Housing Service (October 2008)
 - This exercise is in line with good practice
9. The 2008 update also includes information about the 66 newly built affordable homes which completed 2007-8:
- 3 x homes for rent at Grove Road (Hindhead) in partnership with A2 Housing
 - 9 x New Build Homebuy houses at Sherrydon (Cranleigh) in partnership with Pavilion Housing Group
 - 14 x houses for rent and 6 x New Build Home Buy flats for local people at Dorlcote (Witley) in partnership with TVHA
 - 12x New Build Homebuy Flats and 8 x houses for rent at Admiral Way (Godalming) in partnership with Mount Green Housing Association
 - 14 x houses for rent on the Midhurst Road (Haslemere) in partnership with Peerless Housing Group
10. 22 new affordable homes have been created within existing stock in the borough:
- Pavilion Housing Association completed the purchase and repair of 5 x 3 bed houses in the Sandy Hill area of Farnham
 - Ability Housing Association completed the purchase and repair of 4 existing street properties in Farnham, as move on accommodation for people with a learning difficulty leaving supported housing
 - 13 x households were assisted to buy a home in Waverley using Open Market Homebuy, with Thames Valley Housing Association.

Conclusion

11. Members are asked to approve the proposed updates to the Housing Strategy, as outlined above. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported this report at its meeting on 16 June 2008 but had no particular observations to make to the Executive.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive approves the update to the Housing Strategy 2005-2010.

Background Papers (SD(CS))

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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