

REVIEW OF HOUSING TASK GROUP

Targets on which real progress can be made over the next 12 – 18 months:

- The task group will be concentrating on the following housing targets
 - Examine how provision might be made for homeless people who are not entitled to assistance from the Council – **Lead organisations** RBC and Runnymede Rentstart. The Runnymede and Spelthorne Homelessness Forum to also be involved
 - Examine the prospect of a new Supported Housing Project – **Lead organisations** RBC and a Registered Social Landlord (to be identified). Input will also be required from the Surrey Supporting People Team in relation to revenue funding.
 - Look at housing issues within the wards that have a high score within the deprivation indices – **Lead organisation** RBC officers.

Ongoing Targets:

- Increase housing provision through the planning system: The group will be kept up to date with the development of the Local Development Framework and in particular the housing issues within this.
- Empty Homes: The group will monitor progress to ensure a gradual decline in empty homes.
- Key Worker Housing: The group will oversee provision for key workers . Where possible provision will be made to a wider group of key workers than currently fall within the Government definition. Schemes that provide for the Government definition of key workers are already underway with Thames Valley Housing Association i.e. the Key Worker Living Programme 2004-06 and at Barsbrook Farm and Fox Lane. However it should be noted that not all of the units within these schemes are for key workers.
- Housing needs study: The group will be kept informed of the progress on the assessment of housing need. The Housing Need Survey is now taking place and a outline report should be available by late spring/early summer. The Task Group will be given feedback once the outcomes of the survey are known.

It was agreed at the last meeting that when taking forward targets use should be made of other existing groups where possible e.g. the Homelessness Forum and the Special Needs Housing Strategy Group.

Progress on targets:

Considerable progress has been made on the formulation of the Local Development Framework. A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been compiled and an event for Stakeholders was recently held on 28th April '05 at the Hythe Centre, Egham, to explore the issues and potential constraints which may affect the future development of the Borough. This was very successful and the results of this will feed into the overall process of compiling the Local Development Framework. Consultation on Core Strategy options for housing will take place in September/October and these options have been shared with the Task Group. Two further development plan documents (DPD) are in preparation, the Development Control Policies DPD, and the Housing DPD, which will include policies in relation to affordable housing. These will be presented to Planning Committee in July '05, and will join the Core Strategy in the consultation exercise in September/October '05, together with the SCI.

Further progress has been made against the affordable housing target. As at 1st May 2005 499 units had been provided against the 750 target. 91 units are in development. These are located at Fox Lane, Pooley Green Road, Vicarage Road, Barsbrook Farm and Bridge Wharfe. Other potential schemes are being explored including a supported housing scheme at Blays Lane Egham. Other schemes such as Do It Yourself Shared Ownership and the Key Worker Living Programme are also continuing to provide additional units towards the 750 total.

The group have received information about the work of the Homelessness Forum and will be considering how to link this work to that of the Task Group.

A Housing Needs Survey has been commissioned by the Council and Task Group members where involved in the formulation of the specification. The Chairman of the group was also one of the stakeholder consultees for the Survey. The results of the survey will be considered by the Group who will then contribute towards the creation of a revised Housing Strategy. It is proposed to hold a Housing Forum as part of the preparation of the Strategy.

An audit of the issues in each of the areas of deprivation has been undertaken by a separate Senior Managers Group and this has covered an assessment of housing issues.

Frequency of meetings:

It was agreed that the Housing Task Group should meet before each LSP meeting on a quarterly cycle.

Membership:

It was agreed that the membership of the group should be extended to include representatives from Registered Social Landlords who are involved with new development schemes, faith groups or charities that have a housing interest, and private house builders representatives. It was also agreed that guest speakers might be invited to meetings on specific issues e.g. someone from the Supporting People Team should be invited to talk about the financing of supported housing schemes.

The Development Manager from Thames Valley Housing Association is now attending the Task Group.

Overlap:

It was agreed that the issues of community transport needed to be considered alongside general transport plans.

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