

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW 2009/10: DRAFT FINAL REPORT

LINK TO WORK PROGRAMME: POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW

Report of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP1: Prosperous City; P5: Attractive and Inclusive City

CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services, CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver 'One City'.

1. Why has this report come to committee?

- 1.1 The report provides Members of the committee with the final draft report from the evidence gathered in relation to this year's policy review on access to social housing.
- 1.2 The review report presents in detail the evidence, research and conclusions drawn throughout the review process and recommendations arising from this evidence gathering. Members are asked to give consideration to the final report and the recommendations of the policy review.
- 1.3 The review into access to housing has clear links to all the Councils Strategic Priorities in particular 'Prosperous City' and 'Attractive and Inclusive City'. The review also has links to Corporate Priorities on delivering customer focused services and improving partnership working.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 15th June, 2009 following discussions regarding the work programme the Committee consider the possibility of a study into the issue of access to social housing in Sunderland.
- 2.2 The review came at an important time in light of the work being undertaken at both regional and national levels. The Committee used its skills and expertise to develop themes presented during their evidence gathering procedures. Housing features heavily in the Sunderland Strategy with an aim that 'increasing the amount of affordable housing to meet the decent homes standards, whilst making the best use of available resources across the council and city'.

3. The Draft Final Report

- 3.1 The draft final report on Access to Social Housing in Sunderland is attached as an appendix to this report and presents members with the facts and evidence that have been gathered throughout the review process. As part of the review process evidence was obtained from a variety of national, regional and local key witnesses and stakeholders.

3.2 The report is divided into a number of sections which provide the background information to the review, how the review was carried out and the findings and conclusions from the review process. The findings from the review reflect the main themes raised during the Committee's investigations and evidence gathering as follow:

- Social Housing – The National and Local Picture
- Social Housing Providers
- Private Landlords
- Tenants and Applicants
- Choice Based Lettings.

3.3 Members are asked to read the report and comment on the content with particular reference to the recommendations arising from the evidence gathered and presented in the report. Members may wish to amend the report for purposes of accuracy, clarity or relevance to ensure the report is a true reflection of the work undertaken.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee is presented with a final draft copy of the policy review document for comment and amendment with the aim of producing a final report for presentation and approval by Cabinet.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee provides comments on the final draft report and that any agreed amendments are made.

5.2 That consideration is given to the recommendations contained in the final draft report.

5.3 That the agreed final report is presented to the Cabinet for approval at its June 2010 meeting.

Contact Officer: Nigel Cummings (0191 561 1006)
nigel.cummings@sunderland.gov.uk