

THAMES GATEWAY SOUTH ESSEX (TGSE) HOUSING STRATEGY

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the draft TGSE housing strategy and to make comments if considered appropriate.
- 1.2 **A full copy of the draft strategy has been sent under separate cover, which Members are requested to bring to this meeting.**

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The development of housing strategy is now a two-way process, with local strategies at District/Borough level, strategies covering wider housing market areas or sub-regions and regional strategies. Each informs the level above and, conversely, is guided by higher level objectives, including from national level.
- 2.2 Rochford is within the TGSE housing sub-region. Over the last few months work has been undertaken by the TGSE Housing Group of officers on two major pieces of work.
- The commissioning of a joint housing market and needs assessment.
 - The drafting, with assistance from consultants Housing Quality Network Services, of a TGSE Sub-Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2008.
- 2.3 The draft sub-regional housing strategy has sought to identify the principal issues that face the local housing authorities and their partners. Common themes have been identified, but the extent to which those are reflected in local housing strategies and in Community Plans will vary between authorities.

3 SUB-REGIONAL STRATEGY DETAIL

- 3.1 The draft strategy contains a profile of the TGSE sub-region and information on the strategic context, including the Sustainable Communities Plan/Sustainable Communities in the East of England, the regional housing and economic strategies and planning guidance.
- 3.2 It identifies four priorities:-
- Providing new homes.
 - Supporting vulnerable people.
 - Improving our homes.
 - Building sustainable and inclusive communities.

Each of these is considered in detail and action points developed which are brought together in an action plan, together with the proposed allocation of resources against funding categories that are being developed through the Regional Housing Board. These may need some further consideration once the results of the sub-regional housing market and needs assessment becomes available in December 2004.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Comments have now been invited on the draft strategy from a wide group of interested organisations, and there will be a conference in early January 2005 with the intention that the sub-regional housing strategy will be finalised shortly thereafter.

5 OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 The development of this Council's replacement housing strategy which is close to achieving 'fit for purpose' status has been carried out in tandem with the work on the sub-regional housing strategy. There is good correlation between the strategies and the strategic housing priorities identified in both are similar.
- 5.2 Some additional entries are required in Appendix 3 of the draft strategy, which lists future and potential affordable housing sites, to include, for example, the former Hardwick House and Tylney Avenue sites, which have been omitted. A suggested list for inclusion is appended. With this proviso, and subject to any further comments from Members, it is recommended that the draft sub-regional strategy be endorsed.

6 RISK IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Risk/Resource Risk/Reputation Risk

- 6.1 It is important that there is synergy between the District housing strategy and the sub-regional and regional housing strategies otherwise the Council will not be considered a full partner in the TGSE, funding will be allocated elsewhere and local housing needs will not be addressed.

Regulatory Risk

- 6.2 Housing strategy is one of the core parts of the strategic framework for the Council and is assessed as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The priorities identified in the sub-regional strategy will influence regional housing priorities, which guide the funding decisions of the Regional Housing Board.

8 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Proposed, that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That, subject to appropriate amendments to Appendix 3 as indicated in the appendix to this report, and to any comments from Members, the draft sub-regional housing strategy be endorsed.

Graham Woolhouse

Head of Housing Health and Community Care

Background Papers:-

Thames Gateway Sub-Regional Housing Strategy 2004-2008

For further information please contact Graham Woolhouse on:-

Tel:- 01702 318044

E-Mail:- graham.woolhouse@rochford.gov.uk