

## HOUSING STRATEGY

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report invites comments on the housing strategy for 2001-2004, which has been circulated to all Members under separate cover.

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The production of the Housing Strategy is part of the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) process which, this year has undergone a number of changes as a result of the introduction of the Single Capital Pot from 2002/03, and the new financial framework for housing, in particular the introduction of the Major Repairs Allowance and Housing Revenue Account Business Plans.
- 2.2 The Housing Green Paper and subsequent policy statement "The Way Forward for Housing" emphasised the increasing importance of local housing authorities' strategic housing role. Housing strategies will increasingly be required to demonstrate partnerships with other public and private sector bodies, voluntary organisations and community groups. There will be strong links with the community strategy, when developed, and with the development of local strategic partnerships as a means of rationalising and improving local service delivery.
- 2.3 The key objective of the new approach to housing is the delivery of better housing services and in assessing the Council's performance the Government will be to check whether, in consultation with all residents, it has
- Accurately assessed housing needs across all tenures
  - Established clear priorities
  - Identified effective and efficient strategies
  - Brought these together into clear action plans, the progress of which can be monitored through appropriate performance indicators and outcome measures
- 2.4 Increasingly, outcomes will become more important than processes.
- 2.5 The housing strategy and supporting documents need to be submitted to Go East by the end of July
- 2.6 Members are asked to consider the content of draft strategy and suggest any amendments they wish to see incorporated. It is intended that the final document will be published in a better format, to present a professional approach. It will also be available on the Council's website.

**3 BEST VALUE REVIEW**

- 3.1 The Council's strategic housing role is one of the major ongoing Best Value Reviews being undertaken this year, with a Member Working Group overseeing the work.
- 3.2 The outcomes so far from the review process, including the consultation with various groups has been used in drafting the housing strategy.
- 3.3 Although the strategy covers a three year period, it will need to be reviewed regularly and amended to take account of performance, new requirements, opportunities and information, and other changes in the external environment.

**4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The housing strategy sets the overall future direction for housing in Rochford. It does not spell out in detail all operational or investment proposals. Where these have financial implications, they will need to be considered as part of the Council's Revenue Budget and/or Capital Programme.

**5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are strong links between a number of initiatives and programmes contained in the draft housing strategy and the Crime and Disorder Strategy.

**6 RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To approve the housing strategy, subject to any amendments agreed by the Committee. (HHHCC)

Graham Woolhouse

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**Background Papers:**

Letter and guidance from Department of Environment, Transport and The Regions.

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