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**TEES VALEY SUB-REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2006**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Bill Dixon,  
Community and Public Protection Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. The report seeks approval for the first Tees Valley Sub-Regional Housing Strategy as attached at **Appendix 1**.

**Background**

2. The Strategy has been developed by the five Tees Valley local authorities as part of on-going close collaborative working. Both the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Regional Housing Board place increasing emphasis on working sub-regionally and we are the first sub-region in the North-East to have produced a Strategy. Increasingly Government funding is being distributed at a sub-regional level and from 2008 funding will be distributed via a commissioning rather than a bidding process. Whilst the details of these proposals are not yet available it is clear the Sub-Regional Housing Strategies are of growing importance in determining further Government funding provision.

**Strategic Priorities**

3. The strategic housing priorities identified for the sub-region are summarised below:
  - (a) Complete and undertake a detailed evaluation of the local authority Local Housing Assessments.
  - (b) Increase the balance of owner-occupied properties in line with the economic regeneration of the region.
  - (c) Improve the provision of accommodation in terms of a wider choice and a modern range of housing.
  - (d) Ensure all new housing is provided in sustainable neighbourhoods.
  - (e) Regenerate less attractive (and sustainable) housing estates by investment in social housing stock and the improvement of facilities, services and security.
  - (f) Provide an adequate supply of good quality housing to meet the needs of those people on lower incomes who cannot access housing at full market process.

- (g) Ensure a joined up approach to understanding BME and gypsy/travelling communities' housing requirements and address their housing aspirations.
- 4. The Strategy is being taken forward by the Tees Valley, Heads of Housing Group supported by the Tees Valley Strategy Officers Group. Each Head of Housing has agreed to lead on one of the key five themes and report back to the monthly meetings of the group on progress.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

- 5. The Strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with key stakeholders, individual local authorities, Registered Social Landlords, and the Joint Strategy Unit and reflects a wide range of specific research projects where further detailed consultation has taken place.

### **Financial Implications**

- 6. This Strategy will be further developed through time to include detailed action plans and costings in order to maximise funding opportunities from 2008 onwards.

### **Legal Implications**

- 7. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

### **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

- 8. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is considered that this report will have a positive effect on issues of crime and disorder as a result of improved housing conditions and overall regeneration activity.

### **Council Policy Framework**

- 9. The issues contained within this report do represent change to Council policy and as the Sub-Regional Housing Strategy is a key strategic document it will need to be included in the Council's Policy Framework and referred to Council for approval.

### **Decision Deadline**

- 10. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

### **Key Decision**

- 11. This is a key decision as it has potential implications for all of the Darlington community.

## **Recommendation**

12. It is recommended that the Tees Valley Sub-Regional Housing Strategy is endorsed and referred to Council for approval.

**Cliff Brown,  
Director of Community Services**

## **Background Papers**

There were no background papers used in the preparation of this report.

Pauline Mitchell – 2505  
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