1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide Committee with information from the Department of Communities and Local Government on Choice Based Lettings that the Council must adopt before the end of 2010.

1.2 Relevance to the Council’s ambitions and priorities

- Council Ambitions – In liaison with Ribble Valley Homes, to introduce a Choice Based Letting Scheme that offers a wider range of housing options to residents within the borough.
- Community Objectives – Housing.
- Corporate Priorities – Housing.
- Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Ribble Valley Borough Council presently falls within 3% of all local authorities that have not yet introduced a choice based letting scheme. We are presently working with Ribble Valley Homes in identifying a scheme that will best serve the housing needs of our communities.

3 ISSUES

3.1 It is the responsibility of the local authority to introduce a choice based letting scheme before the end of the year.

3.2 Discussions have taken place between the Council, Ribble Valley Homes and the Department of Communities and Local Government regarding our plans to introduce a scheme. The Department of Communities and Local Government favour a sub-regional scheme, we have made it clear to them that we feel this would not be appropriate for a small rural authority such as ourselves. In partnership with Ribble Valley Homes we are working to achieve a simple, yet fair letting system, that meets the Department of Communities and Local Government’s requirements solely for Ribble Valley.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications
• Resources – the introduction of a choice based letting scheme will have some financial implications.

• Technical, Environmental and Legal – Liaison with Ribble Valley Homes to identify an acceptable scheme that will ultimately offer a wider range of housing options.

• Political – None.

• Reputation – None.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Note the requirement of the Council to introduce a choice based letting scheme before the end of 2010.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Steven Earnshaw, extension 4567.
Ensures support is available for home seekers to participate

Publishes feedback on properties previously advertised

Allocations policy
- Ranks applications for each property according to a published
- Invites home seekers to browse & apply for available properties
- Openly advertises properties becoming available

An approach to letting social housing that:

What is CBL?
3

i.e. less than 3% Number of LAS without plans for CBL reducing

- 20 more sub-regional schemes in development

- 34 sub-regional schemes live

- 57 LA schemes in development

- 260 LAS now offer live CBL

Local Authority Progress

Communities
Better outcomes for homeless people

Better tenancy sustainment

Lower refusal rates & improves void times

Helps with hard-to-let properties

Works in rural & urban, low & high demand settings

Reduces ethnic segregation

Encourages clients to think more flexibly about solutions

Can generate financial savings that outweigh extra costs

Most comprehensive study to date identifies benefits

Research Findings
Making rules "simpler" a theme within new draft Code of Guidance

Equalities Impact Assessments locally & nationally

Good practice guide commissioned by CLG

Care Services Improvement Partnership (CISIP) guide

Better monitoring of engagement & outcomes

Better more personalised feedback & nudges

Offering a wider range of housing options

Being clear that CBL cannot create additional supply

Addressing concerns
Increasing numbers offer a range of other housing options

Many feature strong housing association involvement

Retention of paper based advertising as a safety net

Successful use of electronic channels

Opportunities for mobility

Most classify need using bands not points

Features of recently launched sub-regional services

Trends