

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 24 MARCH 2011
title: AMENDMENTS TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: RACHAEL STOTT

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider proposed changes to the Affordable Housing Memorandum of Understanding (AHMU), including a broadening of its scope to address wider needs issues.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Council Ambitions – To seek to balance the housing market by matching the supply of affordable homes with identified needs.
- Community Objectives – To meet the identified housing needs in the borough and ensure fair access to services.
- Corporate Priorities – To be a well managed council.
- Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The policy was agreed in 2009 and since that date has been used as a material planning consideration in securing affordable units on any site over the specified thresholds.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The recent social housing changes proposed as reported to Committee have significant implications on delivery, particularly tenure type for future schemes. These changes are reflected within the proposed amendments.

3.2 This document also seeks to address not only the issue of affordability in the borough but in addressing the identified housing need, the needs of the elderly also take a priority within the document.

3.3 Ribble Valley has an ageing population which is projected to increase by 49% in the next 15 years. The market has failed to meet the housing needs of this age group and therefore it is proposed that accommodation appropriate for the elderly will be secured through a policy requirement. All elderly accommodation would be secured through a Section 106 Agreement which would require units to be sold to households with a member over 60 years old and with a local connection.

- 3.4 The provision of housing for the elderly has been a priority within the Housing Strategy for many years. However, very little accommodation has been developed by the market. The proposal is to seek 15% of units on sites of over 30 units to be of a type to meet elderly requirements.
- 3.5 All sites over 30 units would have to provide 15% of the site for over 60 year olds. 50% of this is to be affordable and to be included within the 30% affordable housing offer. The remaining 50% would be at market sale or rent. For example on a site of 60 units, 30% of the site would have to be affordable and this would be equal to 18 units. Of the 18 units, 14 of those would be affordable for general need and 4 would be affordable for the elderly. In addition to this, there would be a requirement for an additional 4 units for over 60 year olds that could be sold at market value. The remaining 38 units on the site would be for market sale.
- 3.6 Members' attention is drawn to the fact that amendments proposed in the last review (Spring 2010) have not been incorporated into this revision. This is because they were originally proposed to make a stronger link between the AHMU and the policies of the North West Regional Strategy (RSS). As Members will be aware, the government has published its intention to formally abolish RSS and the relevance to the AHMU no longer warrants their inclusion in this proposed revision.
- 3.7 The proposed revised document is attached at Appendix A for reference.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications
- Resources – none.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal – elderly accommodation with a local connection would be secured through the Section 106 Agreement.
 - Political – addressing housing needs of the elderly is an agreed priority within the Housing Strategy.
 - Reputation – approval of the amendments to the housing policy would result in requesting more from developers in the borough.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Members endorse the broadening of the scope of the policy to encompass housing needs in general and agree that the proposed document be published for six weeks consultation and that the response is reported back to this Committee before adoption.
- 5.2 Refer the document to the Planning and Development Committee for comments and views as part of the consultation process and request that the intention to secure elderly provision as part of any development scheme is given consideration when determining planning applications.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Rachael Stott, extension 4567.