

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 14 JULY 2011  
title: ADDRESSING HOUSING NEEDS IN RIBBLE VALLEY – CONSULTATION  
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
principal author: RACHAEL STOTT

### 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the revised housing policy which incorporates proposed changes to the Affordable Housing Memorandum of Understanding (AHMU) and includes a broadening of the 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 Affordable Housing Memorandum of Understanding was originally 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. As a result of its use in practice, changing circumstances and a need to broaden its scope the policy has now been revised and re-titled.

### 3 ISSUES

3.1 The recent funding changes for affordable housing, mainly the shift from capital grant to revenue funding has had significant implications on delivery, particularly tenure type for future schemes. These changes are reflected within the proposed revision.

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 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 policy requirement. All elderly accommodation would remain as affordable through a Section 106 Agreement, which would also require units to be sold to households with a member over 60 years old and with a local connection.

3.4 Providing housing for the elderly has been a priority within the Housing Strategy for many years. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment also identified the need for housing for the elderly. However, very little accommodation has been developed by

the market. After consultation with the Ribble Valley Older Persons Action Group the following proposal was agreed:

“All Sites over 30 units would require 15% of the site to be 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 but would require a local connection for each unit. 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 properties for general needs and 4 would be affordable bungalows for the elderly. In addition to this, there would be a requirement or an additional 4 units for over 60 year olds that could be sold at market value to households with a local connection. The remaining 38 units on the site would be for market sale.”

- 3.5 Member’s 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.
- 3.6 Following consultation the document and all relevant comments will be considered by the Housing Committee who will, if appropriate adopt the document as a housing policy tool. The document will then be used as the basis of the Council’s requirements to inform negotiations on development sites. Planning and Development Committee would be in a position to treat the Policy as a material consideration, and the document will be used to inform the Local Development Framework and its key statements and development management policies.
- 3.7 Copies of the proposed revised document have been sent electronically to each Member of this Committee, and reference copies are also available in the Members’ Room on Level D. The document is also available via the Council’s website. Members are asked to bring a copy to the meeting.

#### 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 Endorse the broadening of the scope of the policy to encompass housing needs in general rather than just affordable housing needs.
- 5.2 Note that after the consultation period of 6 weeks all comments will be considered and reported to Health and Housing Committee and where necessary amendments made, prior to adoption of the document by the Council.

- 5.3 Acknowledge that the document will form part of the Local Framework Evidence Base, and once adopted will be treated as a material condition for the purposes of determining Planning applications.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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