



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**COUNCIL CABINET
19 DECEMBER 2006**

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood, Social
Cohesion and Housing

ITEM XX

Housing Renewal Policy

SUMMARY

- 1.1 A review of the Council's Housing Renewal Policy has been necessary to take account of shifts in national housing policy, new legislation and the development of regional housing strategies.
- 1.2 The proposed revised Housing Renewal Policy at Appendix 2 to the attached report reflects these changes and sets out the types of assistance which will be available to qualifying homeowners in the city
- 1.3 Subject to any issues raised at the meeting, I support the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That Cabinet:
 - approves and adopts the revised Housing Renewal Policy detailed in Appendix 2 to the attached report
 - authorises the Corporate Director – Resources and Housing, in consultation with the Corporate Director – Corporate and Adult Services, to make the necessary arrangements to give public notice of the adoption of the policy in accordance with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The proposed revised Housing Renewal Policy will help ensure that:
 - assistance is better targeted at those in greatest need
 - the Council can meet Government targets relating to private sector housing improvements
 - government funding for housing renewal work in the city will continue to be forthcoming.



Housing Renewal Policy

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 A review of the Council's Housing Renewal Policy, published in April 2003, has been necessary to take account of recent shifts in national housing policy, new housing legislation and the development of regional housing strategies with new associated funding regimes. These include, in particular:
- the extension of the Government's Public Service Agreement – PSA7 target, originally restricted to achieving the Decent Homes Standard in the social housing sector, to include private sector housing
 - the replacement of the former "Fit for human habitation" standard with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System under the Housing Act 2004
 - the introduction of the Single Regional Housing Pot linked to the delivery of a Regional Housing Strategy
 - government priorities to improve standards in the private rented sector and tackle empty homes.
- 1.2 The proposed revised Housing Renewal Policy attached at appendix 2 to this report reflects these changes and sets out the types of assistance which will be made available to qualifying homeowners in the city. While some remain largely unchanged from those contained in the existing policy, there are a number of new forms of assistance aimed at bringing properties up to the Decent Homes Standard and also help bring empty properties back into use.
- 1.3 For reference purposes, the table at Appendix 3 to this report sets out the main differences between the types of assistance available under the existing and proposed new policies

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. None.

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Background papers: None
List of appendices: Appendix 1 – Implications
Appendix 2 – Draft revised Housing Renewal Policy
Appendix 3 – Proposed changes to existing policy

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 With the exception of Disabled Facilities Grants, funding for the delivery of most types of assistance set out in the Housing Renewal Policy will be subject to annual competitive bidding rounds to the East Midlands Regional Housing Board. The Board's allocation to the Council for 2006/2007 for private sector housing improvements was £2.484million. A bid amounting to £3.941million under the bidding round for 2007/2008 was made on 31 October 2006.
- 1.2 A further £5.523million has been made available in respect of the housing market renewal pilot in Rosehill in this financial year, with a similar amount provisionally earmarked for 2007/2008.
- 1.3 Support for expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants will for the time being continue to be provided through an annual allocation of Specified Capital Grant – SCG – which for 2006/2007 was £539,000, supported by a further £861,000 from the Council's own resources.

Legal

- 2.1 The power to provide assistance as set out in the Housing Renewal Policy is contained within the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002.
- 2.2 Before providing such assistance local authorities are required to prepare and publish a policy setting out the nature and extent of assistance that will be available.

Personnel

3. None.

Equalities impact

4. Disabled people, minority ethnic groups, older people and low income families are disproportionately represented in terms of housing in need of improvement and repair. The implementation of the proposed Housing Renewal Policy will help redress this imbalance.

Corporate priorities

5. The proposal falls within the Council's priorities to **improve the quality of life in Derby's neighbourhoods** and to **build healthy and independent communities**.