

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

8 October 2007

Report of the Director of Health and Housing

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Summary

This report updates Members on the progress being made by the Council's Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners in providing new affordable housing in the Borough. Details of the forthcoming bid round for the National Affordable Housing Programme 2008-11 are also provided.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The effective negotiation, planning and delivery of affordable housing forms one of the key priorities of the Council's housing service. Allied to this is the need to track and monitor the progress of RSLs in delivering new schemes. Failure to secure a steady supply of new homes has a direct knock-on effect with the levels of homeless households placed in bed and breakfast. Members will be aware that the Council is under a duty not to house homeless families with children in bed and breakfast except in an emergency, and then for a period not exceeding six weeks.
- 1.1.2 While we are dependent on our partners to ensure timely delivery of new provision, the Council also has a role to play in tracking performance. This is important to ensure that any difficulties arising on new schemes are highlighted early on and corrective action taken.
- 1.1.3 Set out at **[Annex 1]** is a monitoring spreadsheet covering the Council's RSL development programme over the next two years. The table identifies:
- the scheme address;
 - RSL provider;
 - Start on Site (SoS);
 - total of number of units to be provided (rent and/or shared ownership) ;
 - detailed split of rent and shared ownership units;

- the level of grant required for each scheme;
- expected date of completion; and
- information on progress

1.1.4 Members should be aware that details on some schemes may alter where planning permission has yet to be secured. The number of units to be provided is therefore an indicative figure for strategic purposes, pending confirmation of final scheme details. As new schemes come forward these will also be added to the schedule.

1.1.5 I am pleased to advise Members that Hyde Housing Association has acquired the following 29 additional units for rent on the Frantschach development, New Hythe Lane, Larkfield:

9 x 1 bedroom apartments – ready September 2007

17 x 2 bedroom apartments – ready January 2008

3 x 3 bed houses – ready January 2008

1.1.6 Members are requested to note progress in delivery.

1.2 National Affordable Housing Programme 2008-11

1.2.1 Last month the Housing Corporation published its new 'Prospectus' and launched the bid round for the National Affordable Housing Programme 2008-11 (NAHP 2008-11).

1.2.2 The next three years will see a considerable increase in the levels of investment for affordable housing to meet the targets and numbers aspired to in the Government's housing Green Paper, "Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable". The National Affordable Housing Programme is the route by which the Housing Corporation will deliver this significantly increased supply of affordable homes, along with the necessary efficiencies in grant use. However, it also encompasses a range of important policy intentions in areas such as homelessness, supported housing, rural housing and key worker recruitment and retention to be viewed in the national, regional and local context. For example, the regional-level target is for 70 per cent of the homes produced to be for Social Rent and 30 per cent for HomeBuy. Interestingly this mirrors the tenure balance of the Council's own adopted affordable housing policy.

1.2.3 The Prospectus is designed to achieve five aims:

- explains the policy aims which underlie the Housing Corporation's assessment of bids;
- details the products against which bids are invited;

- describes the routes to access investment;
- describes the process to be used to assess bids; and
- sets out the formal structure of bidding.

1.2.4 The timetable for key stages of the NAHP 2008-11 process are as follows:

- Close of bidding – 2 November 2007
- Presentation of draft regional Programmes to Regional Assemblies/Mayor of London – January 2008
- Presentation of draft national programme to Minister for Housing and Planning – February 2008
- Announcement of Programme; commencement of signature of Programme Partner Agreements/Grant Agreements by Investment Partners – March 2008
- Commencement of the NAHP 08-11 – April 2008.

1.2.5 In conclusion, our RSL partners will now be working on their bids for submission by the deadline. Bidders are responsible for completing their submission in the prescribed form and will need to show whether bids are supported by the local authority. The Chief Housing Officer will be meeting with the Housing Corporation at the end of November 2007 to go through the bids and set out the Council's funding priorities.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 The provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing is essential to enable the Council as the strategic housing authority to fulfil its statutory housing functions.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 The National Affordable Housing Programme is the means by which public subsidy is secured for the delivery of affordable housing. The Government is seeking to achieve significant efficiency savings in the use of NAHP resources, whether in the financing of development, in land acquisition or in the supply chain.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 None.

Background papers:

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