

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

20 July 2009

Report of the Director of Health and Housing

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 HOUSING STRATEGY FOR KENT

Summary

The Housing Sub Group of the Kent Economic Board has been tasked to develop a Kent and Medway Housing Strategy. This will progress the proposal originally promoted in the Framework for Regeneration 2010-2020 document recently published by KCC which made the case for a Kent-wide Housing Strategy.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Kent Housing Sub Group of the Kent Economic Board comprises senior officer representatives from Kent district councils (Chief Executives and Directors), the Regional Director of the HCA, Chairman of the Kent Housing Group and KCC. It is chaired by the CE of Medway Council. I attend on behalf of this Council. General support for this piece of work has recently been expressed by district councils at a meeting of the Kent and Medway Chief Executives Group which considered and endorsed the paper included as **(Annex 1)** to this report.

1.2 A Strategy for Kent

1.2.1 I am aware that an over arching Housing Strategy for Kent has attracted some concern mainly from amongst district councils. This is understandable in the context of housing strategies being local pieces of work, borne out of the statutory housing and planning duties of districts and which reflect the workings of local housing markets which differ across the county. However, it is clear from my involvement in the project thus far that it is gaining momentum, has attracted the keen interest of the HCA and has very significant input from district councils to ensure its value and relevance.

1.2.2 For my part, I am keen to help shape this work in favour of securing a lasting and increased supply of HCA funding into Kent in general and T&M in particular.

1.2.3 As the report Annex explains, this work must be well focussed on achievable outcomes; must not replicate existing work but add weight and strength of case to the aims and outcomes of existing (local) strategies with a 'bottom-up' approach.

1.2.4 I will keep the Board apprised of progress with this work and its linkages with the single conversation process over coming months.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 None.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 None.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 Opportunity has been taken to influence the scope of a housing strategy for Kent in the interests of furthering the objectives of local housing authority strategies.

Background papers:

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Nil

John Batty
Director of Health and Housing