

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	9.
Date:	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	Status	Open
Category	Key decision included in Forward Plan		
Subject:	Housing Market Area Housing Strategy and the Single Conversation Process		
Report by:	Head of Regeneration		
Other Officers involved:	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager		
Director	Director of Neighbourhoods		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor A.F. Tomlinson, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities  
SOCIAL INCLUSION – Promoting fairness, equality and lifelong learning.

The strategy will lead to the provision of affordable housing, and address issues regarding design quality and will also begin to tackle meeting the long term supply of housing for the sub region and District. It will also address the needs of all groups within the community. Crucially it also informs the Single Conversation Process and Investment plan agreed with the Homes and Communities Agency

**TARGETS**

To be set as part of Single Conversation process, and also NI 155 - Number of affordable homes delivered (gross).

**VALUE FOR MONEY**

The “Single Conversation” is the Homes and Communities Agency primary funding allocation process. It replaces a number of historic funding streams and seeks to co-ordinate Housing, Infrastructure, Regeneration and Community activities to deliver comprehensive Place Shaping activity.

The Local Authority is required to work with neighbouring authorities within the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area (HMA) to formulate an Investment Plan for submission to the Single Conversation process. Spend incurred by the Authority during the formulation of the HMA Housing Strategy and Housing Needs Action Plans should be viewed as “leverage” enabling the Authority to access funding.

In reality, the report demonstrates that monies required to deliver evidence bases and strategies as part of the Single Conversation process, have often been secured from external sources.

## **THE REPORT**

### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 Minute 67 of 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009 Executive gave approval to the proposed governance structure for delivery of the Sub Regional Housing Market Area (HMA) Housing Strategy. Minute 67 also resolved to receive further reports detailing:
- Terms of Reference for the Executive Sounding Board
  - Terms of Reference for the Housing Market Area Partnership Group
  - The completed Sub Regional Housing Strategy for the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area.
- 1.2 This report requests Member approval and adoption of the completed Housing Market Area (HMA) Housing Strategy and confirms that the new Homes and Communities Agency funding regime, the “Single Conversation”, will be harnessed to deliver:
- The HMA Housing Strategy
  - The North Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy
  - The Local Development Framework
  - The Sustainable Community Strategy
- 1.3 Because the scope of the Single Conversation incorporates Economic Development, Planning and Social Sustainability, the Executive Sounding Board Terms of Reference are being designed to incorporate Homes and Communities Agency requirements. These extended Terms of Reference will be brought to a future meeting.

### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Members may be aware that several government reports published in 2008 reinforced the case for a sub regional approach to growth and investment and advocated a clear need for a cross boundary approach to policy in terms of housing supply.
- 2.2 The development of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment in September 2007 identified the four local authorities (Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire) as a single Housing Market Area known as the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA, (formally the Northern HMA) within the East Midlands.
- 2.3 CRESR (Sheffield Hallam University) was commissioned in April 2008 to research and develop a Sub Regional Housing Strategy for the HMA with a completion date of April 2009. In addition to the development of the Housing Strategy, CRESR, as part of their work programme, were also asked to consider the current and future working arrangements between the four local authorities and were asked to make recommendations as to how the HMA Housing Strategy could be managed and delivered.

- 2.4 CRESR recommendations regarding future working arrangements were delivered through **Minute 67** and the subsequent establishment of the Executive Sounding Board (**Appendix C**). Owing to long-term illness within the CRESR team, the HMA Housing Strategy has taken much longer to deliver necessitating a change in contractor and a renewed completion date. The HMA Housing Strategy delivered by Ekos Gen can be found at **Appendix A**.
- 2.5 In February 2010, following electronic consultation on the HMA Housing Strategy (December 2009) and sub-regional consultation event (April 2009), a Members Workshop was hosted to go through the Strategic Objectives in the HMA Housing Strategy.
- 2.6 During the Workshop, the commercial importance of the Place Shaping Agenda to the District was analysed in terms of:
- Attainment of residential new build targets
  - Delivery of a residential offer attractive to a range of Socio-economic Groups
  - Delivery of a residential offer supporting a range of household incomes and the knock-on effects to retail, leisure and employment offer

ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS
HUMAN CAPITAL
QUALITY OF LIFE
QUALITY OF PLACE
<b>RESIDENTIAL OFFER</b>
RANGE AND QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL OFFER

Source: Llewellyn, Davis, Yeang: The Northern Way

The weakness of the Bolsover District Housing Market, as demonstrated in the HMA Housing Strategy (overleaf fig1), was also discussed. It is likely that the issue of poor residential values, poor retention of young people and lack of choice within the Bolsover Housing Market, will form a central plank of the Local Housing Strategy that is currently under development.

- 2.7 Feedback from Members can be found at **Appendix B** and will be used to:
- Inform the Local Housing Strategy
  - Identify schemes for submission to the Single Conversation

As part of the Workshop members also received a presentation on the Single Conversation process from the Head of Regeneration.

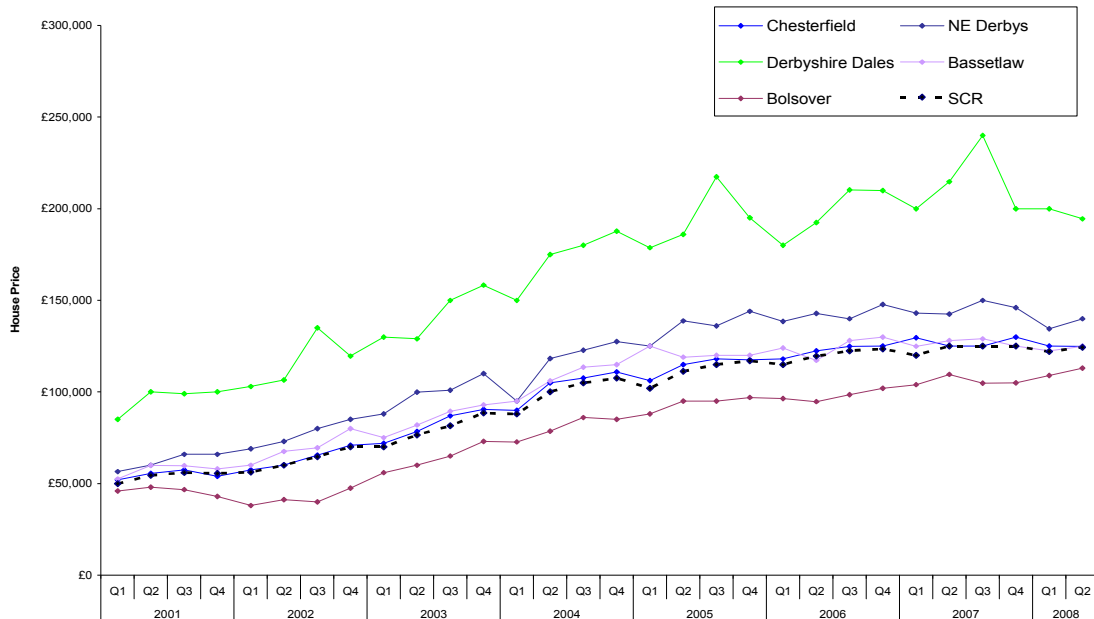


Fig1 SOURCE: HMA Housing Strategy

### 3.0 THE HMA HOUSING STRATEGY

3.1 The Housing Strategy sets a shared ambition for the housing market to provide housing choice for all sections of the community, linked to the culture and sense of identity of the many centres. This is reflected in the vision,

*‘The North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area will be characterised by vibrant towns and smaller centres, accessible to major employment centres and transport routes, where resident and new arrivals can access housing which meets the needs of their circumstances at all stages of their lives based on housing choice, attractive urban and natural environments and a quality of life which matches the best in the region’*

3.2 There are five strategic objectives which will direct the strategy over the coming years. The first three of these are focused on the provision of high quality housing, for all sections of the community, including vulnerable groups. The final two are supporting actions, one of which focuses on the creation of place, maximising the benefits of complementary expenditure to the Housing Market, while the other recognises the need for effective management and delivery. The five objectives are set out below;

**1: Extending Housing Choice** - To extend housing choice and provide a more balanced housing market through increasing housing supply which meets current and future needs and reducing barriers to affordable homes.

**2: Improving the Quality of Housing** - To improve the quality of housing, both through improving existing stock, particularly where it is

of poor quality, and influencing the design and standards of new housing provision.

**3: Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Groups** - To work in partnership to ensure that the four authorities are able to meet the needs of vulnerable groups across the sub-region, in a manner which reduces duplication and maximises effectiveness.

**4: Place Shaping for Sustainable Communities** - To work in partnership with local, regional and national agencies to develop neighbourhoods and centres which provide the environment and services which retain and attract residents

**5: Delivery and Management Arrangements** - To develop governance, management and delivery arrangements which accelerate the implementation of the housing strategy.

- 3.3 An Action Plan to begin to deliver the strategic objectives has been developed and is included at the end of the Strategy. Together these documents, the LDF, the Local Housing Strategy, the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy will feed into a five year Strategic Investment Plan that will identify priority sites, resources and housing and regeneration outcomes for the development of the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA. The Plan will be used to engage with the Homes and Communities Agency in the Single Conversation.

#### **4.0 Governance Arrangements**

- 4.1 The Executive Sounding Board held its first meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2009 when Bassetlaw District Council were elected as Chair and the Deputy Leader of Bolsover District Council as Vice Chair. The position of Chair will rotate on a yearly basis with the Vice Chair graduating to Chair for continuity purposes. The Board will meet on a quarterly basis.
- 4.2 The HMA Partnership Group held its first meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009 when Chesterfield Borough Council were elected as Chair and North East Derbyshire District Council as Vice Chair. The position of Chair will attend the Executive Sounding Board and similar bodies (e.g. Joint Chief Executives) to present reports.
- 4.3 The position of Chair will rotate on a yearly basis with the Vice Chair graduating to Chair for continuity purposes. The Group meets on a six weekly basis. The Terms of Reference for the HMA Partnership Group are attached at **Appendix D**.
- 4.4 Discussions have place with Planning and Economic Development colleagues regarding how they engage with the Homes and Communities Single Conversation, HMA Governance Arrangements, delivery of the Housing Strategy and its alignment with both the Economic Development and Core Strategies.

## **5.0 HMA Partnership Group Current Work Programme – The Single Conversation**

- 5.1 In January 2010, the Homes and Communities Agency contacted the HMA Partnership Group to confirm that the Single Conversation process for North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw was being brought forward by almost 12 months. It is not known whether new capacity in the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has enabled programme acceleration or whether the HCA is positioning itself in readiness for the General Election.
- 5.2 The current timetable for delivery of the Single Conversation is as follows:
- **12<sup>th</sup> March 2010** Afternoon Workshop for LSP's and Voluntary Sector reference Single Conversation and Revenue Projects
  - **31<sup>st</sup> March 2010** Synopsis of Direction of Travel for each relevant strategy approved or under development by the Council
  - **13<sup>th</sup> April 2010** HCA facilitated Single Conversation workshop incorporating 10 Members and Senior Officers from each authority in the Housing Market Area. The workshop will focus on spatial priorities.
  - **30<sup>th</sup> April 2010** Themes emanating from 13<sup>th</sup> April workshop and strategies/already in existence proposed to be formulated as per **Appendix G** but not scored.
  - **15<sup>th</sup> May 2010** Draft Investment Plan for the HMA to be pulled together by Bassetlaw Planning Policy Team informed by themes identified 13<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> April.
  - **June/July 2010** Final Investment Plan to be pulled together by a consultant to be appointed April/May.
  - **September/October 2010** Individual Authority sign off of Final Investment Plan to be submitted to the HCA Single Conversation process.
  - **October – December 2010** Individual projects to be submitted and scored as per proposed **Appendix G** by cross authority teams in line with Final Investment Plan.
  - **March 2011** Establishment of Local Investment Agreement between the Housing Market Area and the Homes and Communities Agency. Monies available to support Local Investment Agreements are not known at this stage. The position may become clearer after the General Election.
- 5.3 **Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme**
- HMA Partnership Group capacity to deliver this accelerated programme has been bolstered by the achievement of £50,000 Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme (REIP) funding in 2009 designed to deliver better integration within the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA.

- a. Some of the funding has been used to contribute to a piece of work across the Sheffield City Region to develop Range and Quality Assessments. The methodology that this piece of work delivers will be able to be used to score settlements and neighbourhoods across the HMA according to their private sector 'investability' using a traffic light system, where 'red' requires the greatest amount of gap funding. The methodology does not "rank" settlements but provides a coherent approach to judging settlements that will be vital throughout the Single Conversation process.
- b. The remaining REIP funding has been used to employ a Strategy Officer for the HMA on part time basis for twelve months. The post is based at North East Derbyshire District Council with the purpose of:
  - Supporting the co-ordination and delivery of the North Derbyshire & Bassetlaw Housing Market Area (HMA) Housing Strategy
  - Supporting the development of greater joint working across the ND&B HMA and particularly co-ordination of the Single Conversation

#### 5.4 Regional Housing Group Funding

HMA Partnership Group capacity to deliver the accelerated Single Conversation programme has also been bolstered by the achievement of £25,000 Regional Housing Group funding in 2009 to carry out a piece of research across the HMA looking at the role of the private rented sector within the Housing Market. The result of this work will help to inform the approach to Private Sector Renewal, which varies widely, across the HMA and which in future, will need to bid for resources through the Single Conversation process.

A further £25,000 was allocated to the HMA by the Regional Housing Group to contribute to the delivery of the HMA wide Investment Plan. The consultant will be appointed April/May 2010 and be required to deliver the Investment Plan June/July 2010 (see 5.2 above). The Investment Plan is one of the most immediate actions set out in the HMA Housing Strategy and will be used to ensure that the partnership is fully prepared to engage with the HCA in the Single Conversation in autumn 2010.

In 2007/8 £20,000 was allocated to the HMA by the Regional Housing Group to enable delivery of the HMA Housing Strategy and Four Housing Needs Studies for Vulnerable Groups.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

Legal:

The HMA Housing Strategy Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and there have been no negative impacts identified by the establishment of

the strategy or the governance arrangements, which seek to include existing consultative groups and will include wider stakeholder consultation.

The work undertaken already has included research into the Housing Needs of specific community groups of interest including, younger persons, older persons, people with complex needs and BME households. Specific actions relating to these groups have been included in the HMA Housing Strategy and 'fair access' has been incorporated as a cross cutting theme throughout the Strategy.

#### Financial:

Regional Housing Group monies secured to develop the four Housing Needs Studies, the HMA Housing Strategy and recommendations reference governance arrangements has been match funded by each of the four local authorities (£25,000 each).

#### Organisational:

The Derbyshire LAA includes one housing target NI115 concerning delivery of new affordable housing. It feeds into the Sustainable Communities block of the Derbyshire Partnership and presents no conflict with the Executive Sounding Board structure.

The Single Conversation with the Homes and Communities Agency has been brought forward by 12 months. This being the case, the HMA Investment Plan underpinning strategic objectives in the HMA Housing Strategy will be developed alongside.

The HMA Executive Sounding Board will need to be formally extended to include Economic Development and Planning colleagues in order to comply with the requirements of the Single Conversation.

The Joint Board currently limited to CEO's and Lead Members in North Derbyshire, would assist the HMA and delivery of the Housing Strategy if Bassetlaw were invited to the table.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS that;**

- 1. Members approve and adopt the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA Housing Strategy.**
- 2. Members note the accelerated Single Conversation Programme and actions underway to deliver that programme.**
- 3. Members request a further report on the extended Terms of Reference for the Executive Sounding Board that will seek to include Planning and Economic Development for the purposes of Single Conversation delivery.**



4. **Members recognise that the HMA Housing Strategy Workshop February 2010 constituted the primary consultation event for delivery of a Local Housing Strategy.**

ATTACHMENTS:

**Appendix A** HMA Housing Strategy; this document is available in the Labour Group Room, Scrutiny Chairs' room, Independent Rooms and Members Room. Further copies will need to be requested).

**Appendix B** Workshop Feedback from Members

**Appendix C** Approved Executive Sounding Board Structure

**Appendix D** T of R for HMA Partnership Group

FILE REFERENCE:

SOURCE DOCUMENT: