

Executive Report**HOUSING & COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO****COUNCILLOR GEORGE CLEMENTS – PORTFOLIO HOLDER****TERRY CHILCOTT – LEAD OFFICER****1. KEY ISSUES – PROGRESS REPORT****1.1 Housing Needs Survey**

The questionnaires for the Housing Needs survey have been sent out to a sample of residents across the borough. The return date is the 21 April and we will have some initial results by the end of May.

Homelessness

For the first time since April 2005 we are not using bed and breakfast as temporary Homelessness accommodation. This can of course change at any time but the additional properties from Copeland Homes have been a great help in fulfilling our duty towards homeless applicants.

Zone Agents

The Housing Corporation have set up a new scheme for the administration of low cost ownership. Eden Homes (Penrith) have been appointed as Zone Agents for Cumbria. This means they will be responsible for compiling a register of properties throughout Cumbria (which has been funded by the Housing Corporation) for low cost ownership and will be the first point of contact for people wishing to buy their home.

There are three homebuy products

New build homebuy – newly built homes are purchased via a housing association on a part buy/part rent basis

Open Market Homebuy – where a home can be bought from the open market, using purchasers savings and/or mortgage topped up by an equity loan

Social Homebuy – where existing social housing tenants can buy their current Housing Association owned homes on a part buy/part rent basis, receiving a discount on the initial purchase.

Eden will compile a register of interested applicants and will direct them to local schemes that best meet their needs.

1.2 Tasking Groups – Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

Violent Crime

The task group has a pub watch scheme in every town throughout West Cumbria under the Nightsafe banner. 12 premises have been identified as being problem premises. Each licensee will develop an action plan to improve and a 'mystery shopper' initiative will be introduced to identify further problems or improvements.

The Best Bar None scheme will be launched in April, which will recognise the best licensed premises and awards will be presented in September 06.

The Global Rock Challenge is due to be hosted at the Sands Centre, Carlisle on 21st April. This international event encourages secondary schools across the area to participate in a music and dance spectacle. The pupils will only be allowed to take part if they sign up to say they will not participate in any drug or alcohol taking.

Anti Social Behaviour

The task group has identified what interventions and diversionary activities are currently available to refer young people into when they come to the attention of the authorities. We can now look to develop further these activities where there are gaps.

Training sessions for agencies who need to deal with anti social behaviour have received training recently on the effective use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts; Environmental Nuisance and basic interventions – legal aspect.

Criminal Damage

A new task group under the Anti Social Behaviour umbrella is to be formed in the next few weeks. The group will look at what types of criminal damage is being recorded; how often, where, when and by whom. The Partnership is required to reduce criminal damage by 32% by March 2008.

2. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

3. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Possible Claim Against The Council

Date of Decision: 21 February 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/169

Context: This report advises Members of a possible claim against the Council

Decision

1. **Note the current position;**
2. **Officers to report back when the position is clearer and in the meantime a full briefing on the background be arranged for the portfolio-holders.**

Subject: Private Sector Renovation Grant Programme

Date of Decision: 14 March 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/177

Context: This report presents to Members an update on the Private Sector Renovation Grant Programme and to seek approval to appoint a 12 month fixed term post to help address current demands on the service.

Decision:

That Executive:

- 1) **Note the current demand on the grants programme and Private Sector Housing team**

- 2) **Agree to support a new 12 month fixed term post from April 2006.**

Subject: Disabled Facilities Grants

Date of Decision: 14 March 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/178

Context:

It was agreed as part of the stock transfer that Council tenants on the waiting list for aids and adaptations as at 18 February 2004 would have works carried out which the Council would pay for.

Decision: That the current position be noted and Executive approves the use of £92,699 of an improvement grants balance sheet provision to finance the re-imburement of works carried out by Copeland Homes.

Subject: Change to Houses of Multiple Occupation Legislation

Date of Decision: 14 March 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/179

Context: This report details the draft Houses in Multiple Occupation Policy

Decision: That the policy be approved and that as new guidance is received from central government the Head of Regeneration be authorised to make further detailed amendments.