

To all Members of the Strategic Housing Panel

Dear Councillors

A draft report for the Council's Executive is attached with a copy of the Cumbria Housing Strategy as Appendix A to that report. **If the Panel accepts both the report and the strategy document they will go forward to the Executive meeting on 20 December 2011 with a recommendation for endorsement.**

The Panel first considered the Cumbria Housing Strategy at its meeting on 18 October, when members specified a number of changes they wanted made. There were also further discussions with the Housing Portfolio Holder and the document was amended to reflect elected members wishes.

The amendments are dispersed around the document but, in particular, are found in the third paragraph from the top of page 18. This is where Copeland's need for new affordable homes, including in rural communities, is specified from the evidence base of our Strategic Housing Market Assessment published in February this year. There are also three specific paragraphs under the sole heading of Copeland on pages 18 and 19, which reflect some of the unique characteristics of our Borough.

The draft report makes clear that the objectives of the Cumbria Housing Strategy are virtually identical to those of the Copeland Housing Strategy, which was produced first. The documents complement each other but the Copeland Strategy is our sovereign document and must therefore have primacy.

The significance of the Cumbria Housing Strategy is twofold.

1. It provides a framework within which Copeland, our partners and neighbours seek to attract investment and collaborate to improve housing conditions for our communities Cumbria-wide and in our Borough.
2. By engaging with the Cumbria Housing Group and Housing Strategy we are well placed to argue the case for investment in Copeland by the HCA, developers and partners, some of whom operate across Cumbria and the wider northwest.

Laurie Priebe
Strategic Housing Manager

30 November 2011.