

**Economy and Enterprise
Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

27 February 2012

Empty Homes



**Joint Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive
and Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and
Economic Development**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to introduce the presentation by the Housing Renewal and Improvement Manager, Regeneration and Economic Development focusing on bringing Empty Homes back into use in County Durham.

Background

- 2 Members will recall that at the meeting of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 4 April 2011, a refresh of the Work Programme for 2011-2013 was considered within the context of the 'Altogether Wealthier' priority theme of the Council Plan 2011-2013. As a result of this refresh, Empty Homes was identified for inclusion within the Committee's current Work Programme for 2011-2013.
- 3 In addition quarterly Performance Reports considered by the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee have identified as a key performance improvement issue the number of empty homes brought back into use as a result of Local Authority intervention.
- 4 As Empty Homes is a cross cutting issue which cuts across the 'Altogether Wealthier' and the 'Altogether Safer' themes of the Council Plan, Members of the Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been invited to attend this initial overview presentation.

Recommendation

- 5 That Members consider the information provided within the presentation and the Council's approach to empty homes issues within County Durham
- 6 That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee determine how to progress empty homes within the context of the refresh of the Work Programme 2012 -2014

Background papers

- Work Programme 2011-2013
- Quarterly Performance Reports 'Altogether Wealthier'

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Costs in relation to schemes to bring empty homes back into use.

Staffing - None

Equality and Diversity - None

Accommodation – Improve and add to the housing accommodation available within County Durham (reduce the number of empty properties).

Crime and Disorder – Reducing the number of empty properties within the County will have a positive impact in relation to crime reduction.

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Discrimination Act – None

Legal Implications – None