

29 March 2012

Durham Key Options

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

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To remind members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the background in relation to the Choice Based Lettings scheme for Durham: Durham Key Options (DKO) prior to a presentation providing members with an update in relation to the scheme.

Background

- 2 Members will recall that the Work Programme for the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2010/11 included consideration by members of DKO scheme. This resulted in members of the Committee receiving an overview presentation at the meeting held on the 7 February 2011 where it was agreed by members that a further update would be presented to Committee and that DKO should be included within the refresh of the Work Programme for 2011-2013
- 3 The presentation at the meeting on the 7 February 2012 focused on the findings of the independent review of the DKO scheme undertaken by a Consultant from the Housing Quality Network (HQN) following the scheme being in operation for 12 months. The presentation included information on the following:
 - Key findings of review
 - Key recommendations for partnership, policy and scheme administration.
 - Customer perspective, partner perspective and stakeholder perspective.
 - Next steps?
- 4 With reference to key findings, the Committee was informed that the DKO scheme had been implemented well during a period of immense change and was well supported by partners, customers and stakeholders. It was confirmed that the scheme was largely working well although some areas did need attention and there was scope for further development and improvement including in terms of efficiencies.

- 5 In relation to next steps, the independent Consultant informed the Committee that an Action Plan would be developed to progress the key recommendations contained within the Review report, highlighting that there was a need to increase resource support to the Board and scheme administration, regular performance monitoring reports need to be produced and resources need to be released for more support to vulnerable applicants.

Current position

- 6 It is now timely for the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive a further presentation providing members with an update of the progress made in relation to the recommendations contained in Review report.
- 7 Following the recommendations made in the HQN report the DKO partnership established work streams to take forward each recommendation. The work streams are progressing these actions to improve the service to customers. These include:
- Policy Group: Working on a revision of the allocations policy to take account of the HQN recommendations and in light of the Localism Bill.
 - Extending the scheme to other Registered Providers. Accent Homes are due to become partners of DKO on the 1 April 2012.
 - Performance monitoring. Agreeing a new performance management framework to ensure continuous improvement.
 - Creation of a CBL Coordinator post to support the DKO Partnership is able to its agreed objectives.
 - Work is ongoing to establish a pilot in extend DKO to include property form the private rented sector.
 - An additional action and working group from across the Registered Provider sector to respond to the challenges of welfare reform.

Recommendation

- 8 That members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the report and presentation in relation to the DKO scheme and agree to include within the Work Programme for 2012-2014 a further update report.

Background Paper(s)

Presentation to Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 February 2011.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk – None

Equality and Diversity –. Impact assessment completed.

Accommodation -. None

Crime and Disorder – None

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – none

Disability Discrimination Act –None

Legal Implications – None