



## **Agenda Item 4**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

3<sup>RD</sup> May 2005

### **BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN INNER MIDDLESBROUGH**

**DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION: TIM WHITE**

#### **SUMMARY**

1. This major regeneration project will have a considerable impact on up to 25,000 residents and numerous businesses that reside or are located within the Town's inner housing area. It is not just a housing scheme but a fundamental intervention to the fabric of an entire community. It will take 10 – 15 years to complete and will affect delivery across a broad range of services. It will also provide a major opportunity for change and improvement that represents a challenge for all involved. It is therefore important that the process is clear and that engagement with local communities is well planned and effective.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

2. Members will be aware of the extensive work that is currently underway to develop a strategy for the long-term future of the town's 11,500 older houses.
3. The Council appointed a team of consultants in February 2004 and the past year has been spent collecting and analysing a wealth of background data and consulting with a range of different stakeholders including residents, community groups, schools, housing professionals and other organisations with an interest in the area.
4. This has confirmed the belief that intervention in some of the failing neighbourhoods is necessary to stem the outflow of residents and to provide opportunities for the strengthening of existing communities by the development of new homes and services.
5. The consultants have now developed a series of options ranging from the do nothing approach to radical intervention including extensive demolition and the Council has adopted Option 4 as the basis for a round of extensive consultation both with the community and other stakeholders. This will take place during May.

6. Subsequently, it is expected that the preferred option will be modified and that as a result of stakeholder feedback a further report containing a revised option will be taken to a meeting of the Executive in July. Assuming the approval of the revised option it will be necessary to put into action a programme of implementation including the process of bidding for funding, developing a dedicated team of officers and working with residents to develop detailed plans.

## **EVIDENCE/DISCUSSION**

7. Attached to this paper is a copy of the report that was approved by The Executive on the 19 April and a newsletter that has been delivered to every house and business within the defined area.
8. The report contains further details of the research findings and a description of the six options together with a more detailed account of the impact in each of the 6 character areas should option 4 be implemented.
9. There are two aspects of the process that Scrutiny Members may wish to comment on. One is the process through which engagement with the stakeholders will occur and the other is the development of support mechanisms to allow such a far reaching and significant project to be successful.

### Consultation

10. Already over 1,000 people have engaged with the project and further consultation will take the following format:
  - 5 community drop-in sessions featuring an exhibition explaining the project;
  - a supporting DVD;
  - a series of four topic based work groups, and
  - a half day conference for professionals in the housing and building sectors.

### Support Mechanisms

11. Building blocks for implementation include the creation of a focussed team of officers, the development of a regeneration vehicle such as a joint venture or limited company, an exploration of neighbourhood management models and a joint working steering group. The project will have a far-reaching impact over a 10-15 year time scale and will involve detailed working on the development of master plans and strategies for a number of areas.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

12. The project is currently at a critical stage when the bulk of investigative work is complete and the stage reached is the consideration and evaluation of options. A key part of the process is underway where the preferred option is tested in the wider community. It will be critical to the long term success of the project to have the endorsement of as many major stakeholders as possible.

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