

Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel
Older Housing Areas – Action Plan

Scrutiny recommendation	Proposed action	Responsibility	Budget cost	Time-scale
<p>1. That all the mechanisms the Council has available at its disposal be used to deliver housing on the strategic housing sites, as outlined in the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework (LDF), including for example the provision of service infrastructure, the use of a Local Asset Backed Delivery Vehicle and the preparation of development briefs, as well as increased partnership working with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the private sector and Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) in order to deliver new housing within town.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement a programme for preparing development briefs. 2. Prepare a programme for disposal of Council owned housing sites. 3. Continue to work with the HCA to develop an Asset Backed Delivery Vehicle. 	<p>P. Clarke</p> <p>P. Clarke</p> <p>A.Carr</p>	<p>Existing staff resource</p>	<p>October 2010</p> <p>October 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2. That an early review of the Core Strategy and Regeneration Development Plan Document (DPD) be undertaken, as although theoretically the supply of land in Middlesbrough is sufficient to meet the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) housing requirement, this was based on market conditions prior to the economic downturn. In the current conditions build rates have been slower than previous forecasts and sites identified for housing development are not coming forward. Middlesbrough is failing to meet the annual targets and even the revised targets will prove challenging. Urgent action is therefore needed to identify new sites that will enable additional housing to be provided within the town in the next five years.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake all necessary survey work to inform the review of the Core Strategy and Regeneration DPD to enable sufficient supply of housing to be identified. 2. Prepare and consult on publication drafts of both DPDs. 3. Hold public examination into DPDs and adopt following receipt of Inspectors Report. 4. Consider opportunity sites for new housing developments on their merits that come forward in the interim period. 	<p>P. Clarke</p>	<p>To be met from existing LDF budget</p>	<p>November 2010</p> <p>August 2011</p> <p>February 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>3. That efforts continue in partnership with the other Tees Valley authorities to promote the need for government investment in Housing Market Renewal (HMR) activities within the Tees Valley and to ensure that the Tees Valley secures the level of funding that is needed to deliver transformational change within some of the most deprived areas of the country.</p>	<p>Continue to work in partnership with Tees Valley Living, through the national Pathfinder group to raise the profile of HMR with the national Government.</p> <p>Ensure that the sub-regional HMR programme is appropriately represented in the Tees Valley Statement of Ambition and Economic Regeneration and Investment Plan.</p>	<p>J. Turner</p>	<p>Existing staff resource</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>4. That a clearer vision for the older housing areas be communicated to enable people within the town to understand the current position and the work that is being undertaken on the various sites to provide a new housing offer and regenerate communities. Within this communication clarity needs to be provided in respect of a realistic timescale or aim date for completion of the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme and creation of new sustainable communities in Gresham, Grove Hill and Middlehaven / St Hilda's.</p>	<p>Newsletters and press releases will continue to be produced, as and when appropriate, that give residents up to date information on the progress of the Gresham and Grove Hill schemes.</p> <p>Information will be available on the Council's website and from the Streets Ahead for Information office on Parliament Road that provides an update of the current position with regards the HMR programme</p>	<p>A. Carr</p>	<p>No additional cost.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>5. That a focus is maintained on increasing the town's housing offer at the middle and upper end of the market in order to increase the number of Council Tax Band C, D, E and F properties within the town, with a view to rebalancing the housing market and increasing the town's population.</p>	<p>This will be addressed through preparation of development briefs and review of LDF documents as identified in 1 and 2 above.</p>	<p>P. Clarke</p>	<p>Existing LDF resources</p>	<p>February 2012</p>

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<p>6. It is clear that the selective licensing is working but consideration needs to be given to an exit strategy, as the current designation is due to end in June 2012. The potential increase in the number of properties to be licensed, as a direct result of the proposed revisions to the Gresham Regeneration Project also requires further consideration.</p>	<p>The Gresham designation will end in June 2012. It is doubtful that an application to extend the Gresham designation would succeed as it would involve making a case to prove that selective licensing has not effectively tackled the factors it was set up to improve. An option analysis will be carried out to review the future of selective licensing in Middlesbrough with involvement from the Older Housing Officer Group. The option analysis will include an assessment on how the outcomes of selective licensing can continue in Gresham within the available staffing resource.</p>	<p>J. Duffield</p>	<p>Existing staff resource</p>	<p>September 2010</p>
<p>7. That joint Officer / Member group consisting of Housing Officers and a number of interested Members be established to develop a discussion document that would explore the potential for measures to be put in place to ensure that the new build properties constructed in Gresham are purchased by owner occupiers and not private sector landlords.</p>	<p>A joint Officer/Member group with representation from Housing, Urban Policy and Legal Services will be established to consider the Council's options in terms of promoting owner occupation as part of the developer selection process, once the Gresham site has been fully assembled.</p>	<p>A. Carr</p>	<p>Existing staff resource</p>	<p>April 2014</p>
<p>8. That the Mayor provides bi-annual updates to the Panel in order to advise on the progress being made in respect of the Gresham project.</p>	<p>A bi-annual report will be prepared for the Mayor to present to the Panel as requested.</p>	<p>A. Carr</p>	<p>Existing staff resource</p>	<p>January 2011</p>
<p>9. That a Private Rented Housing Strategy be developed and work be undertaken to increase the Council's knowledge of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in an effort to improve relations with private sector landlords and that as part of that process the Private Rented Housing Strategy be referred to the Panel for consideration.</p>	<p>Private Rented Sector Housing Strategy to be developed to consider future development of the sector within the town following outcomes of Middlesbrough Private Rented Sector Study, which is currently ongoing.</p>	<p>S. Wilson</p>	<p>Existing staff resource</p>	<p>April 2011</p>

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10. That the option to provide financial assistance through the Regional Loans Scheme to private sector landlords to improve conditions in the PRS be adopted.	Approval is being sought from the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development to provide financial assistance for landlords to bring properties that have been empty for more than 6 months back into use. This assistance package is available through the Regional Loans Scheme	S. Wilson	None	October 2010
11. That as part of the Landlord Accreditation Scheme the following elements be included to encourage responsible landlords to join; access to the private registration scheme, access to financial assistance through the regional loans scheme, access to a landlord hotline number for tenancy advice, discounted services and advertising fees where possible.	Tees Valley Unlimited and the individual local authorities are considering the development of a Tees Valley Landlord Accreditation Scheme to avoid landlords having to register with a number of different schemes with differing criteria if they have properties in more than one local authority area within the sub region. Access to financial assistance through the regional loans scheme and the private registration scheme will be dependent on landlords being accredited where such a scheme exists. The development of other services to assist local landlords will be considered as part of the developing Private Rented Sector Strategy	S. Wilson	Existing staff resource	June 2011
12. That a review of the current licence fee charged to landlords of Houses in Multiple Occupation be undertaken.	Review the fee structure to ensure that the scheme is self financing based on a five year licensing programme	S Beamson	Existing staffing resource	November 2010

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13. That the possibility of developing a 'local letting agency' with the potential to fast track and match Housing Benefit recipients with private rented sector properties be explored and some concrete proposals put forward.	Consultation to be carried out with colleagues and stakeholders, including Fabrick and Endeavour, on the potential to develop a 'local letting agency' and proposals to be put forward.	S. Wilson	Existing staffing resource	April 2011
14. That where facelift works are undertaken and grants awarded that a grant condition be built in to ensure that standards are maintained for a minimum period of five years and an inspection regime established.	The condition period for facelift works is to be extended from 3 years to five years in line with recommendations. Officers will undertake an annual inspection to ensure that conditions are complied with	S. Wilson	Existing staffing resource	January 2011
15. That a joint piece of work be undertaken with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to examine the benefits of the work undertaken in Liverpool in respect of using the Health Housing Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to improve housing conditions in the PRS as well as reduce health inequalities. The purpose of the work is to explore how a similar 'Healthy Homes' initiative could be launched in Middlesbrough and to develop further the joint work undertaken with the PCT in respect of the housing/health agenda. Use to be made of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) toolkit as part of this work to analyse the cost benefits of using housing interventions to mitigate health risks.	A mapping exercise is to be undertaken to determine what services are currently being provided by the Council, and how they can be utilised by a Middlesbrough Healthy Homes Initiative to reduce health inequalities in the town. A gap analysis will then be carried out to determine those services that are not currently being provided in Middlesbrough and a outline proposal submitted to the PCT.	S. Hodge	Existing staffing resource	October 2011

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<p>16. That information be made available to private sector tenants to advise of them of the rights in respect of housing conditions. Information on the type of action that the Council can take to address any issues raised also needs to be highlighted.</p>	<p>This is an ongoing activity with referrals coming from housing advisors, social services, citizens advice, consumer advice centre, and front line environmental health staff etc. Media articles feature the service from time to time.</p> <p>A special campaign will be undertaken from October 2010 to promote the service and potential interventions</p>	<p>S. Wears</p>	<p>Predominantly existing staff time</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>