

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of Paul Claussen, Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services

To: Overview and Scrutiny Commission, 26th April 2012
Cabinet: 8th May 2012

(Author: Darryl Smith Principal Housing Officer (Strategy and Enabling))

Subject: Breckland Tenancy Strategy

Purpose:

To consider the proposed Tenancy Strategy and recommend to Cabinet for approval

Recommendations:

Approve the Breckland Tenancy Strategy and recommend to Cabinet for adoption

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 sets out a requirement for the Local Authority to publish a Tenancy Strategy to provide a framework for the occupation of affordable housing within Breckland.
- 1.2 The document has been drafted in consultation with the Task and Finish Group appointed by the Commission which also included representatives from our Registered Provider landlords. The group took into account discussions from the Commission when considering options for the Tenancy Strategy which will be used in conjunction with the Allocations Policy which is currently under review.

2. OPTIONS

- 2.1 The options are to recommend the Tenancy Strategy for approval to Cabinet as the most suitable framework for our partners to operate within. It is recognised that the Registered Providers only have to have regard to the policy but the inclusion of them in shaping the document has assisted in preparing something that is within a framework that would also meet their own policies on tenancies going forward.
- 2.2 The strategy recommends that flexible tenancies are introduced where appropriate for a period of 5 years following a 12 month introductory tenure. Support is also recommended for affordable rents to be introduced on all new developments as long as the rent is within the Local Housing Allowance levels.
- 2.3 The exceptions to the recommendations are for supported housing and housing for specialist group such as the elderly.
- 2.4 The Council can not, not introduce a tenancy policy as it is a requirement of the Localism Act but it could have a policy which maintains the status quo. This has not been recommended as an option as it would not enable flexibility to be introduced in making best use of the valuable resource that affordable housing has become within the District.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The recommendation has been made to approve the Tenancy Strategy as it will provide a positive framework to maximise the occupation of affordable housing within the District should Registered Providers move to providing flexible tenures.

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

- 4.1 The Council will benefit from increased turnover of affordable housing where Registered Providers introduce flexible tenure allowing for the best use of affordable housing across the District.
- 4.2 Compliance with a legislative requirement.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Legal:** None
- 5.2 **Risks:** There risk to not having a policy are low as we are not a stock holding authority and Registered providers would continue to operate within their own policies.
- 5.3 **Financial:** None
- 5.4 **Timescales:** The policy must be adopted within 12 months of the Localism Act 2011 being enacted. This will be within that timeframe.
- 5.5 **Equality and Diversity:** None
- 5.6 **Stakeholders / Consultation:** Stakeholders have been involved within the preparation of the policy.
- 5.7 **Contracts:** None
- 5.8 **Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998:** None
6. **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**
- 6.1 All wards are affected.

Background papers:- None

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Key Decision – Yes

Appendices attached to this report: Breckland Tenancy Strategy