

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive to the CABINET – 10 June 2008

REFERENCE FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider a reference from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission held on 29 May 2008 in regard to the following item:
- Year 1 Review of the Breckland Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan
(*Cabinet Agenda Item 10 refers*)

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 take into account the Commission's views regarding a need to review the definition of the Action on affordable housing for disabled people as outlined below.

3. Year 1 Review of the Breckland Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan

- 3.1 The Commission has considered the Year 1 Review of the Breckland Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan as set out in the report at agenda item 10.
- 3.1.1 Members have questioned the Action that states "for all new housing schemes in the market towns (of a suitable size and nature to trigger an affordable housing contribution), the Council will seek at least one wheelchair bungalow as new provision" (page 160 of the agenda refers). It was felt that this could be discriminatory against people with other types of disability and removed freedom of choice both from an individual's point of view and that of developers as it would dictate where the provision should be located. There were also cost implications arising from the various design features that would be needed to address all the different types of disability to fully equip a dwelling. The Council needed to be clear about the needs and level of disability it was attempting to address through this provision. Members were also concerned that this Action was related only to the market towns of the District and felt that the needs of the rural villages also needed to be considered. A member also questioned the calculation of the quota, i.e. one wheelchair bungalow on sites of over 25 units; the Member felt that this should be reflected in % terms so that the provision of these homes went up proportionately with the size of the site.
- 3.1.2 For these reasons, it was felt there was a need for this Action to be reviewed.