

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Housing Futures Working Group Date of meeting
AUTHOR/S: Housing Futures Project Team

EVALUATING THE OPTIONS: SUMMARY

Purpose

1. This report presents a very concise summary of the main issues to be considered in evaluating the alternative options.

Executive Summary

2. Working Group members will be aware that there are a number of issues to be taken into account in evaluating the alternative options and the relevant detailed material is contained in background briefing papers. When the earlier working group carried out it's work in the 2005 Options Appraisal they found it helpful to have a concise summary to structure their concluding discussions. A summary following their agreed format is attached to this report.

Considerations

3. The format of the 2005 Options Appraisal followed the guidance provided by the ODPM (now the CLG) since the eventual conclusions had to be signed off by the local Government Office. That guidance made it clear that the evaluation should be multi factor but it did not provide a recommended checklist. The guidance said-

"The output of such an appraisal should be an option that delivers sustainable decent homes, is value for money, separates landlord and strategic functions, improves services and is deliverable."
4. The 2005 working group expanded that definition to include a range of issues that were considered important by the tenants, members and officers attending the group and the nine topics shown on the attached matrix made up the criteria chosen to evaluate the options.
5. It should be noted that the ODPM guidance did not stress the longer term position post the 2010 Decent Home deadline other than to include reference to "sustainability". However, the working group felt that the longer term position as well as the short term situation should be considered.
6. The topics chosen, and the summary format, are not intended to duplicate other material but to provide a structure for discussion and to act as a prompt to ensure that a range of issues are considered.
7. Working Group members will note that the format includes topics that flow directly from the aims established for this project and for the work of the Group. Evaluating the options in line with these key issues should lead to the "sound and robust evaluation" that is required to enable elected members to reach a balanced decision. In addition, should that decision be to proceed with a formal consultation with tenants on a housing transfer proposal, the use of a comprehensive evaluation will increase

the chances of the Government Office supporting any bid for a place on a future transfer programme by demonstrating the quality of the initial evaluation.

Consultations

8. The format includes feedback from the consultation processes that have taken place,

Effect on Project Objectives

9.	Investment needs of the housing and the resources available to meet those needs	Comments are not listed here because relevant information is contained in the evaluation matrix attached to this report.
	The viability of the Housing Revenue Account	
	Tenants' views on the current housing service and their priorities	
	Sustainable Community Strategy (and LAA) implications	
	Staff are well informed and involved in the Housing Futures process	
	A sound and robust evaluation based on the above objectives, and relevant government guidance	

Actions Required

10. To review and comment on the evaluation matrix as a means of summarising the key criteria that needs to be taken into account by the Housing Options Portfolio Holder when considering a recommendation on the way forward to Cabinet and Full Council in January 2008.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

2005 Options Appraisal matrix
Tribal Financial Analysis Report

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APPENDIX: Evaluation Matrix Summary