

**EXTRACT FROM DRAFT MINUTES OF SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE –  
16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2004:**

**BEST VALUE REVIEW OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCLUDING OPTIONS FOR  
RESOURCING DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Policy and Review Manager presented this report, which asked the Committee to approve the Best Value Review of affordable housing. It was noted that affordable housing was one of the Council's priorities and this review recommended a plan of improvement.

Members of the Committee suggested that the targets for the number of affordable housing in the next five years were too ambitious. The Head of Housing Strategic Services assured Members that the number of new developments already in the pipeline ensured that the targets were realistic and that the figures for this and the next financial year had recently been amended to ensure that they were achievable. The targets were high but below the structure plan requirements in order to be realistic. Slippage was always possible since delivery was often not within the control of the Council. However, officers were working with partner agencies to both effectively monitor and where possible assist affordable housing proposals in the district in order to meet targets. Targets would also need to be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect what was happening on the ground.

It was noted that the latest figures were in the agenda report and Members could continue to obtain the latest information by accessing information held on the corporate shared drive and the PIMMS system. The Committee expressed a desire to monitor the progress made in the delivery of affordable housing.

The Head of Housing Strategic Services explained that the most effective way of building affordable housing was through Section 106 Agreements, which made developers responsible for building those houses. The cutting of LASHG money made it much more difficult to provide affordable housing through public subsidy. It was suggested that the Council should copy other local authorities and build affordable housing on exception sites.

Councillor Mrs EM Heazell, the housing portfolio holder, explained that on some occasions registered social landlords had to sell land at the market rate in order to finance affordable housing. Circle 33 Housing were considering this with the five Airey housing sites in the District that have been scheduled for redevelopment.

The Head of Housing Strategic Services explained that the Council was working with Housing Associations to find alternative ways of funding those schemes that had been unsuccessful in the latest ADP round. It was noted that extra funding for affordable housing had been secured in Papworth from the developers of a site in lieu of the affordable housing requirement. This would help to provide more affordable housing elsewhere in the District.

It was agreed that the words "in accordance with the Constitution" be added to the second bullet point of the recommendation at 66(c) as it was possible that the Constitution could be amended, following recommendations from the Constitutional Working Party. It was also agreed that the recommendation to approve the temporary appointment of an officer to appraise Council Housing assets be discussed under item 8 with the other New Expenditure Proposals.

The Committee **AGREED** with the recommendations of the report as amended.

