

## **EXTRACTS OF THE POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2008**

### **ROSSENDALE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY –UPDATE**

The Independent Housing and Homelessness Consultant delivered a presentation on the Rossendale Homelessness Strategy and the Supported Housing Strategy (minute 7). He informed the Committee that the Homelessness Strategy and action plan were working documents and constantly needed updating to continue to be effective, in addition to multi-agency working to achieve targets.

The Policy Scrutiny Committee discussed issues relating to:

- Emergency accommodation for the homeless
- Safe houses or suitable accommodation for families subject to domestic violence
- The provision of a women's/family refuge
- Addressing homelessness needs through partnership working
- Achievements over the last 5 years

#### **Resolved:**

1. That the Policy Scrutiny Committee welcomes the proposals of the Rossendale Homelessness Strategy and recommends that the Council continues to work closely with partners to implement the strategy.
2. That Cabinet be recommended to approve the Rossendale Homelessness Strategy, in addition to considering suitable emergency accommodation for the homeless and the provision of women's/family refuge facilities.
3. That the Independent Housing and Homelessness Consultant provide a summary of achievements over the last 5 years following the implementation of the strategy.

### **SUPPORTED HOUSING STRATEGY – UPDATE**

The Independent Housing and Homelessness Consultant informed the Committee that it was good practice to have a Supported Housing Strategy as it helped shape decisions at regional level. The strategy included services for homeless with support needs as well as a wider range of individuals, for example, older people, care leavers, domestic violence victims, and offenders.

A member of the public asked a question in relation to housing support for offenders and levels of support available.

The Policy Scrutiny Committee discussed issues relating to:

- Differing expectations concerning sheltered housing
- The role of the Probation Service in re-housing offenders and the possibility of securing accommodation and support prior to release
- Linking in wider issues such as training, education and employment
- The role of home improvement agencies to help people with care needs

**Resolved:**

1. That the Policy Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet the approval of the Supported Housing Strategy in principal, however, the Committee would like Cabinet to consider the impact on other sections of the community including older people and expand the strategy to include such groups.
2. That the Local Strategic Partnership, Greenvale Homes and the Elderly Persons Advisory Group be kept informed of the concerns raised by the Committee.

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY UPDATE**

The Environmental Health Manager informed the Committee that the purpose of the update was to bring the strategy and action plan together.

The Policy Scrutiny Committee discussed issues relating to:

- To what extent the policy will benefit new planning applications
- How the policy will be shaped to include existing housing stock in the future
- Whether future reports will contain a section on the impact to the environment

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet be recommended to adopt the Environmental Policy.