

BRIEFING REPORT – Overview & Scrutiny Policy Committee

Policy/Item	Black & Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy
Policy Department	Economic Regeneration & Strategic Housing
Responsible Officer	Gary Parsons – Housing Research & Strategy Officer
Head of Service	Jon Sharples
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Promoting Rossendale
Date	30 th July 2007
Brief Description	<p>As part of the Housing Strategy Action Plan for the period 2005-2008 it was highlighted that the Council needed to produce a BME Housing Strategy that would specifically look at housing needs issues for Black, Minority Ethnic Communities within Rossendale. This particular Strategy is also a recommendation from the Audit Commission themselves following on from the Strategic Housing Teams inspection in December 2006, in which they recommended that a Strategy be in place by September 2007.</p> <p>Currently the Strategic Housing Team have commissioned a consultant to conduct some research work around the needs of BME Communities and this piece of work will help feed into the development of the Strategy.</p>
Outcome	The outcome of this Policy will be for the Council to have a clear understanding of what the housing needs are of the BME Communities that live in Rossendale and a clear Action Plan as part of the Strategy that sets out how these needs will be addressed.
Identify Risk	<p>The risks of not achieving the Strategy for the deadline of September can be seen as minimal as long as work is well under way to have it completed.</p> <p>The only other risk for members to consider with this Strategy is whether the Council should have a stand alone Strategy that relates to the Housing Strategy or use the detailed understanding and Action points from this piece of work to have a detailed section on</p>

	BME Communities within the new Housing Strategy which is to be consulted on and developed during the course of early 2008. The risk of having a separate Strategy to the main Housing Strategy is that Non-BME Communities may question why there is a specific Strategy for certain communities and could actually hinder Community Cohesion and the Sustainable Communities agenda.
Conclusion	This strategy/policy statement is a very important piece of work for the Council and helps improve the Council's understanding and knowledge of the BME Communities in Rossendale and allows for improved service delivery.
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) That Overview & Scrutiny Committee members recommend approval of the BME Housing Strategy/Statement to Cabinet Committee in November 2007 2) That Overview & Scrutiny Committee members consider the option of including this strategy as part of the new Housing Strategy for 2008 and for the interim period it be classified as a policy statement until the new Housing Strategy is developed.