

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Executive Director Place – Rob Walker
To: Policy Development Panel – 28 February 2017
Author: Phil Stacey Senior Housing Advice Officer
Subject: Addressing Long Term Empty Homes
Purpose: Present an update on the current situation

Recommendation(s):

That the Policy Development Panel note the progress made on addressing long term empty homes

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 On 13 January 2016, Policy Development Panel received a report on Addressing Long Term Empty Homes.

1.2 A briefing report has been produced which is attached at Appendix A to this report. The appended document provides an overview of the following:

- Performance in returning empty homes back into use
- Empty Homes and the New Homes Bonus scheme
- South Holland Empty Homes Strategy 2014-16

2.0 OPTIONS

2.1 Option 1: That the Panel considers the information and provides feedback.

2.2 Option 2:- Do nothing

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 The reason for recommendation is for Policy Development Panel to consider the appended briefing report and provide feedback.

4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

4.1 To return 75 empty homes to use per annum.

4.2 To maximise New Homes Bonus income to the authority.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues

5.1.1 It is the opinion of the report author that there are no implications.

5.2 Constitution & Legal

5.2.1 It is the opinion of the report author that there are no implications.

5.3 **Contracts**

5.3.1 It is the opinion of the report author that there are no implications

5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 There is a strong link between work around empty homes and our corporate priorities, notably 'to have pride in South Holland by supporting the district and residents to develop and thrive.

5.5 **Crime and Disorder**

5.5.1 There is often a link between empty dwellings and anti-social behaviour. Addressing the issue of long term properties should make a contribution to wider efforts to address anti social behaviour.

5.6 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.6.1 It is the opinion of the report author that there are no implications.

5.7 **Financial**

5.7.1 The additional resource committed retrospectively within the strategy has a financial implication for the authority. This has been dealt with as part of a previous exercise.

5.8 **Health & Wellbeing**

5.8.1 There is a positive link between increasing the supply of housing, along with investing into the condition of private housing in the district and the broader Health and Wellbeing agenda.

5.9 **Risk Management**

5.9.1 There are risks to the authority associated with certain courses of action designed to bring empty homes back into use. For example, the use of non-mandatory enforcement powers (i.e. Compulsory Purchase, Empty Dwelling Management Orders etc.) carry with them certain degrees of financial risk. However, decisions to utilise these powers will be made on a case by case basis and only where enforcement action is deemed as the last option available to the authority to bring a dwelling back into use.

5.10 **Safeguarding**

5.10.1 It is the opinion of the report author that there are no implications.

5.11 **Staffing**

5.11.1 There are staffing implications of undertaking additional work on empty homes. The Authority recruited additional resource during early 2014 to support the Council's work in this area.

5.12 Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales

5.12.1 There are no known implications for stakeholders, but empty homes work will require the Council to adopt a partnership approach. There are no known implications in terms of timescales and consultation.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 All Wards

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 None

Background papers: - **Addressing Long Term Empty Homes in South Holland. July 2015**

Lead Contact Officer

Name and Post: Phil Stacey. Senior Housing Advice Officer
Telephone Number: 01775 764605
Email: philstacey@sholland.gov.uk

Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A: Briefing Report – Empty Homes in South Holland Update