

ITEM 10 (a)

Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 21st November 2007

Subject: Outcomes of research into the housing market in Leeds

<p>Electoral wards affected: All</p> <input type="checkbox"/> <p>Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)</p>
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<p>Specific implications for:</p> <p>Ethnic minorities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Women <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disabled people <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the gap <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Over the past year, a number of pieces of research have been commissioned by both the council and private sector housing providers to provide a robust evidence base from which to plan the future of housing in Leeds. The research undertaken includes:
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment
 - Research into Demand for Council Housing
 - City Centre Housing research
 - Housing and Economic growth in the Leeds City Region research
 - Student Housing research
 - West Yorkshire BME Housing research
 - West Yorkshire Private Rented Sector research
- 1.2 The Council, in conjunction with the Leeds Housing Partnership, commissioned the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA). Communities and Local Government require this assessment to review future demand across all housing tenures.
- 1.3 In addition, as a linked piece of research, the Demand for Council Housing research focused on the movement and changes that have occurred over recent years in the

supply and demand of social housing, and to understand who was accessing council homes.

- 1.4 Both reports were completed in summer 2007. The HMA involved:
- a review of secondary data, and other research and evidence;
 - a survey of 3,543 households, assessing housing demand both across tenure and across the city;
 - additional reports on older people, Black and Minority Ethnic needs, and rural housing needs in the city.
- 1.5 The HMA stated that 1889 new affordable homes per annum were required to meet housing needs in the city. The Demand for Social Housing research predominantly analysed the drivers for demand, including a detailed analysis of the current customer profiles of those who want council housing.
- 1.6 The Demand for Social Housing research supported the HMA in showing considerably more demand than supply of social housing, and recommended a number of measures to increase supply. In addition, it showed that the future tenant base is changing, due to rehousing those in greater housing need. As a result, a change in the way housing management services are provided will be required.

The research into housing and employment growth in the Leeds City Region identified a need to improve the supply of housing, and the quality and range of the housing offered, if continued economic growth is to continue. Housing for low paid workers is as important as provision of high quality housing options for high earners.

The external research carried out by DTZ into city centre housing that was highlighted in the local press, found that demand for city living had not proved to be as robust as initially anticipated. There is potentially an oversupply of apartments, as shown by the relatively high level of empty properties, especially in the 'fringe' city centre developments. It also showed that there could be future demand from low paid city centre workers for cheaper rented housing in Leeds City Centre.

The increase in purpose built accommodation for students has led to unlet shared housing in the Leeds 6, area and action is now needed to bring those back into use.

2.0 Presentation submitted to the Board

- 2.1 The analysis from all this research has been placed into a presentation for the Board to comment on. The presentation sets out the following key areas for further discussion.
- An overview of the research.
 - The current Leeds Housing Markets – key issues across the housing market zones.
 - Emerging demand for both owner occupied and social housing.
 - The change in the size of properties across the city.
 - Entry level salaries for buyers across the city.

- An overall assessment of the targets to increase affordable housing and current delivery.
- The effects of the changes to the levels of affordable housing on a scheme.

2.2 Members should note that officers from Development Department in conjunction with officers from Environment and Neighbourhoods are starting the work to produce the Supplementary Document on Affordable Housing that will replace the existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Affordable Housing.

2.3 The Housing Market Assessment for Leeds has identified the need to set affordable housing provision between 25 to 40%. The Regional Spatial Strategy envisages 30 to 40 % affordable housing across Leeds. The Supplementary Planning Document will need to conform to the regional objectives.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 Members are requested to consider the information in the presentation and comment on key issues identified.