

<b>REPORT TO</b>	<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>
Cabinet	9th January 2013

Report template revised June 2008



<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
South Ribble Tenancy Strategy 2013	Cllr Cliff Hughes	Jane Maguire	6

## SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This reports links to the corporate priorities of a Strong South Ribble in the heart of a prosperous Central Lancashire, and strong and healthy communities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council in order to progress the strategy through to implementation:

- Approve the contents of the draft Strategy for consultation purposes
- Delegates to the Director of Planning and Housing in consultation with Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing the power to amend the draft Strategy in the light of any representations made during the consultation period and to then implement.

## DETAILS AND REASONING

### Background

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare and publish a Tenancy strategy, and a document should be available by the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The strategy should set out matters that the Local Housing Authority would want providers of social housing and Registered Providers to have regard to when formulating their own tenancy policies, in the light of the reforms to social housing tenure.

The Localism Act offers a number of new opportunities for social housing providers. They are able to offer flexible/fixed term tenancies on new lettings and in property developed with funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) under the affordable homes programme.

The affordable rent model forms part of the new definition of affordable housing, under the National Planning policy framework and allow rents to be charged at no more than 80% of the local market rate (including service charges) as opposed to social rent where target rents are set through the national rent regime.

Any future housing developed under the HCA programme will be required to be let at the affordable rent levels with the opportunity for these to be fixed term as opposed to lifetime tenancies.

Consultation with providers in the area indicates that whilst they will convert homes to the affordable rent levels, they will continue to provide lifetime tenancies.

## The main aims of the strategy are to:

- Set out expectations for the housing providers that work or intend to work in the area to ensure that their policies make the best use of social and affordable housing and contribute to sustaining communities.
- Set out the matters that housing providers should consider when developing policies in relation to types of tenancy, circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy, length of term and circumstance when a further tenancy will be granted.
- Set out the principles that providers need to consider if offering a fixed term tenancy and that they should be for no less than 5 years.

## Consultation

The strategy has been written and developed in consultation with Preston and Chorley Council, and with representatives of the main Registered Providers in the area. However the finished document needs to go out to final consultation before publication and formal adoption for a four week period ending on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

An equality impact assessment has been carried out.

## Conclusion

On approval of the strategy a final consultation exercise will be carried out on the completed document and made available on the website and to all partners.

## WIDER IMPLICATIONS

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its proposals in all the areas listed below, and the table shows any implications in respect of each of these.

<b>FINANCIAL</b>	There are no direct financial costs to the Council as a result of this strategy.  The affordable rent model will ensure that rent levels do not exceed 80% of the market rents and the strategy requires policies to specify that rent levels should not exceed local housing allowance rates.
<b>LEGAL</b>	The document ensures that South Ribble Council has a strategy as required by the Localism Act.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Notes from Charter Institute of Housing  
Shelter – Local decisions on tenure reform 2012