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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> July 2004</b>	<b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	<b>OPEN PARAGRAPH NO: NA</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>BEVERLY WAGSTAFFE Ext 5822</b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>A NEW HOUSING STRATEGY FOR 2004 - 2009</b>	<b>REF: BW</b>
<b>WARD (S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: CS01</b>

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**1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 Members approve the proposed Housing Strategy for 2004 – 2009.
- 1.2 The Housing Strategy for 2004-2009 is formally submitted to the Government Office for East Midlands to be assessed against the “Fit for Purpose” criteria.
- 1.3 That authority is given to the Director of Community Services to make minor amendments as a result of comments received from the Government Office for East Midlands following formal assessment of the Strategy.

**2.0 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To bring before Committee a new Housing Strategy for 2004-2009 which meets the Governments “Fit for Purpose” criteria.

**3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 In 2002 the Government took steps to reduce the burden on Councils having to annually submit an updated Housing Strategy in July of each year. Authorities are now required to submit a “Fit for Purpose” Strategy, which can be for up to a 5-year period. Once the standard has been achieved Authorities are expected to concentrate resources on delivering the Strategy and annually submit to the Government Office a progress report on delivery of the action plan. There is an expectation that as the needs analysis and understanding of the Housing Market is developed that the Strategy will be accordingly reviewed. See Annexe A regarding the “Fit for Purpose” criteria.
- 3.2 In July 2002 the Council submitted its’ first Housing Strategy which would be assessed against the new criteria. In January 2003 feedback was received from the Government Office outlining the action required to meet “Fit for Purpose”. A summary of comments is detailed in Annexe B.

- 3.3 Whilst the Strategy is of a slightly different format to the 2002 submission, it not a complete rewrite. The Strategy has merely been developed to meet the criteria. Hence, some chapters such as the resource chapter are very similar to that previously submitted. The main difference between this strategy and the previous submission is that the housing needs chapter has been expanded to take more account of vulnerable groups and the Strategy more clearly demonstrates how linkages are made with other related sub-strategies and partners.
- 3.4 There has been wide consultation with partners and stakeholders to identify the key housing issues and priorities for the district. Consultation commenced in May 2003 with the Strategic Housing event whereby partners were asked to indicate what they saw as the key housing issues. This was followed by a series of one-to one meetings between appropriate partners and the Housing Strategy Manager, e.g. Connexions, Social Services, etc. As it became clear as to what the key issues were consultation took the form of asking partners to challenge the issues identified. Opportunity was taken to use the April 2004 Local Supporting People Inclusive Forum event to consult with partners and service users. A further Strategic Housing event was held in May 2004 with partners being consulted on the key issues and being asked to prioritise the issues. Following this event a one-to one meeting was held between the Lead Investment Officer for the Housing Corporation and the Housing Strategy Manager to discuss the opportunities for working with the Housing Corporation to delivery some of the priorities. The Housing Corporation have indicated that the opportunities for South Derbyshire are rural housing and affordable housing on the Derby fringe. Finally, a meeting of the Core Strategic Housing Group was held in early June to discuss the out come of the consultation process. The order of priorities are those that were agreed by partners at the Strategic Housing event held on May 2004

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None

#### **5.0 Corporate Implications**

- 5.1 The Housing Strategy is an over-arching document that reviews housing-related issues in a local authority's area and sets out its housing objectives. It is a key strategy delivering the housing elements of the Corporate Plan.

#### **6.0 Conclusion**

- 6.1 Since August 2003 the Housing Strategy Manager has been working closely with the Government Office to develop a "Fit for Purpose" Housing Strategy for South Derbyshire.
- 6.2 The Government Office has indicated that in essence the Strategy meets the criteria and is happy that the Strategy is now formally submitted for assessment.