

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 7 December 2005

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr M. Heavens

**Subject: Epping Forest Local Supporting People Strategy 2005-2009
Six-month Progress Report (August 2005)**

**Officer contact for further information: Alan Hall, Head of Housing Services
Committee Secretary: Zoe Folley**



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Six-month Progress Report for the Epping Forest Local Supporting People Strategy 2005-2009, attached, be considered.

Background

1. At its meeting held on 29 March 2005, the former Overview and Scrutiny Committee (1) considered the Draft Epping Forest Local Supporting People Strategy 2005-2009, and recommended its adoption to the Cabinet, which was subsequently agreed by the Cabinet on 25 April 2005.
2. “Supporting People” is a major Government initiative, which introduced a new policy and funding framework for supported housing and ancillary welfare services in April 2003. It brought together a range of national and local funding regimes and consolidated them into a cash-limited “single pot”, administered by a Commissioning Body at the County level.
3. Supported housing includes the provision of accommodation for the elderly, physically disabled, people with learning disabilities, the mentally ill, young people with drug and alcohol problems etc.
4. As the “administering body” for Supporting People in Essex (excluding Southend and Thurrock), Essex County Council is responsible for producing an Essex Supporting People Strategy. However, in view of the importance of supported housing in the District, fairly uniquely, the District Council produces an annual Local Supporting People Strategy in liaison with the District Supporting People Core Strategy Group, which comprises agencies involved with supported housing in the District. The Local Strategy sets out the local planning and delivering of high quality housing-related support services to vulnerable people.
5. Local providers and user representatives involved in supported housing were consulted on the Local Strategy through the Epping Forest Inclusive Forum, which comprises such representatives, prior to consideration by the Committee.

Six-month Progress Report on the Key Action Plan

6. An important part of the Epping Forest Local Supporting People Strategy, approved by the Cabinet in April 2005, is the Key Action Plan, which comprises all the separate tasks required to develop supported housing in the District. Having formulated the Action Plan, it is clearly important to monitor progress. Therefore, in accordance with good practice, a Six-month Progress Report on the Key Action Plan has been produced. Consideration of the Six-month Progress Report is included within the Housing Scrutiny Panel’s Terms of Reference,

and is therefore attached for consideration by the Panel.

7. The next Local Supporting People Strategy will be produced in February/March 2006, to cover the period 2006-2010, following consultation with the Epping Forest Inclusive Forum in late 2005.