Summary

This report proposes that the Council pursues a Choice Based Lettings Scheme through a partnership with Eden, Carlisle and the Registered Social Landlords in the three Districts. Government grant is available towards the establishment of the scheme and it is proposed that South Lakeland acts as lead authority for that funding.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the partnership initiative to establish a Choice Based Lettings Scheme.
2. Agree that this Council acts as lead authority for the grant funding associated with the scheme.
3. Note that Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee resolved that Members should consider and offer views on how Choice Based Lettings in East Cumbria can best be approached in order to support home seekers in South Lakeland.

Report

1. Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the attached report on 22 November 2007. The proposal to establish an East Cumbrian Choice Based Lettings Scheme is a good opportunity to work in partnership and earn grant funding towards the initial costs.

2. Since the Overview & Scrutiny report was written, Officers have had discussions with colleagues in the other Districts and with CLG about South Lakeland taking on the role of accountable body for the partnership. It is apparent that this role is less one of accountable body and more one of acting as a ‘post box’ or conduit for grant payments between CLG and the partners. On this basis, South Lakeland District Council officers can recommend that the Council takes on the role, with necessary safeguards from partners in respect of their share of the costs and funding.

3. Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed this recommendation and the two recommendations stated in the original report.

Alternative Options

Rejection of the partnership proposal would delay the introduction of Choice Based Lettings and would tend to lead to increased costs.

Refusal to act as lead authority for the grant funding would lead to an impasse as both Eden and Carlisle are reluctant to take this role.
Key Decision
This report contributes to Key Decision KD07/057/H&D which appears in the Forward Plan for the period 1 December 2007 to 31 March 2008.

Material Considerations
Finance
As outlined in the accompanying report

Risk Management
The following risk is identified in addition to those in the original report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Controls required</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The lead authority role is onerous or exposes the Council to an under-recovery of costs.</td>
<td>Staff time is devoted to Choice Based Lettings at the expense of other priorities. Financial loss to the Council.</td>
<td>Clear responsibilities will be established from the outset. Grant guidelines will be followed by South Lakeland District Council and partners, who will be required to carry their own financial risks.</td>
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</tbody>
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Staffing
Per original report.

Links to Corporate Plan
Per original report.

Links to Other Strategic Plan(s)
Not applicable.

Equalities & Diversity
Per original report.

Community Safety
Not applicable

Background Documents
Document: Correspondence with CLG and prospective partners
Contact: Jack Jones

Date: 27/11/2007
Version No:
Amended by: