

BURNLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO THE FULL COUNCIL

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PORTFOLIO: HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COUNCILLOR HOWARD BAKER

DATE OF REPORT: 20/12/2012

Progress on Strategic Objectives

PE3 Ensuring services to vulnerable groups are protected wherever possible	
Action	Progress
PE3a: Proactively work with residents vulnerable to losing their home through preventative strategies	The Council are currently beginning the production of a new five year Prevention of Homelessness Strategy, which will be completed by the end of March 2013. We continue to maximise our capacity to tackle homelessness and ensure that we provide effective advice, and sustainable housing solutions. At the end of the second quarter we had 14 households in temporary accommodation and had prevented 78 households from becoming homeless by using a variety of tools we have available under the Council's preventing homelessness programme. We also provided housing advice to 283 households, all of which contributes to reducing instances of homelessness and minimising spend on temporary accommodation.
PE3b: Ensure quality housing services are available to vulnerable, elderly and disabled residents	Vulnerable, elderly and disabled residents have access to suitable homes through the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and Emergency Works Grants (EWG). So

	far this year 123 DFGs have been approved 89 of which have been completed and 19 EWGs have been approved of which 18 have been completed. Preston Care and Repair is the provider of The Handyperson scheme in Burnley. This enables elderly residents to have minor repairs carried out to their properties.
PL1 Making the Borough Cleaner	
Action	Progress
PL1a: Complete the delivery of committed Housing Market Renewal work for which funding is available	Work on the Empty Homes Clusters programme has started with 4 properties in the process of being bought, by agreement, for renovation and re- sale. A report to Executive in November saw 8 properties agreed for Compulsory Purchase, and a second report in December added a further 12 properties. These CPOs will commence in December if agreement cannot be reached with the owners. We have in the region of 30 properties that are being investigated for the Empty Property Loan scheme with the first loan agreed at the end of November. The Empty Homes "LinkedUp" scheme is progressing with a batch of properties agreed across Pennine Lancashire for either purchase or transfer into the private sector leasing scheme. Several properties in Burnley have been identified for both Calico and the Together Housing Group to take forward. The Government announced a further Empty Homes programme in late November. We are currently preparing a submission to it.
PL2 Making the Borough Safer	
Action	Progress
PL2b - Work with our trade partners on improvements to the taxi service.	Liaison meetings between People, Law and Regulation Head of Service, Licensing Manager and Principal Licensing Officer and the hackney and private hire trade representatives are continuing on a regular basis.
PL2c – Deliver the Selective Licensing pilot in Trinity	The Council has issued 499 licences to 296 landlords for properties in the Trinity selective licensing area. The pilot now has broad landlord support and the Council and our partners continue to work closely

together to maximise the benefits of the programme.

We are in the process of revoking two of the management orders that were issued as one property has become vacant and the other property has now applied for a licence and has demonstrated that satisfactory management is in place.

The Executive approved the tendering of a contract for a management company to carry out further management orders where required and this tender exercise commenced on 23rd November, with an anticipated contract start date of 14th January 2013. This tender also includes the private sector leasing scheme that is being developed as part of the Clusters of Empty Homes Loan Scheme.

PL3 Making the Borough Greener

Action

Progress

PL3b - Improve energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and help tackle climate change

Energy efficiency improvements are being achieved through the Burnley Heating Rebate Scheme and the Lancashire Home Insulation project. This year 123 heating rebates have been awarded, 91 properties have received free loft insulations and 33 properties have benefited from cavity wall insulation.

In the New Year, the Council will progress a community energy bulk buying scheme. The objective is to help local residents get a better deal for gas and electricity. In addition, we are also submitting a proposal under the Government's Green Deal programme, which if successful will be targeting as a pilot properties that are "hard to treat" with traditional energy efficiency measures.