

**Agenda Item No:**

**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny (Services)

**Date of Meeting:** 17th March 2008

**Report Title:** Empty Homes Strategy Policy Development Final Report

**Report By:** Mark Preston, Housing Renewal Manager

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**Purpose of Report**

To advise members of the Service Scrutiny Committee of a Project Board review undertaken to develop a revised Empty Homes Strategy for Hastings.

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**Recommendation(s)**

1. That the revised Empty Homes Strategy be taken forward to Cabinet for adoption by the Council.

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**Reasons for Recommendations**

Though significant progress has been made in returning empty homes to use, further work remains to sustain improvement. Sufficient resources remain in place to continue to drive forward improvement. The revised strategy builds upon the success of the previous strategy and puts forward the Council's continued commitment to returning empty homes to use.

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**Background**

1. The purpose of the review was to consider the existing empty homes strategy and progress to date and to take account of developments both locally and regionally, with national emphasis (where appropriate), to inform a revised strategy to carry the Council forward for a further 5 years (2008 – 2013). A copy of the project initiation document is attached at Appendix 1.
2. The Project Board had an initial scoping meeting in August 2007. At subsequent meetings the Board took the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the existing

strategy. The Board critically examined the draft strategy, to ensure the revised strategy is fit for purpose and meets the objectives of the organisation for the next 5 years.

3. This has culminated in the Board developing a revised strategy for consideration. The revised strategy is attached in full at Appendix 2.
4. The Board also considered the Empty Homes Action Plan. This is attached in full at Appendix 3. This represents a fluid document designed to monitor the performance against the strategic objectives of the strategy.

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### **Wards Affected**

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

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### **Area(s) Affected**

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St. Leonards, South St. Leonards

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### **Policy Implications**

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	Yes

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### **Supporting Documents**

Appendix 1 - Project Initiation Document  
Appendix 2 - Revised Empty Homes Strategy 2008 - 2013  
Appendix 3 - Empty Homes Strategy 2008 - 2013 Action Plan

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### **Officer to Contact**

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*It is not possible to publish Appendix 2 on the Internet due to the complex images it contains. If you require a copy, please contact Katrina Strong by email at [kstrong@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:kstrong@hastings.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01424 451747*

