

Affordable Rural Housing Task and Finish Group – Review Recommendations

In line with the adopted Terms of Reference (as set out at Appendix A), the Overview and Scrutiny Committee established an 'Affordable Rural Housing' Task and Finish Group (Minute O&S.56/21 refers).

The Task and Finish Group consisted of eight Members:

Cllrs Smerdon (Chairman); Birch; Foss; McKay; O'Callaghan; Reeve; Sweett and Taylor.

The Group met on a number of occasions and were supported by the Head of Housing; the Senior Specialist (Place Making) and, at the last Group meeting, the Senior Case Manager (Democratic Services).

Working within the adopted terms of reference, the Group has identified the following organisation(s) and/or projects that have successfully increased the delivery of affordable housing within local authority boundaries:

1. Affordable rented housing projects in rural areas that have arisen as a result of a partnership between the local authority and housing associations or other partners. Such examples are:-
 - The projects shown in the case studies detailed on the website of the Rural Housing Alliance provide examples of ways of delivering affordable rented housing in rural areas as a result of partnership between local authorities and housing associations, Examples include those at Hullavington, Upper Minety and Ilmington;
 - North Devon working with Community Land Trusts to generate 57 affordable homes; and
 - Sedgemoor District Council working with South Western Housing Society and Homes England to carry out a development of 12 affordable rented homes for local people in the village of Mark;
2. The Cornwall Community Land Trust. The Trust's formation resulted from a nationally acclaimed pilot scheme. Cornwall County Council provided the initial funding. It is a registered provider of social housing and an investment partner for Homes England.

Having undertaken its Review, the Group has put forward the following recommendations for the onward consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Task and Finish Group RECOMMEND to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to RECOMMEND to the Executive that:

- 1. Officers explore the formation of a Strategic Partnership with a Housing Association (or Housing Associations) and other partners to deliver affordable rented housing through schemes similar to those mentioned at discussion point 1 (above), with such partnership(s) to include the location of suitable sites within the district; and**
- 2. Officers explore the setting up of a Community Land Trust modelled on the Cornwall Community Land Trust; including the possibility of working with other Devon local authorities in its formation; and**
- 3. The list of exemplar schemes be submitted to officers and that these be used to identify best practice for sites in the South Hams.**