RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

COMMUNITY SAFETY – Ensuring that communities are safe and secure
CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – Providing excellent customer focused services
ENVIRONMENT – Promoting and enhancing a clean and sustainable environment
REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities
SOCIAL INCLUSION – Promoting fairness, equality and lifelong learning.

TARGETS
NI155 – Affordable Housing
PSA7 – Decency in the Private Sector
Increasing the value of residential asset bases

VALUE FOR MONEY
Working in partnership enables the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area to lobby effectively for funding and to have a strong voice at the Sheffield City Region table.
THE REPORT

1.0 Executive Summary

At the 31st March 2009 meeting of the Joint Board, it was agreed that:

(1) the Joint Board note the work undertaken within the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area (HMA)
(2) that the proposed governance structure for delivery of the Sub Regional Housing Strategy be approved.

This report updates the Joint Board as to progress since that date.

2.0 Background

2.1 The authorities of Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield Borough and North East Derbyshire District Council’s have been identified as being in one Housing Market Area (HMA) by the 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Northern Sub Region.

2.2 Several Government reports published in 2008 reinforced the case for a sub regional approach to growth and investment and advocated a requirement for cross boundary work in terms of housing supply and economic development.

2.3 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) formed November 1st 2008 has confirmed that funding allocations termed “Local Investment Agreements” and covering regeneration/new build programmes of potentially up to ten years, will take place at HMA level.

2.4 In order to establish key housing objectives and guide housing-based investment, the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA, commissioned a joint Housing Strategy through Sheffield Hallam University, due for completion April 2009.

2.5 Because the Strategic Housing Market Assessment identified the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA as sitting within the Sheffield City Region, there has been a requirement for the HMA Housing Strategy to face:

a. south to take account of the East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy and to reflect political reality.
b. north to take account of Sheffield City Region Housing Strategy and to reflect Strategic Housing Market Assessment findings.

However, the primary requirement of the HMA Housing Strategy is to reflect the individuality and uniqueness of the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area as a great place to live and work, now and in the future.
2.6 Governance arrangements to ensure delivery of the joint Housing Strategy at HMA level have been formulated and were reported to the 31st March Leaders Forum.

3.0 Housing Market Area Update

3.1 Governance - HMA governance arrangements have been through full approval processes at Bassetlaw and North East Derbyshire District Council’s and partially through systems at Chesterfield Borough and Bolsover District Council’s. For some authorities there was a requirement to wait for the outcome of the Sheffield City Region Pilot bid announced in the April 17th budget.

3.2 Governance - The May 14th HMA Housing Meeting was officer chaired owing to the inability of the Bassetlaw Member to attend/vote for Member Chair. The agenda of the meeting reflected the level at which the group will operate with the Regional Director of the HCA and the Head of Housing Policy at the East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) both contributors.

3.3 Housing Growth - EMRA confirmed that in terms of future housing growth decisions, the HMA Housing Strategy, its’ key objectives and its’ evidence basis, would be a contributory factor in allocations of housing numbers. To this end, there was a clear request from EMRA that the distinctiveness of the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA should be highlighted.

3.4 Links to Economic Development - The HCA stated that whilst HMA’s with growth point status were being focussed upon in the first round of funding discussions (or “Single Conversations”), that did not mean that remaining HMA’s do not have a job of work to do in collating evidence basis as to why and where investment is needed. To this end, the HMA Housing Strategy was welcomed.

The Regional Director also confirmed that for the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA to provide the best opportunities for HCA investment, links should be made with Economic Development. Housing interventions in isolation, will be less persuasive.

3.5 HMA Capacity Building - Head of Operations at Bassetlaw District Council detailed the Sheffield City Region Range and Quality Contract, procured and contract managed by Bolsover District Council, and based on research findings that the quality of the City Region housing offer is likely to act as a brake on economic competitiveness.

Consultants Taylor Young and Ekosgen have been appointed to deliver the contract with initial findings as follows:

- Marked regional differences in place making funding and capacity at Regional Development Agency and Local Authority level.
- Marked differences in tools and methodology employed in delivering the place making agenda at Local Authority level.
- A requirement for the East Midlands authorities to focus on marketing and developing a “vision” for the residential offer in their HMA.
- CABE analysis that new build developments in the East Midlands Region as a whole, score low on design quality assessments when placed in a national context.

Secondary findings required from the contract are “quality of place” assessments of individual settlements across the City Region with associated recommendations as to interventions required. Finally, it was confirmed that the completed evidence base, will be used to:

- Lobby the HCA for funding through the Single Conversation process.
- Demonstrate the requirement for EMDA to revisit the place making agenda.

3.6 Strategic Direction - The draft HMA Housing Strategy refers to the Range and Quality contract in some detail. The draft Strategy completion date is extended to June 2009 having been sub contracted to Ekosgen by Professor Cole at CRESR. Officers present confirmed that the new document is much improved with compelling evidence basis:

In addition to providing robust evidence basis and analysis of the Housing Market Area, the new draft has honed key objectives:
1: Extending Housing Choice
3: Improving the Quality of Housing
4: Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Groups
5: Place Shaping for Sustainable Communities
6: Delivery and Management Arrangements

Appendix A shows the HMA Partnership Group made up of strategic housing leads. Operational delivery of the HMA Housing Strategy will be tasked to this group.

3.7 Strategic Delivery - A further agenda item on HMA delivery vehicles was deferred through lack of time. However, the meeting was verbally referred to the governance structure (Appendix A) and the identification of an appropriate regeneration delivery vehicle. It was confirmed that a number of asset backed delivery models exist that could take account of the two stock retaining and two ALMO structures including Mutuals, Developer Panels and Local Housing Companies. The persuasiveness of presenting the HCA with a single delivery mechanism was put forward.

A paper exploring asset backed delivery mechanisms for Housing Regeneration and Renewal was requested for the August meeting of the governance group.

3.8 Private Sector Renewal – Meden Valley Making Places presented an operational agenda item on the Empty Properties project at the request of NEDDC. It was outlined that the project would work alongside Bolsover District and Mansfield District enforcement teams and had the potential to focus on some buildings of architectural merit. Bolsover District confirmed that the project was useful from a worklessness training angle and that the first hurdle had been passed in attracting Working Neighbourhoods Funding.

RECOMMENDATION(S)
1. The Joint Board note the progress of the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA
2. The Joint Board request a presentation on asset backed regeneration delivery vehicles.
3. The Joint Board request a presentation on the findings of the Range and Quality contract and its implications at RDA level
4. The Joint Board request a presentation on the cost effectiveness of enforcement led private sector renewal as part of an holistic approach to regeneration.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION
1. To keep the Board informed of progress

ATTACHMENT: Appendix A
FILE REFERENCE: please complete
SOURCE DOCUMENT: please complete