

ITEM 11 – MOTIONS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL ASSEMBLY – COMMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTORS

APPENDIX 2 YOUTH PROVISION

Comments of the Strategic Director of Children's Services

1. The Executive received the Officer response to the Youth Review on 28 April 2009 and a scrutiny report on the Youth Offending Team. The Youth Review is completed and ongoing work is being done which will be presented to a future meeting of the Executive.

APPENDIX 5 - COUNCIL HOUSING FOR SOUTHWARK

Comments of the Strategic Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods

2. Following the Budget announcement, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has confirmed a Challenge Fund of £100m for local authorities to develop new properties. The funding is available over the next 2 years - £30m in 2009-10 and £70m in 2010/11. The HCA have issued the guidance for applications to the fund which is a subset of the National Affordable Housing Programme. There will be two bidding rounds, the first requiring bids by 31st July 2009 with results in September, and the second with submission of bids by 30th October, with results being announced in December. The first round is for schemes that authorities consider can move swiftly through the planning process.
3. The HCA guidance sets the following conditions:
 - The funding will cover the cost of development and the increase in public borrowing arising from consequential prudential borrowing.
 - Rental income will be outside the current HRA subsidy system.
 - Council land will be contributed at nil value.
 - New homes will be for social rent only.
 - New homes will need to be additional, not diverted from another delivery mechanism.
 - New homes will need to be built to Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) Level 3 at least but there is strong encouragement to aim higher.
 - Authorities will need to pre-qualify as an investment partner through the HCA.
 - The assessment criteria will be the same as for the HCA's National Affordable Homes Programme (NAHP). The four key criteria are value for money, deliverability, strategic fit, design and quality.
4. Officers are currently in discussion with the HCA on the means for bringing forward housing schemes in the borough. Work is being undertaken to assess the guidance in detail and to analyse the impact for the council of developing council homes on the terms established by the guidance.
5. In addition, it is recommended that officers identify suitable sites where a development may be brought forward in one or other of the bidding rounds, and also make an application for pre-qualification to the HCA.