

**West of England Partnership
Planning, Housing & Communities Board
7th September 2009**

Private Sector Renewal Funding bid 2010/11

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To outline the proposed allocation of Private Sector Renewal funding by the SW Regional Assembly during 2010/11.

2. Background

- 2.1 The level of Private Sector Renewal (PSR) funding in 2010/11 will be £27m across the SW of England. This funding is used by LA's to improve housing conditions as is part of the local authority function of 'annually considering the condition of housing in their areas'.
- 2.2 Private sector renewal funding has traditionally been used by LA's to offer grants, loans and other forms of financial assistance to homeowners and private landlords to assist low income, vulnerable households improve their housing conditions and remain living independently in their own homes.
- 2.3 For the 2009/10 PSR allocation round, the Regional Assembly introduced a bidding round of for allocating Private Sector Renewal allocations. 30% of the allocation was available for bidding and 70% was allocated using the CLG 'Ready Reconnor' to identify the level of non decency in each LA area.
- 2.4 A letter has been sent by South West Council's (who have taken over from the Regional Assembly) to all Local Housing Authority CEO's outlining the proposals for 2010/11.

3. Proposed change to finding

- 3.1 South West Council's have agreed to the following changes to Private Sector Renewal allocations in 2010/11:

a) Percentage of allocation bid for:

- 3.2 The percentage of funding now available for bidding has increased to 50% in 2010/11 from 30% in 2009/10.

- 50% (£13.5m) allocated through the normal formula and;
- 50% (£13.5m) allocated through a bidding round between SW LA's.

b) Loans

- 3.3 There will be no top slicing of the 50% allocated from the bidding round to support the creation of Local Authority loan schemes where these are not currently available. Those authorities who do not currently operate a loan scheme must submit a bid to set one of these up if they apply for Private Sector Renewal funding in 2010/11. This does not apply to the WOE LA's.

4. **The bidding round**

- 4.1 The Regional Assembly are keen to encourage each LA to submit partnership bids with other LA's and target these at delivering one or more of the following national and regional objectives:

- Increasing the use of loans/equity release schemes;
- Delivering action on climate change/tackling fuel poverty;
- Promoting independence and well-being;
- Increasing the use of loans/equity release;
- Tackling cat 1 failures under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System and meeting the decent homes standard;
- Reducing the number of empty properties.

- 4.2 An application form will be produced and these will be assessed on:

- Whether the outputs are clear and likely to be achieved;
- The level of public/private sector leverage the project will bring;
- How the project delivers value for money;
- Partnership working between LA's and other agencies.

- 4.3 LA's with a good track record on past performance in terms of previous PSR spend and achievements against agreed targets will be viewed favourably.

5. **Proposal**

- 5.1 The West of England Housing Officer Group have agreed that a strategically aligned bid is submitted to South West Councils to target a range of initiatives at improving housing conditions and thermal efficiency within hard to treat/and/or non traditionally built properties within the sub-region during 2010/11. The types of properties covered within the submission will include hard to treat properties¹, mobile homes, single brick extensions and pre-caste concrete properties.

- 5.2 The four West of England LA's will therefore send a submission with an overall aim of:

'Improving housing conditions and insulation measures for non traditionally built properties in the West of England area. The measures will be principally targeted at vulnerable households'.

5.3 The deadline for the submission of bids is noon the 2nd of October.

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¹ Hard to treat include those properties which cannot be made more thermally efficient by the usual package of loft and cavity wall insulation and also those properties that are situated off-gas to reduce fuel costs and improve energy efficiency.