

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy (Introduced by the Executive Member for Partnerships and Planning)	Executive Cabinet	20 October 2011

CHORLEY RURAL HOUSING NEEDS STUDY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform Executive Members of the major findings and recommendations of the Chorley Rural Housing Needs Study 2011.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That Members note the findings of the survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The rural housing needs study was commissioned to provide robust evidence of housing need in rural parishes in the borough in order to allow this need to be mitigated by housing policy. Rurality is one of Chorley Council's nine equality strands, and there was a general assumption that certain households in rural areas may be in more acute housing need due to housing related costs and the restricted supply. The main purpose of this study was to highlight and measure this housing need, and make recommendations that will help meet this need.
4. The study was carried out with the cooperation and involvement of several of the rural parishes, and the main primary research that informed this study was carried out via a postal questionnaire to which 1,258 of the 5,330 households contacted responded. The response rate of 23.6% exceeded the target of 20% returns, and enabled statistically robust analyses to be possible.
5. The survey found that there would be estimated 2,114 current households in rural parishes intended or needed to move in the next five years, with over half wishing to remain in their current parish. However 89% would be able to rent or buy on the open market. However only 85% of newly forming households would be able to afford to rent or buy on the open market, with 1,713 new households expected to be formed in the next 5 years and over half preferring to remain in their existing parish.
6. The study highlighted a need for increased supply of accommodation suitable for older people such as a bungalow, and this in turn would increase the supply of family sized housing.
7. The net need for new affordable properties over the next 5 years is 742, and these are shown split by the 15 rural parishes in the main report.

8. The following recommendations are made in the report:

8.1 That Chorley Council takes into account this report when considering any new residential development in a rural parish, especially the highlighted need for all tenures of affordable housing, and that Chorley Council balances the aspirations of new households for home ownership with the highly apparent need for increased numbers of social housing, including social rented accommodation.

8.2 Where housing need can only be met by new social rented properties, wherever possible local lettings policies should be applied to prioritise households with a local connection, along with similar criteria for the sale of intermediate ownership properties.

8.3 At planning application stage Chorley Council's Strategic Housing function looks at models of intermediate ownership which will allow new households in rural parishes to fulfil their aspiration to buy given that take into account the affordability issues raised in this report.

8.4 The Strategic Housing function should also do more to raise awareness of and promote intermediate home ownership models and availability, as the study highlighted a possible gap in knowledge of the benefits of this tenure.

8.5 That new residential developments take into account older people's housing needs, which are for mainly 2 (and some 3) bedroom semi-detached bungalows.

8.6 That Chorley Council promotes the borough's housing related support services including the Home Improvement Agency, to ensure rural parishes are fully aware of DFGs and support to enable people to live independently in their own homes.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

9. To recognise extent of housing need in rural parishes, particularly affordability of newly forming households, many of which are likely to be displaced from their communities which compromises sustainability.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

10. Not applicable.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

11. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Strong Family Support	✓	Education and Jobs	
Being Healthy		Pride in Quality Homes and Clean Neighbourhoods	✓
Safe Respectful Communities		Quality Community Services and Spaces	
Vibrant Local Economy		Thriving Town Centre, Local Attractions and Villages	
A Council that is a consistently Top Performing Organisation and Delivers Excellent Value for Money			

BACKGROUND

12. This is a follow on study to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment of Central Lancashire in 2009.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

13. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal		No significant implications in this area	

COMMENTS OF HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

14. As noted in the main body of the report; rurality is one of the council's equality strands contained within its Equality Scheme. This survey and its results will fulfil a useful role and evidence base in informing decisions on the provision and design of housing in rural areas. The recommendations made within the report should support this consideration in being made.

LESLEY-ANN FENTON
DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING AND POLICY

Appendix A is a copy of the full report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Mick Coogan	5552	September 2011	

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Chorley Rural Housing Needs Study 2011	September 2011		Included with this report

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Mick Coogan	5552	September 2011	***