

Homes England

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

This paper introduces the item on the role of Homes England. Peter Freeman, Chair of Homes England, Paul Kitson, Interim Executive Director of Markets, Partners and Places and Debbie Ward, Director of Local Government Capacity Centre will be attending.

Recommendation

The item is for update and discussion.

Action

As directed by the Board

Contact officer: Jo Allchurch
Position: Senior Adviser
Phone no: 07900 931045
Email: jo.allchurch@local.gov.uk

Homes England

Key issues

1. Homes England, the government's housing accelerator, is a critical partner for councils wanting to build homes and communities – its role and purpose are set out in the [Homes England Strategic Plan 2018-23](#).
2. Following the EEHT Board meeting in February where members discussed council housebuilding, Peter Freeman, Chairman of Homes England is attending the EEHT Board to discuss how Homes England and councils can work together to deliver more homes and communities.
3. Peter will be joined by Paul Kitson, interim Executive Director of Markets, Partners and Places and Debbie Ward, Director of Local Government Capacity Centre.
4. Homes England has recently opened its competitive [bidding round](#) for its latest intake of strategic partnerships (deadline 18 May). Strategic partners are able to enter into a multi-year grant agreement with Homes England to deliver affordable housing, rather than access funding on a scheme-by-scheme basis. For the first time local authorities are able to bid via this route.
5. A new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme will be delivered over 5 years from 2021-26, with nearly £7.5 billion being delivered outside London by Homes England. The remainder will be delivered via the Greater London Authority.

Equalities Impact

6. A significant part of the work of Homes England is the responsibility for the Affordable Homes Programme. The programme's aim is to provide housing for sale or rent 'for those whose needs are not met by the market' and as such is intended to reduce inequalities. For councils delivering affordable homes programmes, equalities is central to their ambitions and councils are continually seeking to improve their approach. For example, Manchester City Council is 'considering whether individual EIAs are required on specific schemes to replace the original approach of an overarching EIA for the strategy'. It would be helpful to see an equalities impact assessment for the Government's full 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme.

Implications for Wales

7. Housing is a devolved responsibility. We will liaise with colleagues at the Welsh LGA on sharing good practice.

Financial implications

8. There are no immediate financial implications.