

Title of Report:	Item Called-In following an Individual Decision
	Review of First Step West Berkshire
Report to be considered by:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
Date of Meeting:	18 January 2011
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2187

Purpose of Report: To review the Individual Decision to approve amendments to the scheme.

Recommended Action: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission examine the decision and make further recommendations as appropriate.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Brian Bedwell – Tel (0118) 9420196
E-mail Address:	bbedwell@westberks.gov.uk

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Alan Law – Tel (01491) 873614
E-mail Address:	alaw@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Stephen Chard
Job Title:	Policy Officer (Scrutiny Support)
Tel. No.:	01635 519462
E-mail Address:	schard@westberks.gov.uk

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The First Step West Berkshire scheme was approved by Executive on 8 October 2009, subject to a detailed proposal being drawn up and agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing. When the scheme was set up it was agreed that a review would be undertaken after 6 months.
- 1.2 A number of amendments were suggested to the scheme as a result of the review and these are detailed in full within Appendix A.

2. Executive Consideration

- 2.1 The review of First Step West Berkshire was considered as an Individual Decision on 6 December 2010 where it was resolved that proposed amendments to the scheme would be approved.

3. Call-In of the Decision

- 3.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution five Elected Members (Councillors Jeff Brooks, Roger Hunneman, David Rendel, Julian Swift-Hook and Tony Vickers) called in the Individual Decision on the basis that:
 - (1) Nothing in the report gives any confidence that changes to it will result in significantly higher take-up.
 - (2) The modifications proposed make the scheme even less in accord with Council priorities to prevent homelessness and improve quality of life for the most vulnerable.
 - (3) The option of ending the scheme was not seriously considered in the report.
 - (4) Other, more critical, problems in Housing are going to demand more time from our officers and this scheme cannot be allowed to divert them.
 - (5) The money which continues to be set aside to enable the scheme to achieve its aims would be better spent at this time on any of several measures that have already proved helpful to those in greater need of affordable homes.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission examine the decision and make further recommendations as appropriate.

Appendices

Appendix A – Individual Decision report – Review of First Step West Berkshire