

Subject:	Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city		
Date of Meeting:	12 November 2009		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Care & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Andy Staniford	Tel: 29-3159
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: CAB11460	
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 This report summarises the development of the city's new Housing Strategy and specialist housing strategies relating to Older People, the city's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) communities and Student Housing and seeks their approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city and related sub-strategies, the Older People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014 and the LGBT People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014 and Student Housing Strategy 2009-2014.
- 2.2 That Cabinet recognises the extensive good practice and stakeholder engagement demonstrated during the development of these strategies.
- 2.3 That Cabinet agrees that minor changes may be required and made to these strategies during their approval process to ensure they reflect the latest national and local strategic context, with significant changes requiring approval from the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 Our last housing strategy was developed in 2001 and updated in 2004. The development of our new housing strategy began in 2007.
- 3.2 To ensure our services are working together as effectively as possible, the development of the new housing strategy has been the springboard for a larger strategy development and consultation review covering 9 key strategies:

Overarching Housing Strategy

- Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city
- Older People's Housing Strategy 2009
- LGBT People's Housing Strategy 2009

- Student Housing Strategy 2009
- BME People's Housing Strategy (to be further developed in 2010)

Core Strategies

- Supporting People 5-year Strategy 2008
- Homelessness Strategy 2008

Homelessness Sub Strategies

- Single Homeless Strategy 2009
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2008

- 3.3 This report is focused on the overarching Housing Strategy and the specialist strategies relating to Older People, the city's LGBT communities and Student Housing that are being developed in recognition of their respective particular needs.
- 3.4 The Homelessness Strategy, Supporting People Strategy Review and Temporary Accommodation Strategy were approved at Housing Cabinet in March 2008 with the Single Homeless Strategy being approved in May 2009. A BME People's Housing Strategy will be further developed during 2009/10.
- 3.5 We recognise that housing plays an important part of all aspects of people's lives, particularly health and wellbeing. To support the new strategy NHS Brighton & Hove carried out a Health Impact Assessment on the city's housing needs. The results of this assessment are helping us to ensure that our strategy and action plans contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of local people.
- 3.6 In addition, we have been working in partnership with Adult Social Care and the Primary Care Trust (NHS Brighton & Hove) to develop and launch a joint Physical Disabilities Commissioning Strategy 2009 for the city and are currently involved in the development of both the joint Working Age Mental Health Commissioning Strategy and Healthy City Strategy.
- 3.7 Oversight of the strategy development process has been by the Strategic Housing Partnership of the Local Strategic Partnership which has been acting as the Project Board.
- 3.8 Subject to agreement, the Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city and accompanying sub-strategies will ultimately be submitted for approval to the Local Strategic Partnership (planned for 15 December 2009) and will become a key component of the refreshed Community Strategy.

4. CONSULTATION:

- 4.1 Our strategies have been developed in stages to maximise opportunities for local people, advocacy groups, partner organisations, staff and other stakeholders to engage in the process.
- 4.2 The first round of consultation was undertaken over 3 months in summer 2007. The consultation was shaped around a Briefing Pack developed to highlight key areas of housing need to provide stakeholders with relevant information to help facilitate discussion. This pack was available on the council website and

throughout the city in libraries and other public places. It was also sent out to many stakeholders, voluntary organisations and residents.

- 4.3 To support this consultation we also organised a 2 day Consultation Fair that included a Saturday, officers went out into the community, attended social functions, service user groups meetings and other events. Where possible we also linked in with other research and consultation being carried out across the city, such as the groundbreaking *Count Me In Too!* research looking at the needs and aspirations of the city's LGBT population.
- 4.4 In winter 2007/08 we published strategy frameworks outlining the proposed key priorities and actions for the Housing Strategy, Older People's Housing Strategy, BME Housing Strategy and LGBT Housing Strategy. These priorities and actions were developed from the Consultation Briefing Pack and findings of the first round of consultation. Consultation on the strategy frameworks together is being used to help develop the draft strategies and action plans.
- 4.5 Groups we set up to support the development of the specialist strategies:
- Older People's Cross Sector Housing & Support Working Group
 - LGBT Housing & Support Working Group

These groups are made up of representatives from a wide range of support and advocacy groups, the community and voluntary sector, the Primary Care Trust and the local authority. Whilst these groups have been instigated and facilitated by the local authority, they are led by our stakeholders.

- 4.6 These groups have reviewed each stage of the strategy development process and made many valuable contributions to our strategic priorities, action plan and equality impact assessment. We hope that these groups will have an ongoing input into monitoring and review once the strategies are published.
- 4.7 We are working with the BME communities to explore the potential for a similar group to be a critical champion of the BME Housing Strategy. This work is planned for development in 2010.
- 4.8 In tandem with the strategy development process, a number of Chairman's Focus Groups have been set up to consider key issues affecting the council's social housing stock and impacting on the lives of tenants. These groups are looking at a number of issues such as sheltered housing, adaptations and allocations which are also helping to inform the draft housing strategies.
- 4.9 The draft Housing Strategy, Older People's Housing Strategy and LGBT Housing Strategy were published at the end of 2008 for a final 3-month round of stakeholder consultation. The drafts were published on the website and on the websites of community partners such as Spectrum, and officers once more visited a number of stakeholder groups, residents groups and community meetings in order to get a wide range of views on the drafts.
- 4.10 A Stakeholder Event was organised to gather officers in the relevant Council services, such as Adult Social Care, Housing Management and Community Safety, to discuss issues from the draft strategies and help draft and 'own' actions for their own services. This event was attended by members, officers,

and community sector professionals, and co-facilitated by the Chairs of the two Housing & Support Working Groups.

- 4.11 The strategy development has been reviewed by Adult Social Care & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 June 2008 and 5 March 2009 which commended the level of stakeholder engagement:

11.8 Several members noted that they were in general strongly supportive of the high degree of public and stakeholder consultation relating to the development of this strategy. Officers responsible for shaping the strategy were also praised for ensuring that public views genuinely contributed to the development of the strategy rather than being ex post facto.

Minutes, Adult Social Care & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2008

70.4 RESOLVED – That the department be congratulated for their good work and good practice.

Minutes, Adult Social Care & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 5 March 2009

- 4.12 The Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) has also been looking at key areas of housing concern. The partnership is Chaired by the leader of the Council and includes representatives from both Universities, the Economic Partnership, Southern Landlords Association, Brighton & Hove Estate Agents and council officers from both Planning and Housing Strategy.
- 4.13 As part of its remit, the SHP has given particular consideration over some time to the issue of student housing and the impact of student housing needs and concentrations to both future housing strategy and planning policy and commissioned the University of Brighton (Dr Darren P Smith, Reader in Geography) to work on a student housing strategy for the city. Key objectives include an area based approach to managing student housing to mitigate the negative effects of high density student populations on established communities.
- 4.14 The research that was involved in the formulation of this student housing strategy also involved focus groups and consultation with a range of officers. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with officials from the universities and representatives from local private sector landlord organisations, and in consultation with Local Student Union officers.
- 4.15 The strategy also builds upon a number of University of Brighton and Sussex research projects which have involved primary research with local community organisations and residents, and actors in the city, and analyses of student term-time addresses, census data and other datasets
- 4.16 As part of this work, and following Cabinet recommendation that SHP consider the recommendations of the ASC&H Overview and Scrutiny report, Dr Smith has also undertaken a cross referencing exercise to ensure the draft Student Housing Strategy encompasses recommendations arising from the ASC&H Scrutiny report on Students in the Community.

- 4.17 We do not want consultation to end with the publication of our strategies, but would like it to be a part of an ongoing process, involving local people and other stakeholders throughout the life of the strategies helping us to monitor its implementation and review our services. This approach has led to recognition of this model of consultation by the Office of the Third Sector; the report by Involve, 'Better together: improving consultation with the third sector' cites this consultation as an example of national best practice.

Recognising Good Practice

- 4.18 The stakeholder focussed approach and joint work with health to develop the Housing Strategy has been recognised as good practice nationally and internationally:
- **Audit Commission (Apr 2008)**
National study scoping exercise: Improving performance through a strategic approach to housing,
 - **World Health Organisation (Oct 2008)**
Seminar / Case Study, WHO Healthy Cities International Conference, Croatia
 - **Housing Quality Network (Nov 2008)**
Case Study, Understanding the Public Health Agenda
 - **Office of the Third Sector (Nov 2008)**
Research project looking at effective and innovative consultation with the third sector
 - **UK Public Health Association (Mar 2009)**
Parallel Session / Case Study, 17th UKPHA Annual Public Health Forum
 - **The Duty to Involve: Making it Work (Apr 2009)**
Good practice guide produced by the Community Development Foundation on behalf of the CLG
 - **Housing Quality Network (Apr 2009)**
Incorporating Equalities & Diversity into the Housing Strategy, HQN Diversity Seminar
 - **Edith Kahn Memorial Lecture (Apr 2009)**
Good practice provided by CLG to support Lecture by Hazel Blears to the Community Service Volunteers
 - **Northern Housing Consortium (Jun 2009)**
Health & housing workshop, NHC Annual Conference, 'Making Places: Shaping Lives'
 - **Housing Quality Network (Jun 2009)**
Health & housing seminar, 'World class commissioning in housing'

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations made in this report. However the final strategies will have strong links to the budget strategy across Adult Social Care & Housing.

Finance Officer consulted: Mike Bentley Date: 17/08/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Although there is no legal requirement for the council to have any housing strategy, let alone one dealing with the supply and management of student housing, a comprehensive strategy is considered good practice. Under section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Secretary of State may by direction make the production of a housing strategy a statutory duty. It is not considered that any individuals human rights will be adversely affected by the strategy's goals and actions

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 27/10/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An equality impact assessment has been carried out on each strategy during its development, with the strategy containing a summary of the assessment. Additional Equality Impact Assessments will be required as the strategy action plans are implemented over the next few years. Below is a summary of our approach to each of the 6 equality strands:

- **Race:** BME Housing Strategy in development
- **Disability:** Strategy Statement on Physical Disabilities incorporated in Housing Strategy and Older People's Housing Strategy. Disability of all kinds, including physical disability, learning disability and mental health issues, are also a key feature of the Supporting People and Learning Disability Housing Strategies
- **Gender and gender identity:** Actions from the Gender Equality Scheme have been fed into the strategic development process. Gender Identity is also a key feature of the LGBT Housing Strategy.
- **Age:** Older People's Housing Strategy. Youth Homelessness Strategy developed in 2007. Supporting People Strategy links to older people's services, youth homelessness services, and action to fund LGBT support worker for young people at risk
- **Religion / Belief:** The BME Housing Strategy to be further developed during 2009/10 includes community safety objectives which also cover religion and belief.
- **Sexual Orientation:** LGBT Housing Strategy

Equality Impact Assessment Summaries are publically available at:
<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1200096>

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Housing is one of the 12 key objectives of the council's Sustainability Strategy which aims ***to ensure that everyone has access to decent, affordable housing that meets their needs***. The Housing Strategy 2009-2014 and related specialist strategies support this aim.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Ensuring appropriate housing and support is essential in helping to reduce antisocial behaviour and other crime and also to support the victims of crime. Specific actions within the LGBT and BME housing strategies recognise hate crime and aim to support victims and help develop safer communities.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The current economic climate brings with it the risks of increased levels of home repossessions, increased numbers of empty homes, increased overcrowding, reduced access to equity funding for maintenance and improvements and reduced levels of house building. This could increase pressures relating to homelessness, housing support and community cohesion. A robust housing strategy is essential to help mitigate these risks and resultant budgetary pressures.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 Housing is a fundamental aspect of people's wellbeing affecting the daily lives of 250,000 residents in Brighton & Hove. Poor or inappropriate housing has a direct impact on the ability of residents to maintain their independence – this has implications for social care, education and the health. 22,000 households in the city have someone with a support need and vulnerability affects 1 in 5 households. Housing also has a significant impact on the economy. Before the downturn, the housing stock was valued at approximately £26bn with homes worth more than £1bn sold in a year with around a further £1bn being spent on maintenance, rents, mortgages and other associated housing costs. Our housing aims support the priorities and aims of the 2020 Community Strategy.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The Housing Strategy is supported by a detailed needs analysis that considers the wide range of housing issues faced by local people. Our strategic priorities and actions have been developed in response to those needs and refined over time through consultation.
- 6.2 Strategic Frameworks for the strategies were published at the end of 2007. Following consultation they were revised and draft strategies were published for final consultation at the end of 2008. In addition, the strategies are supported by Equality Impact Assessments that consider the impact on vulnerable groups.

6.3 When considering our strategic priorities there are a vast range of options. The key options are summarised below:

Strategic Option	Status
<p>to do nothing – this would directly impact on all residents with a housing need, resulting in homelessness, repossessions, a decline in the quality of the city’s housing stock and a greater dependence on more acute and costly services provided by social care and health services. This in turn would lead to greater health, social and financial inequality and a much reduced quality of life.</p>	Option rejected
<p>maintain the status quo – recent years have seen a shift on national and local thinking that places a much greater emphasis on supporting the individual. If we can help people maintain their independence this will improve quality of life and reduce inequality. Our last strategy was developed before this change in strategic direction and is not able to effectively lead stakeholders in addressing this challenge.</p>	Option rejected
<p>a revised focus on a small number of housing needs – people’s housing and support needs are often complex. Unless we tackle the whole range of key housing issues, many vulnerable people would slip through the net into crisis. This would place an increased burden on acute services across housing, care and health, reduce quality of life and increase inequality.</p>	Option rejected
<p>a balanced housing strategy - he city has a wide range of complex housing needs, such as a limited supply of affordable housing, pockets of poor quality housing and a large number of people that require support to maintain their independence. If our strategy did not address the whole spectrum of needs, many vulnerable people would not get the support they require. This approach will contribute to addressing housing needs, health inequalities, social and financial exclusion and improve quality of life.</p>	Option accepted

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7.1 Brighton & Hove is a city with a quarter of a million residents living in 120,000 homes. For many people, Brighton & Hove is an attractive place to live providing a high quality of life.
- 7.2 Successful action in the city over the last few years to enable the development of new affordable housing, prevent homelessness, provide support, implement choice based lettings and improve housing quality in the private sector have helped to secure Brighton & Hove City Council as a lead authority, widely respected in working to address the needs of local people and the sub-region.
- 7.3 However, pressures from an expanding population, high property prices, pockets of poor quality housing and the effects of the recession are having a detrimental

effect on the health and wellbeing of many residents, particularly amongst the most vulnerable members of our communities.

- 7.4 The Housing Strategy is an overarching document that focuses and co-ordinates a number of other housing related strategies enabling us to maintain our momentum as we address the housing needs of the city into the next decade and providing a consistent drive towards our goals.
- 7.5 We recognise that the strategy will not be a success if carried out in isolation. It sits at the heart of the city's 2020 Community Strategy and shows how the Council and its partners are working together to address the region's housing pressures and also the needs and aspirations of the city. Ultimately, our Housing Strategy is aimed at:

Enabling healthy homes, healthy lives and a healthy city that reduces inequality and offers independence, choice and a high quality of life

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Housing Strategy 2009-2014: 1 page summary
2. Executive Summary: Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city
3. Executive Summary: Older People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014
4. Executive Summary: LGBT People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014
5. Executive Summary: Student Housing Strategy 2009-2014

Documents In Members' Rooms:

Also available at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingstrategy>

1. Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city
2. Older People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014
3. LGBT People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014
4. Student Housing Strategy 2009-2014

Background Documents:

Available at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1200096>

1. Equality Impact Assessment Summary: Housing Strategy 2009-2014
2. Equality Impact Assessment Summary: Older People's Housing Strategy
3. Equality Impact Assessment Summary: LGBT People's Housing Strategy

Available at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housingstrategy>

4. Draft Housing Strategy 2008-2013, October 2008
5. Draft Older People's Housing Strategy, October 2008
6. Draft LGBT People's Housing Strategy, October 2008
7. Draft Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
8. Draft Older People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
9. Draft BME People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
10. Draft LGBT People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
11. Housing Strategy 2008: Consultation Briefing Pack, May 2007