

Housing Cabinet Member Meeting

Agenda Item 48

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Consultation Draft: Housing Strategy 2008-2013: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city (incorporating the draft Older People's Housing Strategy and draft LGBT People's Housing Strategy)		
Date of Meeting:	10 September 2008		
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. HSG 2160	
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report is focussed on the development of the Housing Strategy and the specialist housing strategies relating to Older People and the city's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) communities.
- 1.2 Development of these strategies began in 2007 to replace the previous Housing Strategy that was developed in 2001 and updated in 2004. The report to both Housing Management Consultative Committee and the Housing Cabinet Member of 22 July 2008 outlined the strategy development process to date.
- 1.3 This report is to present the consultation drafts of these strategies to the Housing Cabinet Member for approval. Public and stakeholder consultation on these draft strategies is being planned for October and November 2008 subject to approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That the Housing Cabinet Member approve the consultation drafts of the Housing Strategy 2008-2013 (Appendix 1) incorporating the draft Older People's Housing Strategy (Appendix 2) and draft LGBT People's Housing Strategy (Appendix 3).
- (2) That the Housing Cabinet Member approves delegated authority for the Assistant Director of Housing and the Housing Strategy Manager to carry out minor amendments to the draft strategies prior to publication. Any substantial changes will be agreed jointly with the Cabinet Member.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy is being developed to address important citywide issues that affect the whole population of Brighton & Hove – both now and in the future. Housing has a fundamental effect on our lives and it is important that we identify those key housing needs that matter the most and take action that will make a real difference to local people and the city. The Housing Strategy identifies the overarching headline housing issues that the council and its partners are working to address.
- 3.2 Consultation on the draft Housing Strategy also incorporates consultation on our draft Older People's Housing Strategy and draft LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Trans) People's Housing Strategy to address the needs of particular communities in the city. The planned draft BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) People's Housing Strategy will be published for consultation in the new year following further development work.

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 briefing packs and strategy frameworks has been used to help develop the draft strategies.

4.5 To support the development of the specialist strategies, two Housing & Support Working Groups have been set up:

- 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 monitoring and review remit once the strategies have been published.

4.7 Sub groups of the Strategic Housing Partnership have been looking at the role of housing co-ops and the issues around student housing. The findings of these groups are helping to inform the draft strategies.

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 have also helped to inform the draft housing strategies.

4.9 Subject to approval, we aim to publish the consultation drafts of the strategies at the end of September to undertake a final 2 months of public and stakeholder consultation during October and November. Final drafts of the strategies will be produced for Council and Local Strategic Partnership approval in the new year with the launch anticipated in the Spring.

4.10 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.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 **Financial Implications:** *[Mike Bentley, Accountant, 22 August 2008]*

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations made in this report. However the final strategies will have strong links to the various financial recovery plan actions in place/being developed across Adult Social Care & Housing.

5.2 **Legal Implications:** [Liz Woodley, Lawyer, 27 August 2008]

Under section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Secretary of State can by direction require local housing authorities to produce a housing strategy. However, no such direction has yet been given. On the other hand, it is perfectly proper for a local housing authority to produce a strategy, such as the one proposed.

5.3 **Equalities Implications:**

An equality impact assessment is being carried out on each strategy as it is being developed, with the strategy containing a summary of the assessment. Assessments will be completed during the last stage of consultation to inform the final drafts of the strategies. 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 in development. 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 includes community safety objectives which also cover religion and belief.
- **Sexual Orientation:** LGBT Housing Strategy in development.

5.4 **Sustainability Implications:**

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 2008-2013 and related specialist strategies support this aim.

5.5 **Crime & Disorder Implications:**

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 Housing Strategy recognise hate crime and aim to support victims and help develop safer communities.

5.6 **Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:**

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.

5.7 **Corporate / Citywide Implications:**

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, with the housing stock currently valued at approximately £26bn. Homes worth more than £1bn are sold every 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 Each stage of the strategy development process has resulted in the consideration and streamlining of a range of options. These drafts contain a wide range of proposals which will be further refined in light of the upcoming consultation findings to enable us to produce the final drafts and accompanying action plan in the new year.

7. **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 7.1 For the strategy to be a success it must reflect the needs, wishes and aspirations of a wide range of partners, stakeholders and the public. A phased approach to the development of the strategies combined with a staged approval process seeks to ensure a shared ownership of the strategy and desire to achieve positive outcomes for local people and the city that will achieve more by working in partnership that could be achieved otherwise.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

Also available at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1188834>

1. Consultation Draft: Housing Strategy 2008-2013
2. Consultation Draft: Older People's Housing Strategy
3. Consultation Draft: LGBT People's Housing Strategy

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents:

All available at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1188834>

1. Draft Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
2. Draft Older People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
3. Draft LGBT People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
4. Housing Strategy 2008: Consultation Briefing Pack, May 2007