CABINET	Agenda Item 113 Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:		**Response to the report of the Adult Social Care & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 'Students in the Community'**
Date of Meeting:		**12 November 2009**
Report of:		**Director of Adult Social Care & Housing**
Contact Officer:	**Name:**	**Martin Reid** **Tel: 29-3321**
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Key Decision:	**No**	
Wards Affected:	**All**	

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 The Cabinet on 23 April 2009 considered a report of the Acting Director of Strategy & Governance concerning a report of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the impact of students on the city of the Brighton and Hove and its residents.

1.2 Cabinet recommendations were:

- That the scrutiny recommendations on 'Students in the Community' be noted.
- That the scrutiny report with the recommendations be referred to the next meeting of the Strategic Housing Partnership, asking for comments on the report recommendations prior to Cabinet deciding on a response.

1.3 This report confirms that in light of expansion in student populations the Strategic Housing Partnership has given consistent and long standing consideration to a strategic approach for student housing to be provided in balanced ways which is appropriate for local populations and housing markets. This has informed the SHP development a draft Student Housing Strategy to form part of the city's overall Housing Strategy and inform city-wide Planning policy.

1.4 This report confirms that the scrutiny report was considered at SHP meetings of 19 May and 28 July 2009.

1.5 In addition, following Cabinet recommendation that SHP consider the recommendations of the ASC&H Overview and Scrutiny report, Dr Smith of University of Brighton, who has been commissioned by the SHP to work on the Student Housing Strategy, has 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.

1.6 Aside from two specific recommendations from scrutiny requesting lobbying from cabinet members on specific issues and one requiring a national planning

response, Dr Smith advises all recommendations are covered in the draft Student Housing Strategy. Appendix 1 provides a cross reference of where the scrutiny recommendations are covered by the draft Student Housing Strategy.

1.7 The SHP draft Student Housing Strategy sets out a strategic approach for the supply and management of student housing in the city, to ensure that students are integrated into established residential communities in ways that do not unbalance local population structures and housing markets. In doing so, the strategy seeks to harness the many benefits of a large student population for the long-term health and well-being of the city, and engender mixed, cohesive and sustainable communities

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That Cabinet notes the scrutiny recommendations on 'Students in the Community'.

2.2 That Cabinet also notes that, where appropriate, scrutiny recommendations have been encompassed in the Student Housing Strategy.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 The Strategic Housing Partnership, one of the family of partnerships reporting to the Local Strategic Partnership, acts as Project Board for the development of the City-wide Housing Strategy 2009-14.

3.2 SHP 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. 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.

3.3 The Strategic Housing Partnership has commissioned the University of Brighton (Dr Darren P Smith, Reader in Geography) to work on a student housing strategy for the city. The research into changing student demography, student housing needs and the impact of student housing on existing communities will inform the city's Housing Strategy and emerging planning policy.

3.4 Key objectives include an area based approach to managing student housing to mitigate the negative effects of high density student populations on established communities, and the provision of evidence that may inform an area based approach to delivery of new purpose built student accommodation, in the context of emerging housing strategy and Planning policy.

3.5 The Student Housing Strategy will feed into:

- Citywide housing strategy 2009 – 14. Goal 15: Work to ensure student housing provides a positive contribution to students' lives and the city.
- Planning Core Strategy – CP11(Housing Delivery);DA3 (Lewes Road); SA6 (Sustainable Neighbourhoods).

Both are due to report in November 2009.

3.6 At the Strategic Housing Partnership meeting of 19 May 2009, Dr Darren Smith (University of Brighton) updated the SHP on his work on development of the Student Housing Strategy.

3.7 As part of this work, and following Cabinet recommendation that SHP consider the recommendations of the ASC&H Overview and Scrutiny report, Dr Smith had undertaken a cross referencing exercise to ensure the draft Student Housing Strategy encompassed recommendations arising from the Scrutiny report. Aside from two specific recommendations from scrutiny requesting lobbying from cabinet members on specific issues and one requiring a national planning response, Dr Smith advised all recommendations were covered. Appendix 1 provides a cross reference of where scrutiny recommendations are covered in the draft Student Housing Strategy.

3.8 SHP agreed that members would take time to fully consider the scrutiny report prior to a further discussion on this and the updated student housing Strategy draft at the next meeting in July.

3.9 At the SHP meeting of 28 July Dr Darren Smith presented the latest version of the SHP commissioned Student Housing Strategy for discussion. The ASC&H Overview and Scrutiny report had also been re-circulated to ensure SHP members could give further consideration as previously requested. There were no further issues arising in relation to the scrutiny report.

3.10 The draft Student Housing Strategy is now being brought forward as part of the wider City-wide Housing Strategy and findings being incorporated into Planning Core Strategy and future Local Development Framework documents.

3.11 The Student Housing Strategy sets out a strategic approach for the supply and management of student housing in the city, to ensure that students are integrated into established residential communities in ways that do not unbalance local population structures and housing markets. In doing so, the strategy seeks to harness the many benefits of a large student population for the long-term health and well-being of the city, and engender mixed, cohesive and sustainable communities.

3.12 The strategy includes four main principles:

1. To effectively support and enhance the quality and management of housing and residential environments within HMO-dominated studentified neighbourhoods, in conjunction with the recognition of the need to continue to support private sector landlords to supply high-quality student accommodation.

2. To reduce the over-concentration of HMO in some neighbourhoods by promoting and enabling the appropriate development of purpose-built student accommodation at suitable locations within the city, that will appeal to the locational and residential preferences of students.

3. To ensure that new developments of student accommodation are well-managed, and do not impact on existing residential communities in negative ways.

4. To monitor the changing geographic patterns of student housing in the city and identify signs of destudentification.

3.13 Drawing upon evidence-based research, the strategy emphasises the need for an area-based perspective of student housing to acknowledge the different contexts of local neighbourhoods across the city.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The Student Housing Strategy has been developed in close consultation with members of the SHP, in particular, with the Universities and representatives of Southern Landlords Association.

4.2 The research that was involved in the formulation of the student housing strategy also involved focus groups and consultation with a range of officers across the City Council including Private Sector Housing, Planning, Revenues, Environmental Health, CityClean and Transport. 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.

4.3 The Student Housing 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.

4.4 The Strategic Housing Partnership has 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.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations made in this report. The Student Housing Strategy sits within the overall framework of the city-wide housing strategy to make sure that student housing provides a positive contribution to students' lives and the city'

Finance Officer Consulted: Neil Smith Date: 26/10/09

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 There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report. The Student Housing Strategy 2009-14 has been developed as a part of the overall City-Wide Housing Strategy 2009 – 14: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the City-Wide Housing Strategy during its development

Sustainability Implications:

5.4 There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report. The Student Housing Strategy sets out a strategic approach for the supply and management of student housing in the city, to ensure that students are integrated into established residential communities in ways that do not unbalance local population structures and housing markets. In doing so, the strategy seeks to harness the many benefits of a large student population for the long-term health and well-being of the city, and engender mixed, cohesive and sustainable communities

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report. The City-Wide Housing Strategy 2009 – 14: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city, of which the Student Housing Strategy forms a part recognises 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 housing strategies recognise hate crime and aim to support victims and help develop safer communities.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 There are no risk and opportunity management implications arising directly from this report. In relation to the Student Housing Strategy, key objectives include an area based approach to managing student housing to mitigate the negative effects of high density student populations on established communities, and the provision of evidence that may inform an area based approach to delivery of new purpose built student accommodation to meet demand for student accommodation while also continuing to support private sector landlords to supply high-quality student accommodation.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.7 The Student Housing Strategy is part of a group of housing related strategies that supports the overarching **housing strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city.** The Student Housing Strategy specifically feeds into:

- City-wide housing strategy 2009 – 14. Goal 15: Work to ensure student housing provides a positive contribution to students" lives and the city.
- Planning Core Strategy – CP11 (Housing Delivery); DA3 (Lewes Road); SA6 (Sustainable Neighbourhoods).

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 None applicable to this report. Alternative options have been evaluated in the Student Housing Strategy.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Cabinet requested that the scrutiny report 'Students in the Community' with its recommendations be referred to the Strategic Housing Partnership, asking for comments on the report recommendations prior to Cabinet deciding on a response.

7.2 The Strategic Housing Partnership has considered the scrutiny report and advises Cabinet that, where appropriate, recommendations are encompassed in the draft Student Housing Strategy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Cross reference of scrutiny report recommendations with Student Housing Strategy Action Plan.

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None