

To: City Executive Board

Date: 4th April 2012

Report of: Head of Housing and Communities

Title of Report: HOUSING STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2012-15

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To consider consultation responses relating to the draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 and associated Action Plan. To approve the Housing Strategy Action Plan and recommend the Housing Strategy to Council

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Cllr Joe McManners

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan, Asset Management Plan, Regeneration Framework, Core Strategy.

Recommendation(s):

- i) That the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012 to 2015 be approved and
- ii) That the Housing Strategy 2012-15 be recommended to Council

Appendices to report:

1. Results of consultation exercise December 2011 – February 2012
2. Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015.
3. Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012 to 2015
4. Risk Register
5. Equality Impact Assessment

Background

- 1) The City Executive Board (CEB) approved a Draft Housing Strategy, including an Action Plan, for consultation in December 2011

- 2) A Consultation Exercise took place between December 2011 and February 2012. A wide range of opinions were expressed on a variety of housing issues. There was a great level of debate about the high levels of need if not housing crisis in Oxford, priority being given to local people and many views on how and if new housing should be brought forward. Other opinions included conflicting views on regulation within the private rented sector (HMOs) and student accommodation. Much comment was made about our ability to deliver the level of housing needed to meet needs together with the necessity to consider new and innovative ways to bring forward new housing. An analysis of comments can be found within Appendix 1
- 3) The Draft Housing Strategy and Action Plan have been revised to take account of consultation responses. Details are set out in the introduction to each Strategic Objective in the Action Plan but include new council building, more actions on investigating new methods of bringing forward new affordable housing and reviewing new policy being brought forward as a consequence of Localism Act. Statistics and detail on new legislation and policy direction have been updated where needed.
- 4) The most important part of the final Housing Strategy is a forward looking Action Plan that sets out our future plans and how we will deliver improvements and projects. The original Action Plan has been further developed taking into account consultation responses and updated so it is fully up to date when adopted. .
- 5) The draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 is attached as Appendix 2. The associated draft Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012-2015 is attached as Appendix 3.

Level of risk

- 6) a risk register is attached as appendix 4. It should be noted that risks associated with specific projects and work programmes identified in the action plan are identified and addressed in the relevant project documentation for those projects / programmes.

Environmental Impact -

- 7) The Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 does not have any explicit environmental impacts in itself. Specific projects identified in the Housing Strategy Action Plan will have environmental impacts, specifically the provision of additional housing to meet housing needs. These environmental impacts associated with specific projects and work programmes identified in the action plan are identified and addressed in the relevant project documentation for those projects / programmes.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 8) A EIA is attached as appendix 5. The Housing Strategy and Action Plan are very specifically targeted at meeting the housing needs of the most vulnerable people in Oxford and as such no adverse impacts on any equalities group are expected as a result of this strategy.

Financial implications

- 9) Each element within the Action Plan references the financial implications. There are a number of strategic objective actions that have significant financial implications for the council. These projects are:
 - a) Delivery of new housing and land at Barton.
 - b) Delivery of affordable housing on council owned land with or without HCA grant.
 - c) Implementing Self-Financing of the Housing Revenue Account and supporting improvements within the Councils housing stock

Detail on financial impacts for these actions and projects is identified in the relevant council reports for these projects and are acknowledged in the Housing Strategy Action Plan.

Legal Implications

- 10) The Local Government Act 2003 requires local housing authorities to have in place a Housing Strategy for the district.

Meeting the Council's statutory housing obligations is reflected in the objectives of the housing strategy: statutory homelessness duty; provision of housing advice and landlord responsibilities.

Process

- 11) It is intended that the Housing Strategy will be considered by Council in April 2012.
- 12) Following Council approval, the Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2012-15 will be promoted – primarily via the Council's website. The Action Plan will be regularly monitored. The Executive Director for Housing and Regeneration will be the monitoring officer for the Strategy and Action Plan. A refresh of the Action Plan will take place in 2013 in light of both progress by this date and changing circumstances

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: Sheila Farley

Job title: Strategy & Enabling Manager

Service Area / Department; Housing & Communities

Tel: 01865 252449 e-mail:

List of background papers: None

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