

To: City Executive Board

Date: 7th December 2011

Report of: Graham Stratford, Head of Housing & Communities

Title of Report: Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To seek approval for public consultation of the draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Cllr Joe McManners

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

Recommendation(s): That the draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 is approved for public consultation.

Appendices to report:

- 1) Draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015.
- 2) Risk Register
- 3) Initial Equality Impact Assessment

- 1) The council's current Housing Strategy 2008- to 2011 has been reviewed and a new version has been prepared to replace this. The review of the Housing strategy 2008-11 is included in the draft Housing strategy 2012-15.
- 2) The draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3) The aim of the draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 is to:
- 4) Contribute to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan Corporate Objective 'Meeting Housing Needs'.

- 5) The corporate performance measures for this corporate priority for 2011-15 are:
 - a. Improve the percentage of Council tenants satisfied with our landlord services from 80% in 2011/12 to 87% in 2014/15.
 - b. Increase the number of individual Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) subject to agreed licence provisions from 1400 in 2011/12 to 4000 in 2014/15.
 - c. Deliver a programme of new homes at Barton.
 - d. Reduce the number of households in Oxford in temporary accommodation from 130 in 2011/12 to 50 in 2014/15.

- 6) The objectives of the draft Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 are to:
 - a) Provide more affordable housing in the City to meet housing needs
 - b) Prevent and reduce homelessness
 - c) Address the housing needs of vulnerable people and communities
 - d) Improve housing conditions
 - e) Improve housing services
 - f) Implement the HRA Business Plan
 - g) Deliver efficiency savings from housing services

- 7) The expected headline outcomes from the Housing Strategy are:
 - a) Approximately 560 new affordable homes delivered by 2015:
 - b) Households in temporary accommodation reduced to 50 by 2015.
 - c) Old Fire Station 'Crisis Skylight' centre open (in 2011) and operational.
 - d) People requiring housing related support continue to receive appropriate support in the City.
 - e) 4,000 HMO's licensed by 2015.
 - f) 1500 private rented sector properties accredited.
 - g) Quality standard for private rented sector properties used to prevent homelessness developed and implemented.
 - h) Improved energy efficiency in the housing stock.
 - i) Fuel poverty strategy developed.
 - j) Improved tenant satisfaction with our landlord services from 80% in 2011/12 to 87% in 2014/15.
 - k) Tenant and resident involvement activity developed with more tenants and residents involved (in a manner which suits them) in how their homes and estates are managed.
 - l) New and improved communications developed and implemented for housing customers (tenants newsletters, handbooks and web-site).
 - m) Strategic direction for homelessness, vulnerable communities and individuals and tenancies developed and in place.
 - n) Implementation of the HRA Business Plan following the Buy-Out in March 2012.
 - o) Efficiency savings in budgets delivered.

- 8) An action plan designed to monitor the main work streams associated with the objectives is outlined in the draft Housing Strategy.

- 9) Level of risk - a risk register is attached as appendix 2. 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.
- 10) The Housing Strategy 2012 to 2015 does not have any explicit environmental impacts in itself. Specific projects identified in the Housing Strategy 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.
- 11) An initial equality impact assessment is attached as appendix 3. The Housing Strategy is 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.
- 12) 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 using HCA grant.
 - c) Implement Self-Financing of the Housing Revenue Account. Therefore raise £234M of finance to enable the Council to buy its way out of the HRA subsidy system and implementing the 30 year HRA business plan.
- 13) The full detail on financial impacts for these actions and projects is identified in the relevant council reports for these projects.
- 14) Legal Implications: The Local Government Act 2003 requires local housing authorities to have in place a Housing Strategy for the district.
- 15) 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.
- 16) Following approval by the Board, public consultation will begin on the 12th of December. Consultation will be carried out via:
- Online using e-consult
 - Paper questionnaires to be sent to residents volunteering via the road show events in November.
 - Focus Groups
 - Talkback Panel
- Groups to be consulted include;
- Housing Associations
 - Oxford Register of Affordable Housing members

- Homelessness network
- Oxford Residents
- Elected Members

17) Public consultation will end on the 13th of January. Any necessary changes will be incorporated in the Strategy, and following approval from the Corporate Management Team and the Lead Member for Housing Needs the finalised Strategy will be presented to the City Executive Board at their meeting on the 8th of February 2012. If the Board are content with the Strategy, then a recommendation for its adoption will be made to the meeting of Full Council on the 20th of February 2012.

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