

Subject:	Housing Strategy Update		
Date of Meeting:	30th April 2014		
Report of:	Executive Director, Environment, Development, and Housing		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report updates on progress on development of the new City-wide Housing Strategy as requested by members following a presentation at Housing Committee on 5 March 2014.
- 1.2 The current Housing Strategy expires this year. An update on issues, priorities, key themes and preferred means of consultation arising from our initial scoping exercise with key Council stakeholders and communities of interest are outlined in the report.
- 1.3 The findings from the scoping phase including key themes and issues, will inform consultation, development and delivery of the final Housing Strategy to the end of 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing Committee note the themes and priorities arising from the initial scoping stage of the development of the Housing Strategy.
- 2.2 That Housing Committee approve the ongoing methodology and planned events for consultation on the Housing Strategy.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The current Housing Strategy together with the Student Housing Strategy, Older People's Housing Strategy and LGBT People's Housing Strategy are due to expire in 2014.
- 3.2 The new Housing Strategy will not only supersede the Housing Strategy 2009 14 but is also proposed to incorporate the Student Housing Strategy, Older People's Housing Strategy, LGBT People's Housing Strategy and proposed BME People's Housing Strategy into one new strategy. In addition, it is also proposed to develop the City's first Family Housing Strategy. The Housing Strategy will also

have specific sections focussing on those with a physical disability in addition to other groups in need.

- 3.3 The new Housing Strategy is a key stand alone chapter of the Community Strategy and a fundamental piece of evidence to support the City Plan, our Local Housing Investment Plan and other housing related funding opportunities. The strategy brings benefits to the city through leveraging in funding for the authority and its partners.
- 3.4 The strategy will be for everyone living in the city as housing has a fundamental effect on our lives whether we are an owner-occupier, living in a social rented home or living in the private rented sector. It is important that the key housing needs that matter to local people are identified and action is taken that will make a real difference to their lives and have a positive impact on the city.
- 3.5 The new Housing Strategy builds on the successes of previous Housing Strategies setting out priorities and strategic goals that make a real difference, making sure the delivery of services will meet changing needs and new challenges faced by local people and service providers.
- 3.6 The new strategy will support the council's priorities and support, where applicable, other key council policies where housing impacts on the success of those policies.
- 3.7 The timeline for the strategy development is:
- 2013/14 Q3 Project Initiation & Housing Strategy 2009 Review
 - Q4 Scoping & Drafting
 - Q4 Consultation on Scoping Paper
 - Q4 Strategic Housing Partnership Housing Risk and Opportunities Exercise
 - 2014/15 Q1 Scoping & Consultation
 - Reporting to Housing Committee on the initial scoping phase (30/04/14)
 - Q 1&2 Consultation Phase
 - More detailed interaction with communities of interest
 - Meeting with stakeholders including Housing Conference (17/07/14)
 - Final drafting
 - Report to Housing Committee seeking approval of the draft strategy and permission for final consultation on the draft strategy
 - Q3 Sign-off at Housing Committee (12/11/14)
 - Q3 Adoption by Full Council (11/12/14)

In addition to Housing Committee the primary interfaces for the project will be the Housing Leadership Team acting as the Project Board and the Strategic Housing Partnership acting as the Executive.

- 3.8 A scoping exercise informing the scoping paper appended to this Housing Committee report was carried out with the Strategic Housing Partnership at meetings in December, February and March 2014 to consider the draft vision,

priorities and goals whilst the more detailed draft strategy is being produced. Consultation on the on the scoping paper was carried out from mid February to mid March with communities of interest (Older People, BME, people with disabilities, and LGBT), external stakeholders (Carers Centre, Universities, Community Works, Community Land Trusts, Co-operatives, Registered Providers, Support Providers) and internal services providers (ASC, Children's Trust, Children's Services, Planning, Regeneration, and Public Health). The draft strategy will be subject to 12 weeks consultation.

- 3.9 Engagement will be through a variety of means including social media, a housing conference and a series of community events.
- 3.10 This will involve using the @BrightonHoveCC Twitter Page to encourage responses to the strategy consultation using a hashtag (#futurebrightonhousing) so that we can track online comments and respond to questions. This will be managed by the Social Media Officer in the Corporate Communications Team to ensure consistency.
- 3.11 Due to this innovative approach we only propose using the consultation portal as a link from social media to capture more details responses.
- 3.12 A consultation paper will be developed from the scoping phase that includes clear proposals based upon the needs assessment, scoping information, and stakeholder feedback. This will be used throughout the initial consultation phase and will form the basis of the draft strategy.
- 3.13 The draft strategy will consist of a concise and aspirational document that outlines the key themes and issues with clear actions and approaches to address these. There will be a supplementary report consisting of a housing needs and costs data analysis.
- 3.14 The Draft Housing Strategy will be completed for Housing Committee to review and approve prior to final consultation including circulation all groups engaged in the scoping phase to ensure community groups and other key stakeholders continue to be fully engaged.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 This approach is considered best practice and has been commended by community groups and stakeholders as offering early engagement in the strategic planning process.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The scoping stage of the Housing Strategy review has involved both internal and external consultation. These meetings involved presenting the scoping paper and engaging the groups in discussions on the key issues affecting their areas of interest and housing.

We have met with:

- Affordable Housing Delivery Partnership (27/02/14)

- BMECP (28/02/14 & 21/03/14)
- Planning DMT (04/03/14)
- Brighton & Hove Connected (04/03/14)
- Regeneration DMT (06/04/14)
- Community Works (18/03/14)
- Adult Social Care DMT (13/03/14)
- Brighton Community Land Trust (14/03/14)
- Public Health DMT (17/03/14)
- Older Person's Council (18/03/14)
- Children's Services DMT (20/03/14)
- Adult Social Care Commissioning - Learning Disabilities and Autism (20/03/14)
- University of Sussex (25/03/14)
- University of Sussex Student Union (24/03/14)
- University of Brighton (01/04/14)
- University of Brighton Student Union (01/04/14)
- Housing Related Support Provider Forum (26/03/14)
- B&H Advice Network (02/04/14)
- Community Works Housing Event (27/03/14)
- Brighton Housing Co-operatives (26/03/14)
- Leaseholders Association (11/04/14)
- Property & Design DMT (04/04/14)
- Leaseholders Association (11/04/14)
- National Landlords Association (14/04/14)

Planned scoping meetings:

- Southern Landlords Association (29/04/14)
- Carers Centre (01/05/14)
- Vulnerable Adults Team (28/04/14)
- ASC Commissioning (14/05/14)

5.2 There are planned community events facilitated by the Federation of Disabled People and the BMECP. These events will be hosted by the community groups with the support of the Housing Strategy Team and will be held at times and venues to encourage attendance by communities of interest.

5.3 The key themes that have emerged will form the basis of the consultation phase beginning in May for twelve weeks, and will also form the basis of workshops at the Housing Conference in June.

5.4 The Housing Conference scheduled for 17th June 2014 at Hove Town Hall will be based on the successful format of the Homelessness Conference held at Hove Town Hall on 2nd December 2014. The Housing Conference will look at the key themes plus inviting speakers with expertise on the above areas to outline key national and local factors affecting housing. All those involved in the scoping stage will be invited to this event as well as other key professionals who have not engaged at that stage. The feedback from this event will be a key element to the consultation phase of the strategy.

5.5 *Key Themes So Far*

- 5.5.1 Family Housing – issues around insufficient supply with particular concern around family homes that may otherwise be available to first time buyers being converted by landlords into Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).
- 5.5.2 Growth in the private rented sector and resultant change in demography in some parts of the City – statutory service providers including Health, Social Care and Children’s services highlighted emerging challenges around engaging with and delivering services to increasing numbers of households living in the private rented sector, in particular vulnerable households.
- 5.5.3 Affordability and delivery of low cost rented housing, raised by a number of groups including Affordable Housing Partnership - reduction of capital subsidy for social rented homes resulting in affordable housing programmes increasingly delivering shared ownership homes with some Affordable Rent.
- 5.5.4 Ageing population – Older Peoples Council highlighted the popularity and importance of sheltered housing, the increasing older female population in social housing and encouraging downsizing by offering more options.
- 5.5.5 HMO Licensing – raised by communities of interest around managing overcrowding issues and quality of accommodation; also by the Student Unions in term of having recourse when repairs were required.
- 5.5.6 Community Led Housing – Including co-operatives, mutual housing, and community land trusts.
- 5.5.7 Student Housing – raised by community groups regarding ongoing concerns around concentration and expansion but also issues raised by Student Unions around quality (whether accommodation is ‘fit for study’) and affordability.
- 5.5.8 Social Care Staff – issues raised about whether care staff could afford to live near services especially when they have families.
- 5.5.9 Vulnerable People – issues raised about the availability of ‘move on’ accommodation from supported or residential care, and the lack of genuinely affordable accommodation.
- 5.6 These themes and issues are from the initial scoping phase and are prior to the community events. They will be used to direct the discussion at the Housing Conference, consultation events, and on-line consultation.
- 5.7 Community Groups (represented by Community Works) also stated they wanted a Housing Strategy that:
 - reflects the diverse communities in the city;
 - engages with innovation;
 - supports ongoing partnership working;
 - recognises the role of the community and voluntary sector;
 - makes sustainability a central tenet of the strategy;
 - we continue with the current consultations transparent and engaging approach.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 That the approach is approved to continue into the consultation phase with an approach combining attendance at stakeholder groups, social media, and the Housing Conference.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report although there will be significant Officer time involved in the development of this strategy.

Finance Officer Consulted Michelle Herrington

Date: 09/04/14

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 According to Part 3 of the council's constitution, the Housing Strategy forms part of the council's Policy Framework, and as such requires adoption by full council. .

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 15/04/14

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The strategy and any required sub-strategic will be subject to equalities impact assessment to ensure that impacts are mitigated. There has been a targeted approach to ensure community led engagement with sessions facilitated by the BMECP and the Federation of Disabled People.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 None

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.5 n/a

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Housing Strategy Scoping Paper

Documents in Members' Rooms

n/a

Background Documents

n/a

