



Derby City Council

COUNCIL CABINET
11 November 2015

Report of the Cabinet Member for
Urban Renewal

ITEM 9

Housing Strategy 2015-2019

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the key elements of Derby's [Housing Strategy 2015-2019](#). It focuses on the vision and key priorities which form the basis of our strategic approach to housing over the next four year period
- 1.2 The new strategy was drafted in Spring of this year. A consultation with service providers, members of the public, councillors and other council departments took place over the Summer, following which a final draft was produced.
- 1.3 The strategy has been developed in an environment of shrinking resources and increasing demand for services. These pressures impact on what can realistically be achieved in the years ahead. Nevertheless, the challenge remains to maximise the supply and quality of suitable homes across tenures, while also complementing broader corporate goals around regeneration, economic growth and health and well being. To reflect this, we have developed the following vision, which is:

To ensure Derby's residents have access to high quality, affordable homes and housing services which support communities and improve quality of life.

- 1.4 A more detailed discussion of the strategic priorities and actions which will help deliver this vision is found in section 4.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Council Cabinet adopts the Housing Strategy 2015-2019.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Having a coordinated strategy in place will contribute towards improving housing supply and quality. This in turn will support our broader corporate goals around health and well being, urban renewal and economic growth.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Case for Action

- 4.1
- Housing is of critical importance. Good quality, well managed housing is inextricably linked with health and well being; enhancing the quality of life of adults and the life chances of children. It not only provides shelter, but promotes stability and a sense of identity.
 - Housing programmes are also an essential part of any urban regeneration initiative. Upgrading or replacing run-down housing can make a major contribution to the renewal of residential neighbourhoods or mixed use areas such as city centres - particularly when combined with initiatives relating to employment, commerce, education and health.

These elements all contribute to sustainable, thriving communities.

- 4.2 Providing housing of suitable quantity and quality is therefore a key priority in Derby. Similarly, providing support where necessary to enable vulnerable people to access and continue to live in their own homes is also a priority.

Context

- 4.3 Since our last Housing Strategy was written in 2009, we have seen significant changes to the environment in which housing and related support services are delivered.
- 4.4 The Localism Act 2011 has provided new freedoms for councils in terms of how they manage and develop housing. For example, it provides greater local discretion in the management of housing registers. It also gives greater flexibility to use certain revenue streams, such as the Housing Revenue Account and 'right to buy' income, for housing development. But substantial funding cuts are restricting the scope for providing the support services necessary to help vulnerable people live sustainably in suitable homes.
- 4.4 Changes resulting from continued national austerity measures, and in particular welfare reform, are impacting detrimentally on many low income groups and those most likely to be in housing need. A planned further reduction of £12 billion to the national welfare budget over the next 3 years will impact on low income households in Derby as nationally.
- 4.5 There is also considerable uncertainty over the future. The Government has proposed an extension of 'Right to Buy' to cover Housing Association properties in addition to Council properties. Subject to an act of parliament, this will potentially further reduce the stock of scarce affordable housing. The precise extent of further funding cuts to

the Council and its partners is as yet unknown, while the increasing integration between health, social care and housing provides challenges as well as opportunities.

- 4.6 These factors impact on the demand for and supply of housing and housing services and make it crucial that we have an up to date strategy to provide a framework for action.

Strategic Priorities

- 4.7 The strategy identifies 4 priorities which must be delivered if we are to achieve the vision. These are:

Priority 1	Best use of stock – getting the most out of the homes that already exist.
Priority 2	Housing quality and standards – promoting well-managed, well-maintained, greener homes.
Priority 3	Vulnerable people - providing suitable accommodation for vulnerable groups.
Priority 4	Housing development and regeneration - supplying a range of new housing that meets need and contributes to urban renewal.

The Priorities in More Detail

- 4.8
- ✚ Priority 1 acknowledges that an essential part of meeting need is to ensure that we make the best use of the homes we already have. It underpins work on empty homes, mutual exchange, under-occupation, the Allocations policy, and the Tenancy Strategy.
 - ✚ Priority 2 emphasises the importance of providing homes that are decent and well managed. It underpins work on advice and assistance, private sector enforcement, energy efficiency and design and space standards as set out in planning policy.
 - ✚ Priority 3 recognises that certain vulnerable groups such as disabled people, older people, or homeless people may need additional support to live independently in suitable housing. It underpins work undertaken in housing advice, the healthy housing hub, disabled facilities grants and the critical role of the voluntary and community sector. It reflects the objectives set out in our Homelessness Strategy, Older Persons' Housing and Support Strategy and the Accommodation Strategy for Disabled Adults.
 - ✚ Priority 4 highlights the role of new house building in meeting need and contributing to regeneration and growth. It specifies the types of new housing that we will support and addresses:
 - The need to provide additional affordable housing as set out in the *Review of*

Affordable Housing by the Cost of Living Overview and Scrutiny Board.

- The role housing development and renewal can play in regenerating inner city areas such as in Normanton and Arboretum.
- The importance of housing to economic growth and the consequent need to foster a balanced housing market in Derby. This includes the provision of high end accommodation to attract skilled workers and business leaders, thereby helping to ensure that the wealth generated by Derby's hi-tech industries are retained in the city and not lost to surrounding areas.

Delivery, Monitoring and Review

- 4.9 This strategy sets out broadly how we plan to deliver our housing goals over the next five years. Unlike Derby's previous housing strategies, it is *not* intended to specify a series of detailed actions. Rather, it sets out our 'direction of travel' and our overarching priorities. (But see 4.12 below)
- 4.10 However, the strategy has been formulated to be aligned with and supportive of a wide range of corporate and partnership policies, strategies and initiatives. These include those relating to health and wellbeing, social care, planning, economic growth and regeneration.
- 4.11 With regard specifically to housing, the priorities and outcomes set out in this strategy are aligned with and directly supported by a wide range of housing related policies and strategies. These include:
- Accommodation strategy for disabled adults of working age
 - Allocations policy
 - Empty homes strategy
 - Homelessness strategy
 - Housing renewal policy
 - Older persons' housing and support strategy
 - Tenancy strategy
- 4.12 The majority of the strategies in this list contain detailed delivery plans with specific, time-bound actions. Achieving the priorities set out in this housing strategy will consequently be very closely linked to the achievement of the delivery plans in these 'sub' strategies.
- 4.13 Review of progress against these delivery plans will therefore be made periodically, with additional measures being considered and implemented where appropriate.
- 4.14 All of these housing related strategies and their constituent delivery plans can be found at: www.derby.gov.uk/housing-strategy

Consultation

Process

- 4.15 The consultation ran from June-September 2015. It was open to everyone but we particularly targeted:
- a) Members of the public
 - b) Councillors
 - c) Housing associations and Derby Homes
 - d) Partners in Health and Social Care
 - e) Charities, support providers and third sector organisations
 - f) The Council's Diversity Forums
 - g) Council departments including Public Health, Adult Social Care, Regeneration, Planning, Commissioning and Environment and Regulatory Services
- 4.16 Major elements included:
- a) Press release
 - b) The Consultation pages of the council web site ('Your City, Your Say') including an online questionnaire.
 - c) Use of other e-media including In Touch and 1derby.
 - d) Written correspondence with key stakeholders
 - e) Diversity forums

Outcomes and resultant changes to the strategy

- 4.17 Feedback from service users and members of the public concerned the importance of using (reusing) empty homes before building new homes and the possibility of increasing housing density in sort after locations to increase over all supply.
- 4.18 Feedback from service providers and other council service areas covered a wide range of areas and highlighted the need to give greater focus to:
- a) Property design and housing standards
 - b) Support services for vulnerable people, particularly disabled people
 - c) The impact of new communities and changing demographics
 - d) The growing size and importance of the private rented sector
 - e) Alignment with the core strategy
 - f) Links with neighbourhood renewal and regeneration, and the priority given to the Normanton / Arboretum areas and the city centre.

Equalities

- 4.19 The strategy provides a framework for action in relation to housing across all tenures and therefore all of Derby's residents. Because vulnerable groups, including disabled

people, people on low incomes and minority ethnic communities can find it relatively more difficult to access suitable housing, the strategy should have a beneficial effect on these groups.

- 4.20 An equalities impact assessment was held on September 3rd, with officers and members of the Diversity forums participating. The main concerns that arose from this exercise included, but were not limited to:
- a) ensuring that the general shift of information and services to 'internet-based' does not exclude vulnerable people from service take-up
 - b) improving support for older people experiencing increasing frailty /dementia etc.
 - c) improving the process and access to accommodation for disabled young people (transition planning).

Specific actions resulting from the EIA will be fed into the reviews of the particular strategy to which they relate – see the schedule in paragraph 4.11

The broader areas of focus highlighted by service providers have been reflected in the final draft of the strategy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 There are no other alternative options.
- 5.2 The last strategy was written in 2009 and is now arguably out of date. The numerous changes in the economic, social and legal landscape since that time entail a new strategy be adopted which is fit for purpose.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Olu Idowu Toni Nash Liz Moore John Sadler Richard Williams Ian Fullagar
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Jeremy Mason jeremy.mason@derby.gov.uk , 640329 None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 - Links to the strategy and the consultation web pages

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 There are no new additional financial commitments arising directly from this report or the new housing strategy it relates too. Should any future actions arising out of the strategy result in a recommendation to incur additional costs, a separate report will be presented which will detail the costs and funding arrangements.

Legal

- 2.1 The proposed strategy addresses the Council's statutory obligations in respect of provision of housing advice and assistance and the assessment of housing need under the Housing Act 1985, and the enforcement of housing standards under the Housing Act 2004.

Personnel

- 3.1 None arising directly from this report.

IT

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Priority 3 concerns providing suitable accommodation for vulnerable people. Because disabled people, older people, people on low incomes and minority ethnic communities can find it relatively more difficult to access suitable housing, the strategy when implemented should have a beneficial effect on these groups.
- 5.2 An equalities impact assessment was undertaken in September. This has highlighted a number of additional actions that will help prevent any unintended negative impacts on people with protected characteristics. More details in paragraphs 4.19 and 4.20.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 None arising directly from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 Whilst there are no direct property and asset management implications from this report, any property acquisitions and disposals required to support the implementation of this strategy will need to conform to the Property Transaction Rules adopted as part of the Corporate Landlord process.

Risk Management

- 9.1 The Vision identified in paragraph 1.3 will only be achieved if the 4 strategic priorities can be delivered (see para 4.7). The risks associated with non-delivery will be identified and monitored.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 From the Derby City Council Plan 2014/15:

"...provide good-quality housing and worksites across the city."
"Reduce homelessness and increase the housing supply"

Links to the Draft Strategy and Related Information

1. The draft Housing Strategy 2015-2019 is attached separately as a PDF document.
2. The housing strategy consultation pages can be can be found by clicking [here](#) or visiting:

http://www.derby.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations/your-city-your-say-latest-consultations/housing_strategy_consultation_2015/
3. Derby's housing-related strategies and policies can be found at:
www.derby.gov.uk/housing-strategy
4. The review of affordable housing by the Cost of Living Overview and Scrutiny Board can be found at: [Council Cabinet April 2015 - Affordable Housing Review Report](#)