

Report of Director of Environment and Housing

Report to Housing Advisory Board

Date: 3 June 2014

Subject: Housing Strategy Update and Housing Advisory Board Working Arrangements

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report sets out the current arrangements for the Housing Advisory Board (HAB) to engage on areas of work in which it has interest and influence (including the Housing Strategy), in order to fulfil its functions as a Council Advisory Committee.
2. It includes the proposal made at the last Board meeting for individual Board members to engage on the development of a new Housing Strategy, based on specific themes, and provides an update on progress to date with arrangements to develop the Strategy.
3. It identifies other forums and working groups that exists and the links to this Board, in recognition of the fact that part of the Board's remit is to engage with and influence Housing policy and strategy in liaison with key partners.

Recommendations

4. The Board is recommended to:
 - 4.1. Consider the arrangements set out in the report and determine whether these are adequate to enable the Board to fulfil its functions as a Council Advisory Committee in accordance with its Terms of Reference.
 - 4.2. Note the update on progress towards developing the new Housing Strategy set out in the report

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out the current arrangements for the Housing Advisory Board to engage on areas of work in which it has interest and influence, in order to fulfil its functions as a Council Advisory Committee in accordance with its Terms of Reference. The Board is being requested to consider these arrangements to determine if they are adequate for fulfilling its functions.
- 1.2 These arrangements also include a direct involvement of Board members in the development of a new Housing Strategy for Leeds, as agreed at the previous Board meeting, and this report provides an update on arrangements being made to develop the Strategy.

2. Background information

- 2.1. The Housing Advisory Board has been established under Section 102 (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as an Advisory Committee. The TOR are shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. The role of the Board is to consider and make recommendations to the Executive Board about the housing management service. All major decisions and policies are to be directed through the Board who in turn will make recommendations to the Executive for agreement. The Director of Environment and Housing will also seek direction from the Board on major decisions affecting the service.
- 2.3. It was agreed at the last HAB meeting that a report would be presented to the June Board, setting out arrangements for the Board to engage on areas of work on which it has interest and influence, and to also map out how it will engage with partners through its links to other working groups and forums.
- 2.4. Proposals for developing a new Housing Strategy were brought to the last Board meeting. Five themes had been identified for the review.
- 2.5. It was felt that the themes provided a suitable way of organising the Board's involvement in some important strategic areas of work. The Chair therefore invited individual members of the Board to indicate their particular interests, and it was agreed that arrangements would be made for them to engage on these themes:
 - **Housing Growth** (Cllr Anderson, Cllr Truswell, Andrew Feldhaus, David Glew, Matthew Walker, Tim Wood) – *Theme lead: Maggie Gjessing, Asset Management and Regeneration*
 - **Improving Housing Conditions** (Cllr Anderson, Jo Hourigan, Andy Liptrot, Matthew Walker) – *Theme lead: John Statham, Housing Partnerships*
 - **Enabling Independent Living** (Cllr Lowe, David Glew, Madeline Hunter, Tim Wood) – *Theme lead: Megan Godsell, Housing Support*
 - **Housing and Health** (Cllr Truswell, Jo Hourigan, Andy Liptrot, Matthew Walker, Ted Wilson) – *Theme lead: Brenda Fullard, Public Health*

- **Creating Sustainable Communities** (Cllr Anderson, Cllr Bentley, Cllr Maqsood, David Glew, Jo Hourigan, Matthew Walker) - *Theme lead: Megan Godsell, Housing Support*

2.6. The Board agreed to act as Project Board for the development of the Strategy and receive updates on progress being made. This report provides an update at paragraph 3.2.

2.7. In addition, a number of groups and forums exist and the Board engages with these bodies through the provision of reports to HAB, through HAB representation on these groups and through consultation and dialogue on matters of mutual interest and concern. These include Housing Advisory Panels and Cross City Chairs Group, Tenant Scrutiny Board, Multi-storey working group, Housing Forum and under the Housing Forum, the Private Sector Forum and Homelessness Forum.

3 Main issues

3.1 HAB Working Arrangements

- The Board's remit as a Council Advisory Committee is set out in the Terms of Reference Appendix 1 of this report, and reflects the need for the Board to successfully engage on important matters of housing policy and strategy. To do this it needs to use its time and resources effectively. The Board agendas and forward work programme allow the Board to manage its business and bring important issues forward for discussion. However, there are other ways in which the Board can influence and shape future policy and strategy, including more direct involvement in development work and in engaging with partners through its links to other groups and forums.
- The Board has already agreed to engage in the development of a new Housing Strategy under five broad themes (see para 2.5 above). It also has links with other working groups and forums (see para 2 above).
- These arrangements are set out in Appendix 2 of this report. The Board is invited to consider whether these arrangements provide sufficient opportunity for it to fulfil its advisory and influencing role as a Council Advisory Committee.

3.2 Housing Strategy Update

The Board is also asked to note the progress being made develop arrangements for delivery of the Housing Strategy, as set out in the following paragraphs:

Planning

- A Project Team has been established, with representation from each of the theme leads, and a Project Plan has been produced. A meeting of the theme leads is taking place on 28th May 2014, after which each lead will engage with interested parties to take the work forward (Housing Advisory Board members will be invited to become involved in line with their specified interests).

Research

- Work is being done to understand demographic projections, particularly population change, and will consider the needs of different equality groups, in order to gain a robust understanding of the housing needs facing diverse communities.
- An accurate understanding of the nature and condition of all housing stock will also be undertaken and, following a recommendation at the last Board meeting, contact has been made with Leeds Metropolitan University to investigate potential for assistance with research relating to sustainable planning and energy efficiency.
- Visits and research to assess other Local Authorities' reviews of their Housing Strategies have been undertaken with neighbouring authorities, including one core city.

Consultation and Engagement

- In relation to the development of a Housing Strategy, a consultation management and stakeholder engagement plan is being finalised. The Project Team will be carrying out a number of consultation, engagement and information sharing events with relevant stakeholders, including Housing Advisory Panels and Cross City Chair's Group. The Project Team has also been working closely with the Equality Hub Representatives Network to ensure that equality issues are fully represented and inform the Strategy, and with the Authority's Adaptations Operations Group and Adult Social Care in relation to the Enabling Independent Living and Sustainable Communities themes.

Next Steps

- Research and consultation are expected to be ongoing throughout the life of the project, and any emerging findings will be shared via the Theme leads in order to inform Strategy development and identify innovative solutions to address gaps and shortfalls, and develop appropriate targets and actions.
- The outcomes of research and consultation will begin to inform an Equality Impact Assessment.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- The shape and role of the Board was developed through consultation with a number of city-wide partners, including the shadow board, and Executive Board members. This report considers the arrangement for the Board to conduct its business and fulfil its functions as an Advisory Committee of the Council, which includes engagement with partnership boards and other forums.

- In relation to the Strategy, arrangements for consultation and engagement are included in para 3.2 above.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- As an Advisory Committee of the Council, the Board has to meet public sector equality requirements. Due regard to equality will be given in relation to any decisions taken/recommendations made through compliance with the Council's governance processes, and equality impact assessment screenings/full EIAs will be undertaken to inform any decisions taken.
- In relation to Strategy, an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the project delivery plan, as mentioned in para 3.2 above.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- The Board helps to drive delivery of Best Council and City Priority Plan objectives. Its work contributes to the development of an enterprising Council and links closely to existing partnership bodies.
- The Housing Strategy will link with and deliver the aims and objectives of the Authority's Vision for Leeds, Business Plan and City Priority Plans, achieving not only housing related priorities but, as poor housing so often contributes to poor health, poor educational attainment and limited employment prospects, also impacting significantly on the wider themes of improving health and wellbeing and enabling children to live in safe, supportive families.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- The work of the Board will help to deliver high quality efficient services that offer value for money to Leeds taxpayers and Council tenants.
- Work is underway to identify the budget and resources required for the production of the Housing Strategy.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- The Board has been formally constituted as an Advisory Committee of the Council under Section 102 (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, and is now determining arrangements for carrying out its functions. There are no issues of confidentiality. The report is subject to call-in.
- In relation to the Housing Strategy, the report is open to call-in and does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

4.6 Risk Management

- The Board is taking steps to address the need to put the right arrangements in place for it to successfully fulfil its role.

- All Local Authorities are charged with reviewing the housing needs of their area and formulating and publishing a housing strategy. There is a risk that, should a Housing Strategy not be produced, the housing challenges facing the city may not be recognised and addressed in an holistic manner.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The new Housing Advisory Board his now operational and is considering arrangements for conducting its business and fulfilling its role as an Advisory Committee of the Council. It is already making arrangements for individual Board members to engage in the development of the new Housing Strategy under five distinct themes. It also has links to a number of groups and forums. The Board is being invited to consider whether these arrangements are adequate for it to fulfil its role in accordance with its Terms of Reference.
- 5.2 The revision of the Housing Strategy is progressing satisfactorily, with the research and consultation elements underway with key stakeholders (consultation and engagement are expected to be on-going throughout the lifetime of the project). Theme leads are meeting together on 28 May after which Board members will be engaged in relation to their specified interests.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Board is recommended to consider the details set out in the report and determine whether these arrangements are adequate to enable the Board to fulfil its functions as an Advisory Committee of the Council, in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

7 Background documents¹

None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.