



Report of: Head of Housing and Homelessness

Report to: Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 6th December 2022

Subject: Review of the Leeds Housing Strategy

Strapline: This report informs the Health and Wellbeing Board about the review of the city’s Housing Strategy and seeks comment from the Board.

Comms & Engagement: A review is underway to produce a new 5 year Leeds Housing Strategy. The strategy review will be underpinned by the Council’s 3 strategic pillars including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Consultation and engagement on the housing strategy priorities will take place during November and December, with a view to finalising the updated strategy by April 2022.

Are specific geographical areas affected? If relevant, name(s) of area(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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

The current Housing Strategy has been in place since 2016 and sets out the long-term plans for providing housing that is affordable, of good quality, that meets the needs of the citizens, enhances the quality of the environment, supports health and wellbeing and fosters cohesive communities. The strategy has a key role in supporting the Council’s three strategic pillars including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

A review of the Housing Strategy is underway. The six strategy themes remain very relevant and so it is proposed that these are retained and tweaked slightly to ensure closely aligned to wider strategic priorities. The proposed six themes are increasing affordable housing supply, improving housing quality, reducing homelessness and rough sleeping, creating sustainable communities, improving health through housing and age friendly housing.

The Housing Strategy has a key role in identifying how we will improve health through housing, with important connections to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. A number of proposed health and housing priorities for the Housing Strategy are outlined in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 of this paper.

The consultation and engagement phases of the Housing Strategy review will take place during November and December. The strategy will be drafted during January with a view to seeking formal approval from the Council's Executive Board in April 2022.

A further Housing and Health agenda item is planned for Health and Wellbeing Board meeting in February 2022, to discuss strategic leadership of the health and housing priorities via the two strategies.

Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

- Note and comment on the proposed approach to reviewing the Housing Strategy.
- Comment on how the Housing Strategy priorities, including the health and housing theme can support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Note the health and housing agenda item planned for the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting in February 2022.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report informs the Board of the current review of the Leeds Housing Strategy, and seeks input from the Board on how the strategy can support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy by improving health through housing.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The current Housing Strategy has been in place since 2016 and sets out the long-term plans for providing housing that is affordable, of good quality, that meets the needs of the city's citizens, enhances the quality of the environment, supports health and wellbeing and fosters cohesive communities.
- 2.2 The Housing Strategy has a critical role to play in helping the Council to achieve its overarching goal of meeting its 'Three Key Pillars' outlined in the Best Council Plan of delivering Inclusive Growth, improving the Health and Wellbeing of all our citizens, and tackling Climate Change. Attached in appendix one is a summary of how the Housing Strategy supports each of the three strategic pillars.
- 2.3 The condition of the city's housing stock directly affects each of these three pillars. A good supply of affordable housing, that has high energy efficiency helps to support inclusive growth. Good housing fosters good health and wellbeing in many ways, affecting both physical and mental health. The energy efficiency of the city's housing stock, in both the social and private sectors, will play a huge role in determining how the city progresses in reaching its zero carbon goals.
- 2.4 There is increasing national evidence to support the strong link between health and housing. In 2015 BRE estimated that poor quality housing costs the NHS £1.4bn each year.
- 2.5 Recent Joint Strategic Assessments of Leeds have highlighted an increase in the number of Lower Super Output Areas in Leeds which fall within the bottom 10% nationally. The most deprived areas are concentrated in inner city communities where there are high concentrations of social and private rented sector housing. The Housing Strategy has a key role in setting out how the housing sector can support wider strategies to reduce poverty and deprivation in neighbourhoods through providing good quality affordable homes which are energy efficient to help reduce fuel poverty and maximise health.
- 2.6 Housing quality in the private rented sector remains a Housing Strategy priority. There are a number of proactive approaches to improving housing quality in the private rented sector. The Private Sector Team assess housing standards via the 29 Housing Health and Safety Rating System, supporting landlords to address risks and targeting those which fail in their legal duties. To support landlords the Council supports the Leeds Rental Standard which is a self regulation scheme for landlords.
- 2.7 The Council also proactively targets poor quality homes via licensing, both mandatory HMO licensing and selective licensing, the Leeds Neighbourhood Approach (LNA) and targeting overdeveloped homes where people have inadequate living space. Using the powers available to us we are able to take

appropriate legal action to address standards which affect the well-being of occupants and ensure that their homes are safe and free from category 1 hazards. By crossing the threshold it also provides an opportunity to work with partners to address non housing needs such employment, training financial inclusion, access to health care and support needs.

3 Main issues

3.8 The current strategy is comprised of six key themes which represent the priorities for the city. It is proposed to largely retain these themes, but with some tweaks from the previous strategy. The proposed updated themes are outlined in appendix two, made up of the following:

- **Affordable Housing Growth** – to maximise the number of affordable homes available to buy and rent, through measures such as help to buy schemes, promoting starter homes and to increase the quality of new housing.
- **Improving Housing Quality** – to improve the quality and energy efficiency of homes, particularly in the private sector, and reducing the number of empty homes.
- **Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping** – formerly called ‘Promoting independent living’, this theme has been renamed to reflect the fact that its fundamental aim is to reduce homelessness in the city. Elements of the old theme that are not directly linked to homelessness will be included within the health and housing or Age Friendly theme.
- **Creating sustainable communities** – to create confident communities through effective management the neighbourhood environment and tackling anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, and crime. Links to the Inclusive Growth Strategy will be identified within this theme.
- **Improving health through housing** – promoting healthy lifestyles, reducing health inequalities, and supporting people to meet health needs through housing options. Links to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy will be identified within this theme.
- **Age Friendly Housing** – formerly ‘Meeting housing needs of older residents’, this theme seeks to ensure that the right housing options are available which allow older people to remain active and independent in their homes and communities.

3.9 The main areas identified where the Housing Strategy can support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy are outlined in appendix one. These are as follows:

- Supporting good mental and physical health through improved housing quality, particularly in the private rented sector and improved affordability
- Providing age friendly housing which supports independence, self-care, and social inclusion

- Improving accessibility through supporting a ‘prevention’ approach, e.g., homelessness, rough sleeping, mental health, care leavers
- Ensuring that the housing environment enables people to be healthy, social, and active
- Promoting strong, well-connected communities and pride in sustainable local neighbourhoods
- Maximising the benefits from technology to improve health and wellbeing linked to housing
- Ensuring that housing needs are met through integrated models of care
- Supporting the system to respond to the impacts of COVID on health and wellbeing

3.10 Whilst many of the health and housing connections into the Housing Strategy are embedded within a number of strategy themes it is proposed that the ‘Improving Health through housing’ theme is focused on how the health and housing sectors can work together as part of the system to ensure improved health through housing. The main priorities proposed within this theme are:

- Supporting independence through housing – maximising collaboration on adaptations, hospital prevention / discharge
- Strengthening collaboration between sectors – improved awareness and partnership working across the housing and health sectors – basic assessment skills, knowledge of pathways, knowing who to contact
- Supporting system efficiencies - the Housing sector’s role in providing proactive housing solutions for complex and high-cost health / social care cases – targeted case management work with Social Care and Health agencies to meet housing needs of individual and families with very complex needs, high system costs.
- Digital solutions to monitor housing conditions and health impacts, e.g., Gov Tech Project which is using environmental sensors to monitor resident health and wellbeing.
- Information and data sharing – e.g., housing information on Local Care Record
- Strengthened role of housing sector on Local Care Partnerships
- Improved referral pathways between health and housing e.g., homelessness, mental health.
- Adopt System Thinking approaches across Housing sector – Better Conversations, Making Every Contact Count, Trauma Based approaches

3.11 The strategy will be for the next five years, to ensure that there continues to be a framework that guides the city in meeting the housing needs of all citizens. The planned approach will include the following:

3.12 ***October–December 2021 - Consultation and engagement phase:***

- Significant engagement took place with partners and Council teams on each theme of the 2016-21 Housing Strategy during 2018-19 via a series of Leeds Strategic Housing Partnership workshops. These workshops helped to identify a series of collaborative priorities and organisational commitments. In most cases these priorities remain very relevant, and actions are underway to progress these commitments. The focus of this consultation and engagement

phase will therefore be on reviewing whether there is any change to these priorities over the last couple of years. Consultation and engagement will take place via the following:

- An online workshop was held on 16th November, attended by a wide range of stakeholders, both internal and external to the Council. Breakout sessions were held which gave stakeholders the opportunity to engage directly on particular themes, including Health and Wellbeing.
- Discussions are taking place with Council's Policy Network members and Directorate Leadership Teams to ensure that the Housing Strategy is closely aligned to other Council strategies and policy.
- As part of the Equality Impact Assessment, the city's five Equality Hubs have been approached to ensure that consideration is given to the equality impacts of the strategy.
- A website has been launched, via the Council's 'Your Voice Leeds' portal which offers the opportunity for citizens to provide input into the Housing Strategy. It will be publicised via the Council's social media channels and via email directly to Council tenants.

3.13 ***January 2022 – Collation and Drafting of the Housing Strategy***

- The outcomes of the consultation phase will be brought together, and a draft strategy produced

3.14 ***February – April 2022 – Final Consultation and Scrutiny***

- A workshop will be held with the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board in February to provide an update on the consultation and engagement phase and provide an opportunity for the Board to scrutinise the draft strategy priorities. A particular focus will be placed on the improving housing quality, reducing homelessness and rough sleeping and age friendly housing themes at the workshop.
- The draft strategy will be shared with the Leeds Strategic Housing Board for final comment.
- The draft strategy will be shared with Executive Board in April 2022 for final consideration and decision making.

3.15 ***May 22 onwards – Roll Out and Promotion of the Housing Strategy***

- Once approved the updated Housing Strategy will be promoted across Council teams and with partners. The strategy will be published on the Leeds City Council website and promoted via social media.

3.16 Health and housing is already planned as a major agenda item of the February 2022 Health and Wellbeing Board meeting. It is proposed that the meeting discusses how strategic leadership is provided to the health and housing priorities in both strategies.

4 Health and Wellbeing Board governance

4.1 Consultation, engagement and hearing citizen voice

4.1.1 The consultation and engagement process is outlined above.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment is planned as part of the Housing Strategy review.

4.3 Resources and value for money

4.3.1 The Housing Strategy will help outline the city's housing priorities over the next five years, and as such will help the city to focus its resources on the city's biggest priorities and make sure efforts across all sectors are focused on the Key Pillars of delivering Inclusive Growth, improving the Health and Wellbeing of all our citizens, and tackling Climate Change.

4.4 Legal Implications, access to information and call In

4.4.1 The Council has a range of statutory duties relating to housing, homelessness, and reviewing housing conditions. This strategy will assist the Council in meeting those duties.

4.5 Risk management

4.5.1 The main risk is that the updated Strategy fails to meet the housing needs of the city in the coming years in the areas it is considering. The Strategy's themes have a major impact across all the city's communities and all age groups. If the Strategy fails to reflect the needs of the city, then there is the risk that the development of housing in the city doesn't properly reflect the city's needs.

4.5.2 This risk is being managed by carrying out an extensive consultation and engagement exercise, that is aiming to get the input of the widest number of stakeholders, communities, and citizens as possible, to tailor a strategy that is robust and has the buy in from stakeholders across the city. The Leeds Strategic Housing Partnership will help to ensure continued engagement with the wider sector during the period of the updated Housing Strategy.

5 Conclusions

5.1 In reviewing the Housing Strategy there is an opportunity to ensure that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities are embedded within the Housing Strategy, to ensure that we maximise the opportunity to improve health through housing in the city.

5.2 In attending Health and Wellbeing Board as part of the Housing Strategy's engagement phase ensures that there is the opportunity and time available to ensure that priorities are aligned.

6 Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

- Note and comment on the proposed approach to reviewing the Housing Strategy.
- Comment on how the Housing Strategy, including the health and housing theme can support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Note the health and housing agenda item planned for the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting in February 2022.

7 Background documents

7.1 None.

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How does this help reduce health inequalities in Leeds?

The condition of the city’s housing stock, across the social housing, rented and owner-occupied sectors, has a huge role to play in promoting good physical and mental health. The Strategy will help to shape the city’s approach to housing over the next five years that will help to ensure the health and wellbeing of the city’s residents.

How does this help create a high-quality health and care system?

Good quality, suitable housing helps to reduce the pressure on hard-pressed services. The Strategy considers issues such as how to ensure suitable housing for older people, that contributes to a high-quality care system.

How does this help to have a financially sustainable health and care system?

By reducing pressure on the NHS by, for example, helping to reduce falls in the home, or ensuring there is suitable accommodation for people when they leave hospital.

Future challenges or opportunities

Priorities of the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-21 (please tick all that apply to this report)	
A Child Friendly City and the best start in life	<input type="checkbox"/>
An Age Friendly City where people age well	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Strong, engaged and well-connected communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing and the environment enable all people of Leeds to be healthy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A strong economy with quality, local jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get more people, more physically active, more often	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximise the benefits of information and technology	<input type="checkbox"/>
A stronger focus on prevention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support self-care, with more people managing their own conditions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Promote mental and physical health equally	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A valued, well trained and supported workforce	<input type="checkbox"/>

The best care, in the right place, at the right time

X