



Report of the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods

Member Management Committee

Date: 1st July 2011

Subject: Establishing the Leeds Housing Forum

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

The report asks the Committee to determine Elected Member representation on the newly formed Leeds Housing Forum. The Forum combines the functions of the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership Board with those of the current Leeds Housing Partnership.

The report asks the Committee to consider Elected Member representation of:

2 Labour

1 Conservative

1 Liberal Democrat

1 Morley Borough Independents

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 To ask the Committee to establish the Elected Member representation Leeds Housing Forum.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Council is currently developing new strategic plans including the long term partnership strategy for the City – the Vision for Leeds. The **Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030** - is the Leeds Sustainable Community Strategy which sets out the long term ambition and aspirations for the city. It is being developed by the Leeds Initiative in conjunction with all local partners, including the public, private, and third sectors.

- 2.2 A key element of the city planning framework are the **City Priority Plans 2011 to 2015** – these are new city-wide partnership plans which identify the key outcomes and priorities to be delivered by the council, and its partners, over the next 4 years. They replace the Leeds Strategic Plan and are aligned to the new Strategic Partnerships.
- 2.3 Housing is a cross cutting issue and potentially impacts on a wide range of areas of activity but the key contribution of the housing sector will be to deliver the Best Cityto Live outcomes of the City Priorities Plan through the Housing and Regeneration Board. In order to achieve this it is essential that strong, accountable mechanism is found to promote partnership working on housing strategy and delivery.
- 2.4 Currently, partnership working on housing is organised through two mechanisms: The Leeds Housing Partnership (LHP) and the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership Board (AHSPB).
- 2.5 The LHP was established, originally as the Leeds Housing Partnership Forum in 1994 and has acted as the prime forum for discussion of housing policy, strategy and practice since then.
- 2.6 The Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership Board was established on March 2007, the primary focus being to deliver affordable homes across Leeds and make a significant contribution towards meeting the identified need for affordable homes. In March 2011 it was decided that a review of the partnership is required due to the changing political, economic & financial impacts and the need to locate affordable housing within wider housing growth, improvement of existing housing and housing support.
- 2.7 Given the establishment of City Priority Plan Boards and the need to avoid unnecessary duplication between the AHSP Board and the LHP, the Chair of the AHSP Board has agreed that its activities be wound up in July 2011, and the LHP Executive agreed at its meeting on 24 May 2011 that its activities be merged with those of the AHSP Board into a single partnership group.

3.0 Proposed Key Objectives and Terms of Reference of the Leeds Housing Forum

- 3.1 The proposed key objectives and Terms of Reference for the Leeds Housing Forum are as follows:
- a. To develop effective mechanisms to ensure an effective 'housing voice' within the City to inform and deliver the Housing Strategy
 - b. To act as the body for housing delivery and related regeneration activity approved through the Housing and Regeneration Board
 - c. To develop effective relationships with the other four City Priority Plan Boards
 - d. To ensure the effective review of the Leeds Housing Strategy and the evidence base upon which it is based
 - e. To establish processes for the delivery of the outcomes and outputs outlined Leeds Housing Strategy and to implement those processes
 - f. To coordinate and guide the activities of partners at a local level in identifying means of progressing actions to deliver key outcomes and outputs
 - g. To develop effective mechanisms to ensure all housing providers:
 - i) deliver customer focused services which respond to local communities

- ii) contribute effectively to the jobs and skills agenda
- iii) understand and respond to Welfare Reform
- iv) respond and contribute to delivery of Community Safety and the Burglary Reduction Strategy

4.0 Proposed Key Relationships

- 4.1 The Leeds Housing Forum needs to establish and maintain strong links with the Housing and Regeneration Board with possible representation to ensure the Forum takes ownership of key decisions by the Board, reports progress on delivery and that the Housing and Regeneration Board have a source of specialist support and advice.
- 4.2 Links need to be established and maintained with the other City Priority Plan Boards probably through key members of the Forum agreeing to champion the links between housing and the aspects of activity overseen by each City Priority Plan Board
- 4.3 Delivery of new and affordable housing as a driver, and as a means of supporting Leeds' regeneration priorities requires clear connections with regeneration programmes and boards for East Leeds Regeneration, the Investment Partnership for South Leeds, Aire Valley & the Leeds Bradford Corridor / West Leeds Gateway. The Forum will need to understand and make connection with the Town and District Centres Programme, investment through Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and neighbourhood renewal. The changing regional and sub regional structures will mean that the Leeds Housing Forum should also consider how to establish partnership links to the Leeds City Region / Leeds Enterprise Partnership.

5.0 Membership

- 5.1 Membership of the Leeds Housing Forum will be drawn from the wide range of housing organisations including:
 - a. Key Leeds City Council directorates
 - b. Lending and funding agencies
 - c. House builders and developers
 - d. Housing associations
 - e. Private landlords
 - f. Third sector housing and support providers
 - g. Constructors and related businesses
 - h. Tenants, residents and community organisations
 - i. Relevant key statutory agencies
- 5.2 Members will be free to attend meetings and events organised through the Leeds Housing Forum in a way that best uses their time and interest.

6.0 Cycle of meetings and agendas

- 6.1 It is proposed that the forum meet six times a year to review action and delivery of the three priority themes of the Leeds Housing Strategy.
- 6.2 Meeting agendas would cover the three priority themes in the Leeds Housing Strategy and each meeting would cover two aspects with an hour devoted to each aspect. This would enable members to attend for those items of most interest to their business.

7.0 Sub Structure

7.1 In order to be able to consider certain aspects of housing delivery in more detail it is proposed that the Leeds Housing Forum be augmented by:

- i) A twice yearly private rented housing conference
- ii) A twice yearly housing supply conference
- iii) A twice yearly housing management, support and care conference
- iv) Social Landlords Forum, Leeds Accredited Landlords Network and Homelessness Forum to cover operational issues

7.2 Links will also be made to the Leeds Property Forum of the Chamber of Commerce.

8.0 Support to the Forum

8.1 Work plans relating to the three priority themes of the Leeds Housing Strategy would be led by a named Council officer with support from key relevant partner organisations.

8.2 Support to the forum and servicing of Forum meetings and conferences would be undertaken by re'new through its Service Level Agreement with the Council.

9.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

9.1 Members are asked to categorise the Leeds Housing Forum as a Strategic and Key Partnership, meaning that Elected Member appointments to it would be part of the remit of the Member Management Committee.

10.0 Legal And Resource Implications

10.1 There are no specific legal implications, combining the partnership mechanisms for housing streamlines resource requirements.

11.0 Recommendations

11.1 Member Management Committee is asked to categorise the Leeds Housing Forum as a Strategic and Key Partnership, and nominate the following representatives to sit on it:

- 2 Labour
- 1 Conservative
- 1 Liberal Democrat
- 1 Morley Borough Independents

Background Papers

Appointments to Outside Bodies Procedure Rules