

COUNCIL:

24 NOVEMBER 2016

CABINET PROPOSAL

CARDIFF HOUSING STRATEGY 2016-2021

Reason for this Report

1. To seek approval of the new Cardiff Housing Strategy 2016-21 (Appendix A).

Background

2. Cardiff's existing Housing Strategy covers the period 2012-17. The date for revising the Strategy has been brought forward by 1 year however, to reflect changes in legislation, UK Government policy and strategic direction.
3. As the over-arching housing strategy for Cardiff, this document sets the strategic direction for housing provision and services across all tenures and identifies the key priorities for the Council and partners. The Strategy references the findings of the Local Housing Market Assessment 2015, which was commissioned to provide a robust evidence base for future housing need, to inform the Housing Strategy. The Market Assessment will be updated bi-annually in accordance with Welsh Government requirements.

Issues

4. The Strategy has been developed in a time of increasing housing need and reducing resources. The document therefore focuses on prioritising and meeting the housing needs of the most vulnerable.
5. It also responds to recent Welsh Government legislation including the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 and changes in UK Government policy, specifically around welfare reform.
6. The Strategy supports all 4 of the Council's key priorities, with the main emphasis being on supporting the vulnerable. The Strategy reflects the city's aim to be Europe's most liveable city, and seeks to contribute to the Corporate Plan and key themes of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Vision and Key Aims

7. A vision for the Strategy has been set out as follows:

We aim to deliver the best housing outcomes for the people of Cardiff, working together with our partners to ensure that all our citizens can access high quality, affordable and sustainable homes.

This vision is supported by 4 Key Aims, each aim is represented by a separate chapter within the Strategy. These aims are as follows:

- To develop a full understanding of housing need in the city (Housing Need)
 - To take a coordinated and evidence based approach to developing and improving homes in Cardiff (Homes)
 - To ensure that the housing needs of the most vulnerable are met (People)
 - To improve neighbourhoods and help build stronger communities (Communities)
8. The Strategy focuses on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in the community and the Equalities Summary (page 42) and Accessible Services Summary (pages 43-44) set out the actions to be taken to support the vulnerable and ensure equal access to housing.
9. The Strategy sets out a number of ambitious activities to be undertaken by the Council and partners over the next 5 years, listed as 'We Will' commitments. A summary of these actions can be found on pages 45 to 46.
10. A separate action plan will be developed and a monitoring framework established to track progress against these commitments. It is proposed that this take the form of an annual report card, with activities identified through a RAG system.

Consultation

11. The Strategy has been developed with input from RSL partners and consultation has been undertaken with over 100 stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors.
12. The Strategy was also considered by the Community and Adult Social Services Committee on 6th July 2016, a copy of the Committee's letter and response can be found at Appendix B. Changes made as a result of the scrutiny include:
- reference to the findings of the Local Housing Market Assessment on the housing needs of BME Communities
 - reference to the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020

- reference to the importance of design in delivering high quality, sustainable, affordable housing.

The Strategy has been amended to reflect these comments and in particular the Equalities section has been considerably strengthened.

13. All Ward Members have been consulted on the Housing Strategy.
14. A number of comments were received during the consultation from a range of partners. These were generally positive, and changes were made as a result to enhance the strategy. A summary of these comments and the changes made can be found at Appendix C.
15. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and can be found at Appendix D.

Reason for Recommendation

16. The Cardiff Housing Strategy 2016-2021 ensures that the Council has current and relevant strategic plans in place to address housing issues across all tenures.

Financial Implications

17. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The report lists a number of aims which will have financial implications. These will need to be delivered within existing financial resources or additional funding be identified before these are implemented. The effectiveness of new and existing policies will need to be continually monitored to feed into future updates of the Strategy and to ensure that the use of resources is effective and sustainable, given current and future restraints on resources.

Legal Implications (including Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate)

18. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. standing orders and financial regulations; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.
19. The Council has an allocation policy in accordance with Part VI of the Housing Act 1996. The scheme has been framed so as to secure that reasonable preference is given to
 - i) People who are homeless (within the meaning of Part II of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014

- ii) People who are owed a duty under sections 66, 73 or 75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014
 - iii) People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
 - iv) People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds
 - v) People who need to move to a particular locality where failure to meet that need would cause hardship
20. The Council have a duty to carry out a homeless review and formulate a homeless strategy under Part II of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
21. The Council have a duty to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to its area under Part III of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
22. The Council has to satisfy its public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are:
- Age
 - Gender reassignment
 - Sex
 - Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
 - Disability
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Sexual orientation
 - Religion or belief – including lack of belief
23. As such a decision to implement the proposal has to be made in the context of the Council's equality act public sector duties.

HR Implications

24. There are no HR implications.

CABINET PROPOSAL

Council is recommended to approve Cardiff's Housing Strategy 2016-2021.

THE CABINET

13 October 2016

The following appendices are attached:

Appendix A – Cardiff Housing Strategy 2016-2021

Appendix B – Letter from Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee and response.

Appendix C – Consultation Summary Report

Appendix D – Equality Impact Assessment

The following background paper has been taken into consideration
Local Housing Market Assessment 2015 Final Report