

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

16 July 2012

Joint Report of the Director of Health and Housing and Cabinet Member for Housing

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 HOUSING STRATEGY 2012-2015

Summary

This report presents the draft Housing Strategy for the period 2012-2015 [Annex 1], which members are invited to endorse for the purpose of consultation.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In November 2011, members approved the proposal that the review of the housing strategy, which would ordinarily have been due during the early part of 2012-13, be deferred until after the enactment of the Localism Bill and the publication of the Government's national Housing Strategy, *Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England* (November 2011). An interim housing strategy action plan was developed to cover the intervening months, which members approved. A further copy of the interim action plan is attached for information at [Annex 2].
- 1.1.2 The draft Housing Strategy 2012-2015 has been developed in the same format as the 2009-2012 strategy, i.e. brief and succinct (NB: It has yet to be similarly formatted). However, unlike the previous version, which sat within the Sustainable Community Strategy, this is a stand-alone document.
- 1.1.3 Despite the considerable challenges that lie ahead, the four key priorities have remained largely unchanged, and we are confident that they will provide a sound framework for the next three years:
- § Provision of affordable housing
 - § Tackling homelessness
 - § Private sector renewal and energy efficiency
 - § Assisting vulnerable households.

- 1.1.4 Detailed objectives that underpin each priority will be identified in a separate action plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually. The action plan to cover the first year of the strategy will be developed once the draft strategy has been subject to consultation, and the objectives within it will be subjected to the EqIA process as appropriate.

1.2 Next Steps

- § July/August – consultation period. Partners and stakeholders will be invited to comment on the draft strategy. It will also be made available on the Council's web site for access by the general public
- § 10 October 2012 – draft strategy and action plan to Cabinet for approval
- § 12 November 2012 – update on progress against objectives in the 2011 interim action plan to the Strategic Housing Advisory Board for information
- § 29 January 2013 – draft strategy and action plan to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration
- § 28 March 2013 – draft strategy and action plan to Cabinet for approval
- § 16 April 2013 – draft strategy and action plan to Council for approval.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The Housing Strategy is a statutory requirement under section 7 of the Local Government Act 2003.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 None arising from the decision sought in this paper.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 Failure to develop an effective and forward-looking housing strategy and action plan will compromise the Council's ability to meet identified housing need, and to attract the funding necessary for that purpose.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to **ENDORSE** for the purpose of consultation the draft Housing Strategy 2012-2015 which is attached at **[Annex 1]**.

The Director of Health and Housing and Cabinet Member for Housing confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Janet Walton

Nil

John Batty
Director of Health and Housing

Councillor Jill Anderson
Cabinet Member for Housing

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	<p>The draft Housing Strategy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. No potentially negative impacts were identified. However, it will be subjected to a further assessment post-consultation and prior to being finalised.</p> <p>Individual objectives within the housing strategy action plan (see paragraph 1.1.4) will also be subjected to the EqIA process as appropriate.</p>

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	<p>The Equality Impact Assessment has identified the following positive impacts within the draft housing strategy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A commitment to ensuring an adequate provision of suitable move-on accommodation for young people leaving accommodation-based support. 2. A commitment to meeting the housing needs of people with a disability. 3. A commitment to supporting the delivery of a scheme for women fleeing violence. 4. A further assessment of the housing needs of the gypsy and traveller community. 5. A commitment to supporting the delivery of new accommodation-based support for people who misuse drugs and alcohol.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		N/A

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.