

**SUBMISSION BY CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY 2013-2017**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise Members about the Lichfield District Housing Strategy 2013-17. The draft strategy is attached at **Appendix A** with a full copy of the strategy including the appendices available on the Council's website at: [http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/custom\\_scripts/voiceitdocs.php?id=257](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/custom_scripts/voiceitdocs.php?id=257).
- 1.2 To invite comments from Members on the draft strategy and endorse the four priorities for action.
- 1.3 To recommend the Housing Strategy to the Cabinet for approval subject to consideration of Members comments and the public consultation results.

**2. Background and Introduction**

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy 2013-2017 sets out the council's plans for housing in Lichfield District from 2013 to 2017. The strategy examines the housing challenges that we face in the district and explains how the council and its partners will address these challenges through four priorities for action.
- 2.2 The four priorities which have been identified during the development of the strategy are underpinned by several aims and actions. These are contained within a delivery plan that will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant to the housing agenda in the district. The strategy sets out high level actions only; more detailed actions are included in service plans and policies that sit below the strategy.
- 2.3 As Lichfield District Council no longer owns any housing stock the importance of the housing strategy to set out how we will fulfil our strategic and enabling role is very important. This includes how we will meet our statutory responsibilities for homelessness and to periodically review the housing needs and housing conditions of the area.
- 2.4 The vision for housing within the strategy is 'To ensure that the housing stock meets existing and future housing needs and includes a wide choice of affordable homes in healthy, safe and sustainable communities'.
- 2.5 The four priorities have been identified as:
  - Improve housing choice and access to a wide range of affordable homes
  - Prevent and reduce homelessness
  - Ensure warm, healthy, well maintained homes, reduce fuel poverty and cut carbon emissions
  - Support older and vulnerable people to live as independently and healthily as possible
- 2.6 The four priorities have been developed following a full analysis of the available evidence and feedback to date that we received from our partners and residents.
- 2.7 The strategy has been developed and written at a time of great change and economic uncertainty which will impact not only on the finances and resources available to deliver our housing strategy but on the way we work and the organisations we work with. We therefore will be regularly reviewing our methods of delivery and actions to achieve the best possible outcomes for our residents in this changing and challenging time.

### **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 To develop the strategy we have carried out a range of consultation exercises with partners and stakeholders. In 2012 we held a consultation event for the Strategic Housing Partnership and other partners to share our emerging evidence and priority areas for action. Following this we have shared the draft delivery plan with key partners involved in delivery.
- 3.2 In 2012 we consulted the public on the emerging priorities for the strategy through the council's resident's survey. In the survey, residents were asked to rank the four emerging priorities for the housing strategy in order of importance and also identify any other housing issues that they felt needed addressing in the district. Of all respondents, 70% thought that we had chosen the most relevant priorities for action in the housing strategy. Priority 4 (supporting older and vulnerable people to live as independently and healthily as possible) was thought to be the most important priority, with 48% of people ranking this as the most important.
- 3.3 The draft strategy is currently out for formal public consultation until the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013 when it is proposed to consider the consultation results and feedback from this committee before completing final amendments and then submitting the strategy to Cabinet for approval.

### **4. Community Benefits**

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy recognises the needs of the local community and identifies the priorities we need to pursue in the period 2012-2017. The vision of the strategy seeks to create sustainable communities and the strategy aims to bring about a range of benefits to residents and the communities in which they live in the district. These aims include:
  - To increase provision of affordable housing
  - Improve the housing options for people in need
  - Ensure best use is made of the housing stock
  - Continue with a proactive approach to preventing homelessness
  - To reduce the percentage of people living in fuel poverty
  - Increase the energy efficiency of the housing stock and cut carbon emissions
  - To ensure an adequate supply of suitable accommodation for vulnerable and older people in need
  - Support and promote services to enable older and vulnerable people to continue to live independently in their own homes

### **5. Recommendation**

- 5.1 That Members endorse the four priorities of the strategy and delivery plan, and subject to the comments of Members and public consultation results recommend that the Housing Strategy 2013-2017 be forwarded to Cabinet for approval.

### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Our ability to deliver the priorities of the housing strategy is dependent upon a range of capital and revenue funding sources. Due to the financial situation the capital and revenue resources available for all housing activities to deliver our priorities through the period of the strategy up to 2017 is currently uncertain until future budgets have been agreed.
- 6.2 The Council has limited financial resources and assets to use towards enabling new affordable housing. The public funding available to housing associations to develop new affordable housing has been drastically cut since 2010, which may restrict the ability for new affordable housing to come forward. The Council's role in trying to facilitate new supply by looking for innovative ways and new funding mechanisms with our partners is therefore crucial if our target to deliver new affordable homes is to be achieved.

### **7. Local Policy Context**

- 7.1 The Housing Strategy has a key part to play in delivering the 'Plan for Lichfield District 2012-2016', particularly within the themes of 'supporting people' and 'shaping place'.

- 7.2 Within the strategic theme of ‘we’ll support people’ there are the following long term outcomes relevant to housing:
- We’ll help people to be and to feel secure in their homes, neighbourhoods and town and city centres by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
  - We’ll help and support vulnerable adults, families and children to live independent and fulfilled lives in their own homes and communities, and prevent homelessness wherever we can
  - We’ll improve the health and wellbeing of the whole population making sure we make the biggest improvement for people with the lowest life expectancy
- 7.3 Within the strategic theme of ‘we’ll shape place’ there are the following long term outcomes that are of most relevance to this strategy:
- We’ll work with others to provide access and choice to a range of market specialist and affordable homes that meet the needs of our existing and future residents
  - We’ll reduce carbon emissions and promote energy efficiency and renewable energy within the home
  - We’ll enhance and protect the district’s built environment assets, its historic environment, open spaces and local distinctiveness
- 7.4 The Local Plan is a very important document which will plan, manage and monitor future growth, including housing growth in the district up to 2028. Within the strategy document is a ‘Homes for the Future’ chapter that sets out the core housing policies including the affordable housing policy which proposes a target of up to 40% affordable housing on large sites. The policy however is a flexible one which that allows the Council to change the % provision of affordable housing according to market conditions.

<b>8. Risk Management Issues</b>				
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood/ Impact</b>	<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Countermeasure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Actions identified in the Housing Strategy are not delivered	Medium/High	Strategic	Action plan is monitored through covalent and an annual review conducted by the Strategic Housing Partnership	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
Insufficient resources available to deliver strategy actions	High/High	Strategic/ Financial/ Reputational	Monitor impact on strategy actions and continue to consider alternative funding options	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
The Local Plan is not adopted and so housing policies remain out of date	Medium/High	Strategic/ Financial	Existing policy adhered to in negotiations with developers	Housing Services Manager / Planning Policy

**Attachments:**

Appendix A: Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the draft Housing Strategy 2013-2017

**Background Documents:**

Draft Housing Strategy 2013-2017

[http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/custom\\_scripts/voiceitdocs.php?id=257](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/custom_scripts/voiceitdocs.php?id=257)

Lichfield District Private Sector Stock condition survey 2010 CPC Ltd

[http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?downloadID=1318](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1318)

Housing Assistance Policy

[http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?fileID=3994](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=3994)

Carbon Reduction Plan

[http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/file/3948/carbon\\_reduction\\_plan](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/file/3948/carbon_reduction_plan)

Local Plan

[http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/download/1440/lichfield\\_district\\_local\\_plan\\_strategy\\_july\\_2012](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/download/1440/lichfield_district_local_plan_strategy_july_2012)