

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 46

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Local Investment Plan for Housing
Date of Meeting: 8th September 2010
Report of: Director of Housing Culture and Enterprise
Contact Officer: Name: Martin Reid Tel: 29-3321
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Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Improving housing supply is one of the key strategic priorities of the citywide Housing Strategy 2009-14. A key goal is to increase the supply of affordable rented housing. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the body the government currently uses to help fund local authorities and housing associations to develop new affordable housing. The Local Investment Plan will inform HCA planning around priorities for future housing investment based on strategic priorities identified by local authorities.
- 1.2 In 2009 the HCA introduced a new business process entitled the 'Single Conversation' in order to coordinate the planning of housing investment with the key role given to local authorities to commission housing development in their area.
- 1.3 The HCA divided the country into sub-regions, based on the HCA's view of the operation of housing markets. Brighton & Hove is grouped with Arun, Adur, Chichester and Worthing, the 'Coastal West Sussex' sub-region.
- 1.4 In February 2010 the authorities in this sub-region were invited to prepare a Local Investment Plan (LIP) for housing which would set out their priorities for housing investment.
- 1.5 Following the adoption of a Local Investment Plan in September 2010, a Local Investment Agreement will be agreed, which will set out the HCA's proposed investment in the area over the next 3 years.
- 1.6 It is planned that the LIP will be adopted in September 2010 and will enable a realistic assessment of funding requirements for the 3-year period 2011-14 that can feed into the next public sector spending review.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To seek the agreement to the proposed process and timetable for completion of a Brighton & Hove Local Investment Plan for housing.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Housing delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Housing Strategy to agree the final content of the Local Investment Plan prior to the sign off with the Homes & Community Agency in September 2010.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 For the HCA, the LIP will help determine where investments and interventions should be made and ensure that any future funding is targeted for maximum benefit. Importantly, the LIP will enable local authorities to have more control over investment and future funding opportunities (including sources other than via the HCA) and will ensure a joined-up approach to investment planning along the coast.
- 3.2 The plan will focus on short term priorities (2010-2013), but will also look at the medium term (2013-2015) and longer term objectives (up to 2025).
- 3.3 The LIP will not seek to duplicate work that has already been completed or is underway (including Local Development Frameworks, Housing Strategies, Economic Strategies etc), but instead, will consolidate these areas of work into a single, comprehensive plan.
- 3.4 The local authorities will have the leading role in the development of the Coastal Conversation and the LIP, in consultation with the HCA. However, the process is intended to be inclusive and will involve a number of other stakeholders, including Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).
- 3.5 The aim is for the LIP to be completed by the end of September 2010. Once the LIP is completed and agreed, the intention is for this to be formalised in a Local Investment Agreement (LIA). The LIA will set out the level of investment that the HCA will provide in Coastal West Sussex and Brighton & Hove, subject to budgetary constraints and specific project assessment. It will be a non-legally binding memorandum of understanding between the local authorities and the HCA.
- 3.6 The LIP can also be used to help inform wider sub-regional strategies and is likely to have a number of wider uses.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The LIP is based upon our existing strategic documents and priorities, which have already been subject to extensive consultation.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Finance Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation made in this report.

Any council investment required for the delivery of decent homes and the delivery of affordable homes will be subject to full Cabinet approval at a later date.

Finance Officer Consulted: Neil Smith Date: 25/08/10

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no significant legal implications for the Council arising from the report's recommendations. However, once a Local Investment Agreement has been drafted, Legal Services will need to consider it to ensure that Council's interests are properly protected. The development of a Local Investment Plan will not adversely affect any individuals Human Rights.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date:25/08/10

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The plan will address equality issues across all groups in terms of providing affordable, accessible, quality homes.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 A key objective of new affordable housing is to develop or improve sustainable, mixed and balanced communities.
- 5.5 All social housing grant aided housing schemes must meet Code Level 3 of the Sustainable Code. In the 2011 there is an expectation that new affordable housing schemes will meet Level 4.
- 5.6 The funding for BEST (private sector renewal partnership), has a specific programme identified to improve energy efficiency within existing private sector housing stock.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.7 All new affordable housing schemes aim to achieve Secure by Design status, which is an accreditation given by Sussex Police. Each of the proposed housing schemes is consulted on with the police prior to a planning application, in order that new housing attempts to design out potential for crime.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.8 The Investment Plan has been developed on a sub regional basis in line with recommendations from the HCA. Failure to adopt the plan by September 2010 will impact on our ability to bring forward investment from the HCA.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.9 The LIP by supporting investment into the City will support the key corporate priority 'Providing Homes that People Need'.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The following options were available regarding the development of the LIP:

- (a) Brighton & Hove withdraw from the LIP
- (b) Delay the progress of the LIP

- 6.2 The option to withdraw could put Brighton & Hove at a disadvantage, in that the other authorities could go ahead and Brighton & Hove would not secure any portion of any funding to be made available in the future. We could have delayed the approach to developing the LIP, but this would have meant that we would not be in the best position in readiness for the autumn spending review

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The LIP provides not only an opportunity to consider longer-term investment needs from a position of far greater financial and strategic clarity but also offer an opportunity to review progress against the 3-year development programme and to add or adjust in terms of any policy changes, priorities and development proposals as these develop. The LIP is currently being drafted and is based upon known priorities and quantifiable investment needs.
- 7.2 The Leader and Portfolio Holder will be asked to sign off the final version of the document in preparation of approval by the HCA. It is essential that despite the changing landscape in terms of the announcements from the new Government Brighton & Hove positions itself through identification of its long term investment needs so that should any funding be made available in the future it is in the best position to secure funding.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices: None

Documents in Members' Rooms: None

Background Documents

1. The Core Elements for Local Investment Plans: HCA 2010
<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/core-elements.pdf>