

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: October 14 2009	Meeting Name: Executive
Report title:		Southwark Housing Strategy 2009– 2016	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

1. Agrees the new Southwark Housing Strategy 2009 to 2016 (Appendix A).
2. Notes the development of an interactive housing supply and demand model.
3. Notes the partnership arrangements set up between the borough and the Homes and Communities Agency as set out at paragraph 21 and in the Memorandum of Understanding at Appendix B.

BACKGROUND

4. The Housing Strategy sets out our strategic approach to housing, describing the key housing issues in the borough and the council's priorities for tackling these over the life of the strategy. It covers housing across all tenures (public and private sector housing), with a particular focus on housing demand and supply, housing conditions and how housing and housing services can contribute to meeting wider strategic priorities, such as improving health, tackling poverty and creating safer and stronger communities.
5. This Housing Strategy will replace the current five-year (2005 to 2010) Housing Strategy. That strategy was agreed by Council Assembly July 20 2005.
6. The executive meeting on the October 16 2007 agreed the approach for reviewing Southwark's Housing Strategy. This included plans for a two stage consultation process. The first stage of consultation was finding out what residents' and other stakeholders' key concerns were, and what they thought we (the council and its partners) should do to respond. This stage ran from July 2008 to the end of October 2008 (see paragraph 14 for further details). The stage 2 consultation process, which included a consultation document, was approved by the executive February 10 2009.
7. The timescale for the Housing Strategy is 2009 to 2016 is to bring it into line with that of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, 2016. However the Housing Strategy action plan will be reviewed at intervals throughout this time to respond to any significant changes in Southwark, and in regional and national policy as required.
8. This Housing Strategy is a partnership strategy and has been developed under the auspices of the new Southwark Housing Strategic Partnership (SHSP), a sub-group of Southwark Alliance.

9. There is some overlap in the objective 2 of increasing the supply of housing, and the housing policies in the council's Local Development Framework. The consultations for both strategies were aligned and responses were shared. The Housing Strategy consultation document and the proposals for the Core Strategy preferred options document were jointly reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in May 2009. The Core Strategy development is still underway. The Core Strategy is at the preferred options stage and will be submitted to the Planning Inspector for approval shortly. Therefore it is possible minor changes affecting the Housing Strategy may be made, therefore we have stated that the targets on new housing in the Core Strategy take precedence over the targets in the Housing Strategy.
10. Until recently there was a set criterion for housing strategies called "Fit for Purpose". Local authorities had to submit strategies to the Government Office for London. This requirement no longer exists and boroughs are free to develop strategies more appropriate to their needs. However, the strategy will need to be in general conformity with the Mayor's London Housing Strategy when this is published in late 2009. The GLA will declare whether borough's strategies are in general conformity. Therefore our strategy needs to be in line with the general thrust of the London strategy and not contain or leave out objectives which would result in significant harm to the London Housing Strategy objectives. The Southwark Housing Strategy has taken account of the objectives in the Mayor's draft London Housing Strategy. If there is considerable change in the final London Housing Strategy or the London Plan the Housing Strategy may need to be updated.
11. Since executive October 16 2007 agreed the broad plans for developing a new housing strategy the timetable has changed slightly. The revised timetable is below.

Date	Event
October 16 2007	Executive agreed broad plans for developing a new strategy
November 3 2009	Overview and Scrutiny on plans for consultation
February 10 2009	Executive sign off housing strategy consultation document
April 20 2009	Overview and Scrutiny on synergies between the Core Strategy and Housing Strategy
April 30 2009	Stage 2 consultation closed
June 9 2009	SHSP meeting to discuss results of consultation and draft of new strategy
June 10 2009	Southwark Alliance meeting to discuss draft of Housing Strategy
September 15 2009	Corporate Management Team
September 22 2009	Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)
October 14 2009	Executive Meeting to sign off new strategy
Autumn 2009	Publish Strategy
Autumn 2009	Publish feedback document + EqIA
November/December 2009	SHSP event to publicly launch strategy

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

12. The draft Housing Strategy 2009 to 2016 is attached as Appendix A. A summary of the strategy will be produced. We will also be releasing a report on the consultation responses which will include a response to the comments. Where lengthy comments were made these will be summarised as some responses were over 20 pages long. The Housing Strategy will be professionally designed and printed. It will also be

published on the Southwark website. It is our intention to hold an event in late 2009 to launch the Strategy.

13. The objectives and priorities of the Housing Strategy 2009 to 2016 are the same as in the consultation document as agreed with executive. However, following consultation we have suggested making two of the existing priorities **key** priorities. These are “Enhance social rented housing options” and “Ensure the right type of housing for an ageing population, supporting independent living.” We have also updated the text under these priorities taking account of the comments received.

Objectives	Priorities (key priorities in bold)
1. Improve the quality of existing housing and use it more efficiently	
	Bring council homes up to the Southwark decent homes standard
	Use existing assets better to meet changing needs
	Bring empty homes back into use
	Improve the energy efficiency of homes in all tenures
	Improve and maintain the quality of private housing
	Improve housing management
2. Increase the supply of good quality housing	
	Increase opportunities for housing development
	Increase the supply, particularly of family sized homes
	Ensure new housing is of the right type and quality
	Ensure a supply of new affordable housing to meet a range of needs
3. Enable choice while meeting housing needs	
	Enable options for private renting in a high quality private rented sector
	Provide options to sustain home ownership
	Provide options to access home ownership
	Enhance social rented housing options new as key priority
	Ensure the right type of housing for an ageing population, supporting independent living – new as key priority
	Provide support for young people to live independently
	Provide for special housing, supporting independent living
	Improve life chances by contributing to preventing and tackling worklessness
	Improve life chance by contributing to improving the education and skills of residents
	Improve life chances by contributing to tackling poverty
	Improving life chances by contributing to improving the health of residents
4. Prevent homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation	
	Maximise opportunities for homeless prevention
	Reduce the use of temporary accommodation

The Consultation

14. As explained in paragraph 6, there was a two stage consultation process on the Housing Strategy. In summary, we have consulted: individual members of the SHSP, councillors, Southwark Alliance and the thematic partnerships of the LSP, SOUHAG (Southwark Housing Association Group), community councils, tenant and leaseholder groups, private residents, the homelessness forum, supporting people forums, equalities forums, advice forums, the carers forum, council staff, and PCT. We also advertised the consultation in various forms of media and took the

consultation out to shopping centres around the borough. Specific consultation events were arranged with some communities. The consultation responses helped to shape the final version of the strategy. Some of the main comments from consultation were:

- Concern over there being insufficient emphasis on affordable housing in the objective rather than overall supply
- Concerns over the impact of major regeneration schemes on the supply of lettings
- Need for larger rooms in new developments
- A need for larger intermediate housing
- A need for more family housing generally
- Concern about an over-reliance on the private rented sector
- Some concerns over selling council properties to bridge the investment gap
- Issues over clarity of benefit entitlements and worklessness
- Need more support for young people to set up and sustain tenancies under local housing allowance.

15. These comments were gathered through the 2 consultation exercises. The first ran from September to November 2008 and sought responses on what the 5 biggest housing issues were. We used these comments to formulate the objectives and priorities in the strategy. Comments that were similar were grouped together. There was an excellent response to the consultation and some of the more frequent comments included:

- “Improve the amount of affordable housing”.
- “Improve the quality of all homes”
- “Build more family sized properties”.

We developed these comments to form our first 2 objectives:

- 1- Improve the quality of existing housing and use it more efficiently.
- 2- Increase the supply of good quality housing.

16. Having formulated the objectives and priorities we produced a draft strategy consultation document and asked residents, partners and stakeholders to make comments. This consultation exercise lasted from February to April 2009. The responses from this allowed us to add greater emphasis to some areas of the strategy. For example, we included a fuller explanation of what fuel poverty is and added how we will tackle it by targeting grant schemes at older and vulnerable households. The Housing Strategy feedback report will show how we used the comments we received during consultation. It will also thank those who commented for their contribution. The feedback document will be launched shortly after the strategy is signed off and we hope it will help to manage expectations of residents, explaining which suggestions we were able to take forward and which ones we could not. CAA and KLOE guidelines recommend that local authorities give feedback to residents, partners and stakeholders following consultation.

Housing Supply and Demand

17. The Housing Strategy identifies a number of challenges for the borough and its partners. Southwark has one of the most ambitious regeneration programmes in the country. Realising these plans will significantly improve the quality of the physical

environment, creating the conditions necessary to stimulate investment, re-invigorate the local economy and promote sustainable long-term regeneration. Much of the new housing in the borough will also be provided in regeneration areas and we want it to be of the highest standard, with a good mix of sizes, types and tenures. However our existing housing stock requires substantial investment, and we also have very high levels of housing stock need, e.g. overcrowding. The strategy recognises that we have to make choices, and in order to inform our decision-making we have developed an interactive housing supply and demand model.

18. The housing supply and demand model has been developed by a cross-departmental project team. The model covers the period 2009-2030 and it includes data on:

- New affordable housing supply, both intermediate and social housing, including new RSL developments and Section 106 agreements
- Projected relets of both council and RSL housing (based on historic lettings data)
- Demand from residents being relocated as a result of regeneration schemes, based on the phasing of schemes
- Demand from other priority housing applicants.

19. The model will be used to:

- Forecast new affordable housing completions and monitor against the Mayor's and London plan targets for new affordable housing.
- Compare the overall supply (both relets and new provision) with demand for affordable housing, and project trends.
- Inform phasing and re-provision planning for current, future and potential regeneration and major works schemes, by allowing for scenario modelling.
- Quantify the anticipated supply of social housing lettings across the borough, and the impact on the Homesearch lettings scheme and on priority housing needs in addition to those moving due to regeneration schemes
- Inform policy on new housing provision in terms of development timing, unit mix and funding, both on Southwark's own sites and on private sites.
- Provide a framework for the 'single conversation' with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
- Coordinate with the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) site identification process.

20. The model will be updated quarterly and an annual report produced, reviewing actual results against projections and adjusting future years' projections accordingly.

21. As work on the model has progressed, there has also been an operational focus on securing and increasing the supply of affordable housing in a difficult economic environment. This has resulted in the following 3 initiatives:

- a. We have established a strategic partnership with the HCA in order to jointly achieve delivery of significant volumes of affordable housing in the Borough which may otherwise not have happened given the economic conditions. This partnership is implemented through a high level programme board chaired by the HCA's London Regional Director. Day to day programme management is provided by a jointly appointed programme manager. Southwark is one of only

a small number of London Boroughs to be singled out by the HCA as meriting special partnership arrangements and this is largely due to the extent of the opportunity in Southwark in terms of the borough's own housing sites and the regional significance of its major regeneration schemes (in particular, the Aylesbury estate and the Elephant and Castle). The full extent of the partnership with the HCA is described and formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding at Appendix B;

- b. On the basis of our partnership with the HCA, a joint delivery programme of affordable housing for the Borough has been developed (which is derived from the housing supply and demand model).
- c. An internal Housing Regeneration Board has been established which brings together all key teams on a fortnightly basis to oversee and implement the delivery of the programme.

Community Impact Statement

- 22. The Housing Strategy sets overarching priorities for housing in the borough and as such has the potential to impact on all residents in the borough and on future residents. The strategy is a key driver in delivering essential services to excluded/under-represented communities and addressing deprivation. An equalities impact assessment (EqIA) scoping paper was produced which helped shape the consultation process. The finalised EqIA will go to the EQIA panel on October 22 2009.

Resource Implications

- 23. There are no specific financial implications arising from the report at this time. Section 3 of the Southwark Housing Strategy sets out the anticipated resources available to the Council to deliver the requirements outlined in the strategy, based on known and best information at this time. This will be systematically reviewed and updated in light of movements in resources and needs over the period. The financial implications arising from any particular scheme or policy change will be addressed as part of any specific proposal.

Legal Implications

- 24. The advice from Legal Services is that there are no legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Southwark Housing Strategic Partnership agendas and minutes, The Housing Strategy consultation document</i> • <i>The Core Strategy Preferred Options Report</i> • <i>The Southwark 2016 Sustainable Communities Strategy</i> • <i>The Equalities Impact Assessment of the Housing Strategy (going to EQIA panel available after 22 September)</i> 	<i>Housing Regeneration Initiatives Strategy & Policy Team, Tooley Street</i>	<i>Robert Weallans x51217</i>

APPENDICES

Appendix	Title
Appendix A	Housing Strategy 2009 to 2016 Providing more and better homes
Appendix B	Memorandum of Understanding

Audit Trail

Lead Officer	Richard Rawes, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	
Report Author	Claire Linnane, Policy & Performance Manager	
Version	final	
Dated	September 28 2009	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director for Communities, Law and Governance	Yes	Yes
Departmental Finance Manager	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional/Community Council/Scrutiny Team		5.10.09