

Executive

Cherwell's Housing Strategy for Older People 2009-2014

1 February 2010

Report of Head of Housing Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

For Executive to formally adopt the housing strategy for older people following consultation and to agree the delivery plan.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To formally adopt the Housing Strategy for Older People 2009-2014
- (2) To endorse the delivery plan for the strategy

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing Strategy for Older People was first presented to Executive in April 2009 and has since been through a full consultation with residents and stakeholders. Although the priorities of the strategy remain the same, a number of the recommendations have been amended to take account of the comments from the consultation. The revised strategy is attached at Appendix 1. The result of consultation can be found at Appendix 2 including highlighting where changes have been made.
- 1.2 The delivery plan will be led by a steering group for the strategy. This is a multi agency group chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing and including two older people's representatives. This group will be responsible for the delivery of the action plan in the strategy which has been fully resourced and timetabled. Progress on some of these action points has already been achieved and a progress report is attached at Appendix 3.
- 1.3 The strategy is intended to deliver improvements in five priority areas. These are described under 2.2 of this report:

Proposals

- 1.4 That the strategy be formally adopted by Executive including the changes that have been incorporated into the strategy following the consultation.
- 1.5 That the delivery plan for the strategy is endorsed.

Conclusion

- 1.6 This strategy forms a very important part of the District Council's response to our growing older population and ensuring that our housing services play a key role in responding to the needs of our older residents. Delivery of this strategy will help ensure older people have access to housing and related services that will help them to remain independent and active for as long as possible.

Background Information

- 2.1 This strategy has been written to ensure the Council is taking the lead on delivering housing and housing related services for older people at a time when the numbers of older people and particularly those aged 85 and over are set to increase dramatically. The strategy puts the Council in a strong position to respond to the needs of this group and lead partners to make sure services and resources are being used effectively. It has been written in partnership with RSLs, Oxfordshire County Council Social Services, the Oxfordshire PCT, voluntary agencies and older people themselves to ensure we have the commitment from our partners to deliver services that older people want and need.
- 2.2 The strategy has five priority objectives.

Improving housing related services to help people remain living independently in their own homes

This strategic priority recognises the huge importance that is attached to older people maintaining their independence for as long as possible, and to older people being able to manage their home and their life as effectively as they can. This priority will be delivered through a range of actions that will be delivered through the Council and its partners. These actions include best use of grants to improve and adapt people's homes, seeking opportunities to expand the services of the Home Improvement Agency, support for older people who want to move to smaller homes and ensuring the new Supporting People service for older people (the Alert Service) is effective in supporting Cherwell residents.

Good quality supported housing for older people

As Cherwell's older population increases, the demand for good quality supported housing will also increase over the lifetime (and beyond) of this strategy. This increased demand is addressed specifically through two major initiatives – the provision of Extra Care Housing across the District, and the addressing of existing sheltered housing that is not always of good quality. In anticipation of this strategy, substantial groundwork has already taken place with partners and in terms of capacity this has ensured Extra Care units across the District are already scheduled to come forward from 2010-11 onwards. Due to the remodelling of the sheltered housing support service and the need for sheltered housing providers to deal with outdated buildings we will see a reduction in the number of sheltered housing units being provided by 2026. Up to 396 units could be lost providing we are on target to achieve Extra Care unit provision. However, this is part of the modelling provision, and it would be a strength that the outdated sheltered housing units would be replaced with units that meet older people's aspirations and the old units could be re-developed where appropriate to meet other housing need.

Improving the provision of housing information and advice for older people

This priority will involve both ensuring the Council provides comprehensive and accessible information to publicise services and working with other advice agencies to provide a comprehensive and consistent approach. It is

intended that the eventual outcome will be the provision of a one stop housing advice service for older people.

Involving older people in the design and implementation of services

The experience of working with older people in producing the strategy has proven enormously beneficial. A database of older people who have expressed an interest in getting involved in the development and implementation of this strategy has been established and older people will be involved in all aspects of implementing this strategy – through information, consultation and direct participation.

Making sure that new housing meets the needs of older people now and in the future

This priority will be achieved through the opportunities presented within the Local Development Framework, aiming to use planning policy to ensure we have well designed homes (including use of Lifetime Homes Standards) and communities which are accessible to all. Such provision could reduce the need for costly adaptations and reduce the chances of older people having to move home. It also seeks to ensure we assess the needs of older people living in rural areas and plan adequate housing to meet these needs.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 This strategy is an essential part of the District's response to the needs of our older people and seeks to deliver improvements within existing resources. Housing and related services are at the heart of enabling older people to live independent and active lives and helps prevent older people falling into crisis and the need for high cost care.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

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| Option One | To formally adopt the strategy and endorse the delivery plan. |
| Option Two | To adopt the strategy and endorse the delivery plan with amendments. |
| Option Three | Not to adopt the strategy or endorse the delivery plan in which case an alternative strategy will need to be considered. |

Consultations

The strategy has been through a full consultation process with stakeholders. The Consultation summary report is attached at Appendix 2

Implications

- Financial:** Resourcing the strategy is covered within the final section of the strategy. There are no additional resources identified at this stage. If funding is required for new projects these will be subject normal budget approval processes.
- Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Service Accountant 01295 221552
- Legal:** There are no significant legal implications arising from this strategy.
- Comments checked by Liz Howlett , Head of Legal and Democratic services 01295 221686
- Risk Management:** The risks of not being able to deliver the action plan for the strategy are included in the resources section in part C. Not preparing to meet the needs of our ageing population will leave the Council exposed to poor quality service provision for a vulnerable group within our community. This would have a serious affect on the health and well being of residents and on the Council's reputation management.
- Comments checked by Rosemary Watt, Risk Management and Insurance officer 01295 221566
- Equalities** The draft strategy seeks to increase opportunities for all older people in the District including the most vulnerable. The strategy has been subject to an equalities impact assessment.
- Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Community and Corporate Planning Manager, 01295 221563

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

The draft strategy helps to deliver:

- Strategic Priority 1 – Cherwell: A district of opportunity
- Strategic Priority 2 – A safe and healthy Cherwell
- Strategic Priority 4 – Cherwell: An accessible, value for money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Michael Gibbard
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Cherwell's Housing Strategy for Older People 2009-2014 'Planning for our Futures'
Appendix 2	Older People's Housing Strategy Consultation Response Report
Appendix 3	Older People's Housing Action Plan and Delivery Progress
Background Papers	
None	
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