

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Older People's Housing Strategy

5 January 2010

Report of Head of Housing Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the progress being made with the development of the Cherwell Housing Strategy for Older People, a sub-strategy of the Cherwell Housing Strategy 2005 – 2011.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) note the contents of the report;
- (2) consider whether the Committee wishes to refer any comments on the report to the Executive for consideration at their meeting in February 2010.

Details

Introduction

- 1.1 Cherwell's Housing Strategy for Older People 2009-2014 is designed to ensure we are providing the right housing and housing related support services to meet the needs of our older residents over the next 5 years. It has been designed to respond to the needs of the growth in the population of people aged 65 or over to ensure that resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- 1.2 The strategy has 5 priorities:
 - **Provide and support preventative services that allow people to remain living independently in their own home.** This covers services the council runs or helps to commission such as private sector grants, the Small Repairs Service, and

Supporting People services. This section complements many of the actions now identified in the Private Sector Housing Strategy and the two teams are working closely on the action plan to deliver these.

- **Increase the provision of specialist older people's housing.** We have quantified the need for the provision of Extra Care Housing and have a delivery plan to do all we can to create a supply of this housing over the next 5 years and beyond. We also have plans to work more closely with RSL providers on their plans for improving their own sheltered housing provision.
- **Improve the provision of information and advice about housing options for older people.** We are working with Age Concern and will include other agencies with the aim of providing a comprehensive 'one stop' approach for older people thinking about their current and future housing needs.
- **Involve older people in the way we provide services.** We have set up a database of those who are interested in contributing to new services to ensure these are what people want and will use.
- **Ensure new development meets the needs of older people now and in the future.** This includes making sure new housing development meets the needs of all members of our community in both scheme and individual house design (for example through use of the Lifetime Homes standards). It also seeks to ensure the needs of older people are fully taken account of in rural development.

Current position

- 2.1 The strategy was sent out for full consultation with residents and stakeholders and the strategy is currently being amended to take account of this.
- 2.2 We have had a very positive response to this consultation. It has reinforced our understanding of certain issues such as the lack of awareness about services, the need for better information and advice and the need for suitable housing in rural areas.
- 2.3 As a result of the consultation we will be amending some areas of the strategy to include the following:
 - Increased emphasis on the need to help people downsize in order to maximise the use of existing housing stock.
 - A revised strategy for the provision of information and advice services based on new information about a potential partnership

with Age Concern.

- A more detailed action plan for delivering the strategy.
- 2.3 A steering group has been established to ensure the action plan for this strategy is delivered. This is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing and comprises of stakeholders from within the Council, key external partners and representation from older people.

Next steps

- 3.1 A revised version of the strategy in a publishable format will be sent to Executive for approval in February 2010. The strategy has a three year detailed action plan with a built in review at the end of year 2 to establish an action plan for the remaining 3 years of the strategy.

Implications

Financial:	<p>Resourcing the strategy is covered within Part C 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.</p> <p>Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Service Accountant 01295 221552</p>
Legal:	<p>There are no significant legal implications arising from this strategy.</p> <p>Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic services 01295 221686</p>
Risk Management:	<p>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.</p> <p>Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566</p>
Equalities:	<p>The draft strategy seeks to increase opportunities for all older people in the District including the most vulnerable. The strategy will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment before the final strategy is published.</p>

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	Draft Older People's Housing Strategy
Background Papers	
None	
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