

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	19 July 2007
Subject:	Housing Strategy 2007-2012 and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Penny Furness-Smith – Corporate Director of Adults and Housing
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Camilla Bath – Portfolio Holder for Housing Cllr Chris Mote – Portfolio Holder for Strategic Overview, External Affairs and Property
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing Strategy 2007-2012</li><li>• HRA Business Plan</li><li>• Minutes of the Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Sub-Committee 13 June 2007</li></ul>

## SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report sets out the main principles contained within the Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Cabinet is requested to approve the Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan before submission to Government Office for London (GOL) on the 23 July 07.
- That Cabinet agrees that any minor changes, following submission to GOL, can be approved by the Portfolio Holder

## **SECTION 2 - REPORT**

### **Brief Background:**

#### 1.1

The Housing Strategy sets out the housing responsibilities of the Council beyond the landlord service for the retained housing stock. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan outlines the Council's plans as a landlord. Neither document fully met the Fit for Purpose criteria when assessed by the Government Office for London (GOL) in 2002.

1.2 All Council's are required to have a Fit for Purpose (FFP) Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan. The deadline for FFP approval by GOL is the end for Aug 07.

1.3 The Housing Strategy:

- Sets out a five year plan for all housing in Harrow
- Supports the Council's key priorities and influences other plans
- Determines the amount of money available to spend on local housing issues
- Is developed in consultation with all groups, individuals and organisations with an interest in Harrow's housing.

## **2. The Housing Strategy Core Objectives and HRA Business Plan Priorities**

The Housing Strategy Officer group, chaired by the Head of Housing, was established to ensure a co-ordinated approach was adopted in the development of the Strategy and HRA Business Plan. This cross-departmental group is a Council wide forum with an interest in the development of housing services. The group has produced both documents and has been responsible for the development of the Housing Strategy core objectives and HRA Business Plan Priorities.

2.1 The Housing Strategy core objectives are:

- Meeting the needs & aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people
- Continue to tackle homelessness and high demand, whilst reducing temporary accommodation
- Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life
- Increasing housing supply
- Deliver quality services

2.2 The HRA Business Plan priorities are:

- Help older and vulnerable people who are or will be residents of Council stock to maintain their independence and wellbeing
- Use Council stock as effectively as possible
- Achieve Decent Homes Standard in Council stock by 2010
- Increase resident satisfaction with the environment of their homes

- Empower all residents to have a greater say in the management of their homes and community
- Increase resident satisfaction with responsive repairs and maintenance services
- Provide value for money services that are efficient and effective

### 3 Consultation with Key Stakeholders

3.1 In order to establish the direction of the strategy and HRA business plan, consultation was initiated against the selected priorities. Key stakeholders were engaged through a range of consultation mechanisms. Residents, members, staff, Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), voluntary sector, partner agencies and council officers were consulted. A special meeting of Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum (TLCF) was organised. A Housing Conference was arranged in May and was attended by over 110 people; a newsletter was produced and sent to all tenants, leaseholders and other interested parties.

The Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Sub-Committee subjected a draft of the strategy and the Business Plan to challenge. The Harrow Strategic Partnership received a presentation summarising the contribution that the Housing Strategy would make to delivering the objectives of the Community Strategy. The consultation document has been placed on the housing website together with a questionnaire to capture views from stakeholders.

## SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Name: Myfanwy Barrett, Director of Financial and Business Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 10 July 2007		
Name: Eugene MacLaughlin, Senior Litigation/ Dispute Lawyer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 11 July 2007		

## SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

**Contact:** Gwyneth Allen – Head of Housing,  
Adults and Housing Services,  
Tel: 0208 424 1998

**Background Papers:** NONE

**IF APPROPRIATE, does the report include the following considerations?**

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES
3.	Manifesto Pledge Reference Number	None