

Report Title. **Progress report on the development of Haringey's Move-on Strategy and Overcrowding & Under-occupation Strategy**

Report of **Niall Bolger, Director of Urban Environment**

Signed :

Contact Officer : Rosie Green, Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager
Tel: 020 8489 4526

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Information**

1. Purpose of the report

1.1. To provide an update on Strategic and Community Housing Services' development of a Move-on Strategy and Overcrowding & Under-occupation Strategy.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member

N/A

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

3.1. These two strategies are sub strategies of Haringey's Housing Strategy 2009-19.

3.2. Both strategies link with the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Homelessness strategy 2008-2011.

3.3 The Move-on Strategy links with the Supporting People 5-year Strategy.

3.4 The Overcrowding & Under-occupation Strategy links with the Child Poverty Strategy and NHS Haringey's Infant Mortality Strategy.

4. Recommendations

4.1 To note the progress being made in the development of these two strategies.

4.2 To invite the views of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the proposed content and development of the strategies.

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

5.1. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have asked to have an input into the development of these strategies.

6. Summary

6.1. Haringey's Housing Strategy 2009-2019 identified a suite of sub-strategies that need to be developed in order to deliver its outcomes (see Appendix 1). The Move-on Strategy and the Overcrowding and Under-occupation Strategy are two of these.

6.2. Both strategies have clear links to other strategies and plans that aim to improve outcomes for people living in the borough. As with the other housing strategies, they are being developed in an inclusive manner and in partnership with stakeholders.

Move-on Strategy

6.3. The main aims of the Move-on Strategy are:

- To ensure that people have fulfilled lives through effective support
- To give people independence, with real options
- To increase move-on opportunities through effective partnerships

6.4 A draft Move-on Strategy (see Appendix 2) is now being consulted on and will be completed by the end of March 2010.

Overcrowding and Under-occupation Strategy

6.5 The Overcrowding & Under-occupation Strategy is less developed, but the first draft will be completed by the middle of February 2010.

6.6 The main aims of the Overcrowding & Under-occupation are:

- To increase the supply of family sized rented accommodation
- To make best use of the existing stock of social housing
- To maximise choice and options for overcrowded families.

7 Chief Financial Officer Comments

7.1 N/A

8 Head of Legal Services Comments

8.1 N/A

9 Equalities & Community Cohesion Comments

9.1 Equality Impact Assessments are currently being written for both strategies.

10 Consultation

10.1 Both of these strategies will be widely consulted on in accordance with the Compact agreement and, following the consultation, a separate report will be written for each.

10.2 Three months' consultation on the Move-on Strategy commenced on 23 December 2009 and involves the following:

- Information on the Council's website, including an online questionnaire;
- A specific consultation event (to be held on 11 February 2010), to which providers, service users, internal and external partners will be invited;
- An article has been written and sent to all providers, to insert into their own internal newsletters for staff and service users; and
- Attendance of service users' 'house' meetings, if required

10.3 The Overcrowding & Under-occupation Strategy is being drafted and will not be suitable for consultation until February 2010. Given the need for 12 weeks' consultation and the 'Purdah' period, consultation will commence in May 2010.

11 Service Financial Comments

11.1 The two strategies will be developed within Strategic & Community Housing Services' existing resources.

12 Use of appendices /Tables and photographs

- Appendix 1 - Structure chart of the Housing Strategy and sub-strategies
- Appendix 2 - Draft Move-on Strategy

13 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- Move-on Strategy – Move on Plans Protocol (MOPP) audit.

14 Background

14.1 Haringey's Housing Strategy 2009-19 is an over-arching strategy that sets out the vision for meeting the borough's current and future housing needs. The Strategy itself has few specific actions; most of the priorities for action will be delivered through a series of sub-strategies. The Move-on Strategy and the Overcrowding & Under-occupation Strategy are two of these sub-strategies.

14.2 The development of the two strategies has been commissioned by the Integrated Housing Board, a theme Board of Haringey's Strategic Partnership.

14.3 Like the other housing strategies, they are being developed in partnership to ensure effective implementation, since the Council cannot tackle these issues on its own.

15 Move-on Strategy

The need for a strategy

15.1 Moving people on from short term supported housing is essential if they are to achieve independence and to lead the life they choose.

15.2 This short term supported accommodation (provided for less than two years) is funded through the Supporting People Programme. When people are equipped with the life skills they require to live independently (or they require some other type of supported housing) it is important that they are moved as soon as practicable.

- 15.3 The lack of suitable move-on results in the 'silting up' of services and prevents new service users from receiving the support they need. This also does not provide value for money, since best use is not being made of the support provided.

Strategic drivers

- 15.4 Haringey's 5-Year Supporting People Strategy identified move-on as being a priority and this was also a recommendation from the Audit Commission's 2007 inspection of Haringey's Supporting People Programme.

Needs analysis

- 15.5 Prior to the development of the Move-on Strategy, there had only been anecdotal evidence that moving people on is a problem. We did not know numbers or have clear evidence of the barriers to move-on. To give us the required data, we have used Homeless Links' Move-on Plans Protocol audit (MOPP). This audit, supported by Communities and Local Government (CLG), has been used by many local authorities to establish base line data.
- 15.6 16 of the 17 providers of short term supported accommodation in Haringey completed the MOPP audit and the data that they have provided has helped us to identify clear priorities for the Move-on Strategy's action plans.
- 15.7 The results cover 499 clients/units of accommodation. Of these, 176 clients are ready for move-on but have no firm move-on plans. It is estimated, also, that over the coming year a further 242 clients will be ready for move-on.

Emerging priorities for action

- 15.8 From the audit and initial partnership work, we have identified the following priorities (see Appendix 2, for full details):
- (1) To ensure that people have fulfilled lives through effective support
 - (2) To give people independence, with real options
 - (3) To increase move-on opportunities through effective partnerships.
- 15.9 We are currently consulting on these priorities.

Timescales for completion of the strategy

- 15.10 The Move-on Strategy is on track to be completed by the end of March 2010 and will then be presented to the relevant Boards and Committees for agreement, with a view to it being launched in summer 2010.

16. Overcrowding and Underoccupation Strategy

The need for a strategy

- 16.1 In 2007, with the publication of 'Tackling overcrowding in England: An action plan', the government recognised the problem of overcrowding had long been hidden behind outdated statutory definitions that have underestimated the scale of overcrowding.
- 16.2 Overcrowding impacts on many areas of people's lives from ill-health and infant mortality; underachievement of children in education to strained family relationships and breakdowns.
- 16.3 Haringey's Housing Strategy recognises that action is needed to combat overcrowding and prioritises the development of this strategy. Although a lot of work is already being done to tackle overcrowding, it is recognised that, in order to tackle the problems more effectively, the borough needs an effectively co-ordinated, multi agency approach to deal with overcrowding and under-occupation.

Haringey's Pathfinder Status

- 16.4 Following the publication of the overcrowding action plan, all London boroughs were awarded 'pathfinder' status and Haringey was allocated £90,000 funding for 2009/10.
- 16.5 With the Pathfinder funding we have appointed an Overcrowding Project Officer for 09/10 plus an Underoccupation Officer for three months (Jan-Mar 2010).

Emerging priorities for action

- 16.6 We have already established, through Haringey's existing Pathfinder Action Plan, the following priorities for tackling overcrowding:
- (1) To increase the supply of family sized rented accommodation
 - (2) To make the best use of the existing stock of social housing
 - (3) To maximise choice and options for overcrowded families
- 16.7 Through the further development of this strategy, we need to ensure that these actions are sufficiently comprehensive to tackle the problems of overcrowding.
- 16.8 We are still developing the underoccupation aspect of the strategy.

Work undertaken so far to tackle overcrowding

- 16.9 We have identified 109 Homes for Haringey (HfH) households lacking two bedrooms or more.
- 16.10 These 109 properties will be visited by 31.3.10 to establish if they can be extended or converted. To date, 79 out of the 109 visits have been undertaken. The Pathfinder group will then prioritise work to be done. Work will be funded through the Decent Homes Programme.
- 16.11 Held a specific event on 14.12.09 to which 220 identified HfH under-occupied households were invited to. 26 attended. The aim of this event was to find what people's aspirations are and how we can best help people move out of larger properties, for example, incentive payments or help with moving costs. The data from this day is currently being analysed and will be used to inform the strategy and assist the Underoccupation Officer in helping people to move.
- 16.12 We are on track to meet the 09/10 target to help ten severely overcrowded households move into private sector rented housing.
- 16.13 Produced publicity information about other housing options.

Timescales for completion of the strategy

- 16.14 The strategy development group is meeting regularly and is fully committed to completing the draft Overcrowding & Under-occupation Strategy by the middle of February 2010.
- 16.15 Taking into account the forthcoming elections and the 'Purdah' period, the 12 weeks consultation period will commence in May 2010. It is envisaged that the new Strategy will be launched in Autumn 2010.