

Executive**On 20 March 2007**

Report Title: **Update on the Integrated Housing Board and related issues.**

Report of: **Interim Director of Adult, Culture and Community Services.**

Wards(s) affected: **ALL**

Report for: **Key Decision**

1. Purpose

This report asks the Executive to note the progress in establishing the Integrated Housing Board (IHB) and to note that the Haringey Strategic Partnership will be asked to endorse the proposal. It sets out the proposed terms of reference, membership and the strategies that will be the responsibility of the IHB.

2. Introduction by Executive Member

The residents of Haringey face a wide range of severe housing challenges including homelessness, lack of housing, overcrowding, high house prices, high rents. Disrepair is a problem for some residents, the need for care and support is important for others.

The Executive Committee recognises that it has to work in partnership with a range of housing providers, including housing associations, developers and private landlords, as well as building upon the commitment to engaging residents in a wide range of ways.

The IHB will play a central strategic role in bringing together all the key bodies and partners that will help transform housing conditions in the borough. We aim to improve housing conditions, tackle homelessness and increase choices.

The IHB is a major project to place housing and housing services at the centre of the Councils commitment to its residents and to improve public services.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Executive note:

- (i) the progress being made in establishing the IHB and that the Haringey Strategic be asked to endorse it.
- (ii) the proposed IHB consultative structure including sub committees
- (iii) that the old Area Housing Forums no longer operate and will not meet again.

3.2 That the Executive agree:

- (i) to ask the Head of Legal Services to amend the Council's constitution to reflect changes to consultative bodies.

Report Authorised by: **Jim Crook, Interim Director of Adult, Culture and Community Services.**

Contact Officer: **Nigel Long Strategy and Partnerships Manager**

4. Director of Finance Comments

4.1 The Service has identified that it can contain the additional resource requirements arising from this proposal within the existing housing budget. The financial implications from this proposal need to be clearly identified and monitored through the financial management process.

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

The Head of Legal Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

The current review of the Council's Constitution will consider issues relating to the inclusion of sub bodies in the main constitution.

There are no other legal implications.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Housing Strategy 2005-2008, Strong and Prosperous Communities, Executive Committee Report,	Haringey Council 2005. Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), 2006. Haringey Council, 2006.
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7. Strategic Implications

The establishment of the IHB will enable all housing stakeholders to participate in the development of housing provision and services across all tenures.

The aim is to create a powerful, high status leadership body that can influence the Council, Haringey Strategic Partnership, and the Mayor of London. It will play a leading role in addressing the severe housing challenges facing the Borough.

This paper highlights the strong relationship that exists between housing association partners and the Council, but raises issues about the relationship of the IHB to the LSP and issues about how resident's views can be considered on strategic matters.

The Council is also committed to working closely with the private sector including reputable private landlords and developers. The Council recognises that many private landlords are drawn from the BME community and offer good quality accommodation.

Landlords and Developers will both be encouraged to work with the IHB and we are investigating ways to involve and consult with them.

8. Financial Implications

The financial resources required to support the IHB and its forums will be contained within the existing Housing Service budget. It is also proposed to seek additional funding (or resources e.g. seconded officer support from housing providers)

9. Equalities Implications

Tackling the Borough's severe housing problems means addressing the needs of diverse communities where it is often the residents from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities (BME) that are enduring poor housing standards and choices.

The Council also needs to be aware of the needs of vulnerable people and the issues that arise from an ageing population and from the high number of disabled residents. There are also significant equality issues around overcrowding, homelessness and disrepair. The IHB will be able to respond across all tenures in strategic terms to the diversity and equality challenges.

10. Consultation

Officers met with some of the key locally based housing associations on the 31 January. The consultation brought together Metropolitan Housing Trust, Circle-Anglia, Family-Mosaic, and Hornsey Housing Trust. They met with housing staff from the Strategy and Performance team and from the Housing Supply team. The key points made were:

- The associations were strongly supportive of the IHB and the proposition that it should be the key leadership forum for housing in the Borough.
- That it should report directly into the LSP Board and not via the Well-being theme group
- That it needed to have responsibility for ensuring key strategies lead to practical measurable outcomes.
- The objectives should be strengthened to emphasise the importance of *'delivery'*.
- That its membership should not be too wide or its effectiveness would be dissipated
- That it would have a role wider than the borough seeking to influence the sub regional and regional decision making.

- That it would consider funding bids to the Mayor.
- That the Housing Association Forum (HA Forum) should be retained but expanded to involve Homes for Haringey, renamed and the terms of reference reviewed.
- The existing range of sub committees and forums should be retained but reviewed.
- That part of the reviews would be devoted to whether the sub committees reported direct to the IHB Board or to the HA Forum.
- The IHB would be responsible for overseeing major strategies
- That the Council needs to ensure that the IHB is adequately resourced, though the housing associations may also be able to contribute.
- That they favoured one borough wide resident's forum to ensure consultation on key matters. (This point on involvement will require further discussion)

A further area for consideration is how the IHB will relate to the local LSP and in particular how it influences both the Well-Being and the Better Places theme groups.

It is proposed that further consideration be given to the above at the Housing Association Forum on March 12th meeting. There will also be a written consultation with other stakeholders once the Executive has considered this report.

11. Background

The Council has established its role as the strategic leader of the Borough. This reflects the move to a more European model of local government with the emphasis upon leadership and co-ordination as opposed to direct service provision.

This changing role is reflected in the importance the Council is giving to the Haringey Strategic Partnership, establishing a new Sustainable Community Strategy and ensuring that robust strategies are in place across all areas of responsibility.

Increasingly the Council works with private sector providers, especially in the provision of temporary accommodation and in creating long term settled accommodation. The Council will need to consider the opportunities to deliver a larger affordable housing programme through private developers as well as housing associations, following national changes allowing them to bid for public capital grants.

The Housing Service is currently establishing a high level strategic and performance core that will ensure strategic outcomes are met; service standards met through a developed Client role and will ensure effective partnership working with housing associations, private developers, and private landlords and internally with planning and social care.

Developing a strong strategic housing role and an effective performance orientated Client function starts to change the relationship between the Council and residents of the Borough. The Strategic and Performance core guided by clear Executive ownership of the policy agenda needs to focus upon its strategic relationship with the funders, providers and planners of housing services.

A further factor that Members need to take account of is the new powers of the London Mayor. In addition to the original spatial planning powers the Mayor will from July 2006 de facto direct housing investment previously allocated at Regional Housing Board level. This means that the Borough's relationship with the Mayor needs to become more intensive in order to influence allocation decisions.

The pending amalgamation of the Housing Corporation, English Partnerships and part of the DCLG may open up opportunities to secure regeneration monies and to enhance the Council's regulatory role. The above raises issues about the relationship of the Housing Service with residents. This report takes as its starting point that involvement of residents in policy and decision making processes improves outcomes.

12. Integrated Housing Board.

The Executive, at its 31 October 2006 meeting, (minute TEX100) agreed to:

1. establish the IHB
2. strengthen the link between housing and Area Assemblies
3. consider a report on the relationship between the IHB and Area Assemblies.

Detailed discussions have taken place with the Executive Member for Housing and with Chief Executives/Directors of the four leading housing associations based in the Borough. The following is proposed:

- To establish a Board, chaired by the Executive Member for Housing, bringing together at Chief Executive/Senior Director level representatives of Housing Associations, and other key partners such as the Primary Care Trust. The proposed membership is set out at **Annex A**.
- To operate a small officer executive to support the work of the Board.
- To produce a work programme to guide the work of the IHB.
- To provide secretariat support from within the Housing Strategy and Performance team.
- That the Board will act as a strategic body overseeing key strategies and liaising with the Greater London Authority on future funding bids. A list of strategies is at **Annex B** and the draft terms of reference at **Annex C**. sitting under the IHB will be the existing Housing Association Forum. Reporting to The HA Forum would be the existing:
 - Housing Association Development sub committee
 - Housing Benefit Liaison sub committee
 - Lettings sub committee

The IHB would be the key strategic housing body in the Borough. It would require significant Member commitment and would have a powerful role:

- Overseeing all housing strategies
- Advising on housing investment
- Building relationships between public and private sector partners.
- Receiving feedback from various forums including the Residents Forum.
- Contributing to the spatial planning process.

13. Area Assemblies

Area Assemblies currently exist to provide a forum for residents to discuss local issues. It will be for the Chairs of each Area Assembly to consider if they wish to discuss housing issues at their meetings. Officers are currently investigating whether Specific surgeries are needed alongside Area Assemblies where a need has been identified.

14. Involving Residents

This paper has proposed that Council tenants and leaseholders are primarily involved through Homes for Haringey participation structures and processes as is the case for other Social Housing providers in the Borough. The Area Assemblies offer residents, regardless of tenure, the opportunity to become involved on a locality basis. Proposals identified in the October Executive report for surgeries (Para 12.33) could be progressed with both Homes for Haringey staff and Council staff being available.

15. Area Housing Forums

These were tenant participation bodies under the old pre ALMO Housing structure. They are no longer part of the Homes for Haringey approach to consultation and they have declined to organise a final meeting. The Housing Service is not in a position to organise a final meeting and believes such an expensive series of 7 meetings would open the service to the charge of not using limited resources effectively.

Following discussion with the Legal services the Executive have to formally agree to recommend amendment of the Council's constitution. This is because Section H4 includes a sub section on Consultative bodies. It refers to both the Area Forums and to the Housing Management Board. Members are recommended to refer this matter to the Head of Legal Services who has commenced a review of the constitution.

16. The role of Ward Councillors

Ward Councillors often 'take-up' a large number of housing related cases. This report highlights the important role of councillors both as policy makers but also as advocates for their communities. The Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' (October, 2006) promotes a strong role for non-executive councillors in leading their communities and advocating for people. There is a need to ensure councillors can influence the organisations making decisions about housing services in a given area and that they can address housing service problems if and when they arise. As part of the further consultation on the establishment of the IHB and consideration of participation structures the role of ward councillors will be considered.

17. Conclusion

This report updates Members on the proposals for the IHB and the proposed structures to support it. It sets out the proposed remit and membership of the Board. It proposes that further consultation be undertaken with stakeholders.

The questions of the relationship between Area Assemblies and Housing Services and the link between the LSP and the IHB and how to involve Ward Members in housing advocacy will be considered in further reports. Subject to further consultation we expect the IHB to be launched in September.

Integrated Housing Board: Draft Terms of Reference

1. The IHB will ensure that effective partnership working arrangements are put in place
2. That the IHB brings together partners across all housing tenures and meets at least 4 times a year.
3. That the IHB will be chaired by the Executive Committee Member for Housing and will bring together senior managers and representatives who operate at a senior and leadership level in their respective organisation.
4. The IBS will co-ordinate the LSP and Council work on key strategic matters including policy and strategy.
5. That the membership will include deputies from each organisation represented on the Board
6. That the IHB will operate a small executive of 5 members to co-ordinate the work of the Board.

IHB Executive: Draft Terms of Reference

1. The IHB would elect a small executive of 5 people to meet as required.
2. The IHB Executive would plan the work of the IHB and oversee progress including the achievement of action plans, the organising of events and the agendas and running of meetings of the IHB.

Integrated Housing Board: Objectives

The IBS will:

1. Work within the LSP Sustainable Community Strategy vision and aims.
2. Value the promote a diverse community and seek to create opportunities for all residents.
3. Help create strong effective partnerships that meet agreed strategic housing objectives
4. Ensure that housing and planning policies compliment and meet agreed strategic objectives.
5. Ensure that the following strategies are produced and supported by partners:
 - Housing Strategy
 - Housing Diversity and Equality Strategy
 - Homelessness Strategy
 - Private Sector Strategy
 - TA Reduction strategy
 - Housing Supply strategy
 - Sub regional housing
 - Energy efficiency and Fuel Poverty Strategy
6. To oversee the implementation of strategies and receive reports on Action Plans and progress against targets.

Integrated Housing Board: Membership

Membership would bring together key Council leaders from the Executive with senior level managers (leaders) of key partners. These would include:

- Executive Member Housing
- Executive Member Enterprise and Regeneration
- Executive Member Environment and Conservation
- Housing Association lead Directors

(Consideration needs to be given to the number of representatives)

- Major Private Landlords
- Chamber or Business equivalent
- Other housing organisations
- Voluntary sector representative
- Director of Urban Environment
- Head of Housing
- Local Housing Organisation

Other Council officers would attend as required by the IHB.

Tenants and Residents.

It is proposed to consider with the IHB members how to involve tenants and residents from across all partner organisations in the work of the IHB.

Occasional Members.

It is proposed that some key council partners like the Police and Primary Care Trust will be invited to attend Board meetings as and when appropriate rather than to offer permanent membership.