

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 6TH MARCH 2019

DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE

**APPENDIX 1: OUTCOME OF O&S COMMITTEE HOUSING STRATEGY
WORKSHOP**

28TH NOVEMBER 2018

1. Strategic Housing Priorities

Members' Comments	Response
<p>Private landlords – widespread agreement that accountability is needed across the private rented sector and strong support for “registration”/licensing.</p>	<p>Evidence confirms the rate of growth of private renting in the LCR. There is further evidence of poor quality conditions at the lower end of the market. Accordingly, improving the quality of the private rented sector is emerging as a key priority.</p>
<p>Brownfield sites – support for the brownfield first approach, with an appreciation that more support (in terms of financial / grant assistance to address viability) for brownfield development is needed compared to easier to develop sites</p>	<p>The Metro Mayor keen to adopt a brownfield first approach to housing development. A Brownfield Housing Land Register has been compiled and the sites on it will be the focus for funding to address viability gaps.</p>
<p>Future housing needs – there is a need for both social and private housing to cater for the growing elderly population in particular, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disability/accessibility needs being built in to designs; ○ Adaptations within existing stock; ○ Building housing for the whole ‘life-course’ which in essence future proofs housing across the city. 	<p>Evidence confirms that LCR has an increasingly ageing population. The emerging housing and spatial development strategies recognise the challenge posed and are looking to ensure new homes are accessible and capable of being adaptable.</p>
<p>Funding streams –support for devolution and the increasing importance of the Combined Authority to use its powers to draw down funding.</p>	<p>The housing strategy will be a key document in seeking to draw down funding from government to address LCR housing issues.</p>
<p>Management of stock – need to ensure that the most is being made of existing stock, and that housing associations in particular have a key responsibility in sustaining quality wider</p>	<p>The housing strategy is being prepared in the context of the Metro Mayor’s inclusiveness agenda where no neighbourhood</p>

<p>neighbourhood management. It is clear that improving quality together with wider regeneration for those places which require it is a significant priority.</p>	<p>is left behind. Regeneration of the city region's more deprived neighbourhoods likely to be a key priority with the housing associations having a key role.</p>
<p>Leasehold Housing – a number of members expressed concern about the significant number of leasehold properties, most notably relating to new developments. Can there be the exploration/influence around a policy which requires new housing developments to be freehold?</p>	<p>Comments noted. It is understood that Government are looking at this issue.</p>
<p>Tenure mix - a wider tenure mix is needed to meet changes in demand and choice with a focus on quality</p>	<p>Evidence is being gathered to ensure that the right tenure and housing mix is provided in the city region to meet need and aspirational demand. Agree that choice and quality is important to ensure sustainable communities.</p>
<p>Density levels – a wider point that was discussed related to the design of places in terms of the number of homes within schemes (which was generally considered as too high).</p>	<p>The Metro Mayor has appointed a Design Champion to promote good quality design. Design Panels have also been established. Density levels, however, can often be a function of a development's location e.g. higher density in city and town centres.</p>
<p>Environmental sustainability –needs to be a priority and should link directly into the low carbon agenda.</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that housing quality in some parts of the city region is poor. This has a direct impact on environmental sustainability through higher emissions and also contributes to fuel poverty. Improving the quality of existing and new housing is likely to be a priority.</p>
<p>Homelessness should be a priority for the Combined Authority. There was also concern that more needs to be done around prevention.</p>	<p>Evidence confirms that rough sleeping and homelessness is a growing issue and will be a key theme within the emerging Housing Strategy. In particular, the three year LCR Housing First pilot (£7.7m) is a key delivery programme for the Metro Mayor.</p> <p>The LCR Trailblazer programme partly addresses early</p>

	intervention and prevention. The national Rough Sleeper Strategy highlights prevention as a key priority, and by extension, local authority level homelessness strategies must now focus on prevention.
Wider infrastructure is critical and without it housing developments will not support resilient communities. There are a whole range of interdependent factors including providing access to jobs, education (schools being built), health facilities and services, digital etc.	Agreed. This will be reflected in relevant Combined Authority strategies.

2. National Policy

Members' Comments	Response
<p>Devolution – there was strong support for more proactive devolution. A number of comparisons were made with GMCA and the housing deal that it has secured.</p> <p>Important to influence Whitehall on housing policy and funding.</p>	<p>Noted. The housing strategy will be a key document in ongoing devolution discussions to draw down funding and policy flexibilities.</p> <p>Add a reference to HE move in</p>
<p>Local Plans –agreed that it is important that the individual Plans across the city region are consistent, recognising cross-boundary issues. The Combined Authority can have an important role here through its influence and convening powers and, in the medium and longer term, the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS).</p>	<p>Noted. Once published, the Spatial Development Strategy will be important in shaping the scope of the next wave of Local Plans.</p>
<p>Welfare reform/Universal Credit roll out – the impact is considered important given the high levels of both private and social rented housing in LCR, and how this links to wider issues around poverty. It is important that the link to welfare reform and housing is acknowledged and that there are appropriate links to other related LCR work-streams.</p>	<p>Noted. Whilst welfare is not a devolved matter, it will be important that any negative impact of welfare reform is mitigated where possible in CA strategies. In the housing strategy, for example, the supply of and access to homes for social rent is likely to be an emerging priority.</p>

3. Data, forecasting and evidence gaps

Members' Comments	Response
<p>Quality of housing – what can be done to improve existing stock, particularly that which is privately owned. Members feel that to really understand the issue in more granular detail, insights will be required from across the six local authorities.</p>	<p>Evidence is continues to be gathered on housing quality as it is an issue in parts of the city region. Improving housing quality, both private and social, likely to be a key priority in the emerging housing strategy.</p>
<p>The Committee would also like to see greater detail behind the data where possible – for the purposes of the workshop the intelligence presented was relatively high level</p>	<p>Comment noted. More detailed evidence on a range of housing issues is currently being collected to provide a finer grain analysis.</p>
<p>Forecasting data for LCR was presented to illustrate some of the wider economic and labour market drivers for housing demand.</p> <p>Post Brexit – this would have an impact on all these projections and so will they need revisiting?</p> <p>Do we need to account for change in the city region local economy post-2016, as this was when the latest forecasts were developed?</p> <p>What actually drives housing demand?</p>	<p>Impossible to determine impact of Brexit at this moment in time. Depending on the outcome, government may revise a number of projections in the future which would be taken account of in any revision of the housing strategy.</p> <p>The evidence base for the emerging Local Industrial Strategy is currently being prepared which is likely to include updated economic analysis. As the LIS evidence base is developed, it will inform housing policy and any changes to the housing strategy as it is subject to monitoring and review.</p> <p>A combination of population growth and labour market trends combine to influence household growth, which in turn is the key driver for housing demand.</p>

4. Other Comments

Members' Comments	Response
<p>Learn from best practice/successes across LCR – for instance, Eldonian Village and the history of co-operatives;</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that a range of housing tenures and types are required to meet demand and a range of delivery agencies and mechanisms will be</p>

	required to help deliver this.
Ensure that the processes are in place for strong two way communications between the constituent local authorities and the Combined Authority; this is crucial in fostering a collaborative approach;	The CA Housing and Spatial Planning Advisory Group, whose membership includes the Constituent Local Authorities, facilitates this dialogue and collaborative approach. The Group is supported by technical officer working level groups.
Strategically map out where we want/need future developments to take place, rather than maintaining a developer led system;	Evidence is being gathered to inform this but have to recognise that there are statutory Local Plans in place which have designated sites / areas for development.
Require a “meaningful” definition of affordability, as at present it is a confusing term to many (at both national and local levels) and is at risk of becoming meaningless.	Evidence is being gathered to inform this for the Liverpool City Region (i.e. incomes / house prices / rentals) but have to recognise that there are planning definitions of “affordable housing” already.