

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Metro Mayor and Members of the Combined Authority

Meeting: 1st November 2019

Authority/Authorities Affected: ALL

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

KEY DECISION

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER: HOUSING AND SPATIAL FRAMEWORK AND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, POLICY AND STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION HOUSING STATEMENT AND DELIVERY PLAN 2019-24

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the draft Liverpool City Region (LCR) Housing Statement and Delivery Plan 2019-24 for consideration and approval by the Combined Authority.
- 1.2 This follows consideration and approval of the document by members of the LCR Housing and Spatial Planning Advisory Board at their meeting of 26th September 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority approves the draft, non-statutory LCR Housing Statement and Delivery Plan set out in Appendix One of this report which articulates the LCR's vision and priorities for housing for the period 2019-24.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Liverpool City Region Devolution Agreement confirmed that housing was a matter devolved to the City Region. The Agreement stated that "*Liverpool City Region and the government will continue to discuss the devolution of housing loan funds and the city region's future housing ambitions.*"
- 3.2 The LCR Housing and Spatial Planning Board previously agreed that the best way of setting out the City Region's housing ambitions was through a City Region housing strategy. This is reflected in the Combined Authority Corporate Plan which seeks to guide activities between 2018 and 2020. Priority 5 of the Corporate Plan ("Good Quality and Affordable Housing") includes the following headline action:-

Produce a Housing Strategy with the aim of increasing the number of high quality homes across the city region

- 3.3 Discussions amongst Board members and strategic partners earlier this year suggested that the Combined Authority should pursue a more high level and strategic approach in the short term.
- 3.4 Accordingly, the Board agreed that the strategy be reformatted as a higher level Housing Statement supported by a Delivery Plan with a series of identified actions for partners. The priorities and ambitions of the draft Strategy have been retained in the Statement and feedback from partners has been incorporated, supplemented by new emerging evidence procured and developed as part of the emerging LCR Local Industrial Strategy.
- 3.5 In addition to setting out housing ambitions for the City Region (as part of LCR Devolution Agreement), the Housing Statement will:
- Make the case to national delivery agencies – notably Homes England – for investment in the City Region;
 - Guide and inform LCRCA investment decisions, particularly the SIF;
 - Link housing ambitions with further devolution of housing powers and funding and policy realignment – particularly with regards to brownfield land viability and housing regeneration and renewal;
 - Ensure that City Region housing ambitions support other key strategies – notably the Local Industrial Strategy and the Spatial Development Strategy; and
 - Ensure that City Region housing ambitions support other key policy priorities, including inclusive economic growth and mitigating the impact of climate change.

4. THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION HOUSING STATEMENT AND DELIVERY PLAN

- 4.1 The draft LCR Housing Statement and Delivery Plan is set out in Appendix One to this report for members' consideration and approval. It was considered and endorsed by the Housing and Spatial Planning Advisory Board on 26th September 2019.
- 4.2 The Housing Statement sets out a vision for housing in the Liverpool City Region which:
- Supports ambitions for an inclusive economy as set out in the emerging Local Industrial Strategy;
 - Addresses fuel poverty;
 - Improves the long term sustainability of all communities in the LCR;
 - Delivers public service transformation and meets the housing needs of the City Region's most vulnerable residents;
 - Supports the City Region's ambitions to become a world leader in modern construction methods; and
 - Prevents homelessness wherever possible.

4.3 To deliver this Vision, the following five key priorities have been identified:

- Delivering more homes, improving housing choice and quality – with a focus on increasing housing supply and choice (with a focus on brownfield land) improving housing quality (including better design, accessibility and energy efficiency) and increasing the supply of construction skills
- Supporting our Ageing Population – recognising that the City Region has an increasingly ageing population and that the housing offer has to address this, particularly through improved accessibility of homes;
- Regenerating our Neighbourhoods - there are a number of neighbourhoods in the City Region which are amongst the most deprived in the UK. Regenerating these neighbourhoods, including improving the quality and choice of housing, is important in improving quality of life and life chances, supporting economic growth and public service delivery.
- Improving the Quality of Renting – renting is an important tenure in the City Region and the numbers of people renting privately is increasing. It is important, therefore, that the quality of renting in both the private and social sectors, is of good quality.
- Tackling Homelessness – unfortunately homelessness and rough sleeping is increasing. The Local Authorities and their partners are at the forefront of tackling this issue through the statutory services they undertake. Complementing these will be Housing First and the Trailblazer rough sleeping initiative.

4.4 Against these priorities, 24 actions are set out in the Delivery Plan including:

- Complete and maintain a pipeline of housing development sites;
- Work with Homes England to shape investment strategies to bring forward housing sites;
- Continue to develop our evidence base;
- Ensure that homes funded by the Strategic Investment Fund are accessible and energy efficient;
- Work positively and proactively with the City Region's Housing Associations;
- Improve the supply of construction skills;
- Support a strategic approach to the provision of supported housing;
- Discuss with Government the business case for neighbourhood and housing renewal and housing retrofit programmes;
- Discuss with Government the devolution of landlord licensing confirmatory powers to the Metro Mayor; and
- Implement Housing First across the City Region to address homelessness and rough sleeping.

4.5 The Delivery Plan identifies the key partners - principally the Local Authorities, the LCRCA, Homes England, the Housing Associations and the private sector – who will deliver the Statement. In many instances work is already underway on putting these plans in place.

4.6 Delivery and implementation of the Housing Statement and Delivery Plan will be coordinated and monitored by the Housing and Spatial Planning Advisory Board.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as the Housing Statement and Delivery Plan 2019-24 has been developed, and will be delivered utilising existing staff resources. The Housing Statement and Delivery Plan will, however, act as a framework for securing and guiding future funding opportunities from Homes England and other national funding sources. The Statement will also be a key consideration in the use of the LCRCA's Strategic Investment Fund.

5.2 Human Resources

There are no direct implications for human resources arising from this report.

5.3 Physical Assets

There are no direct implications arising from this report on physical assets

5.4 Information Technology

There are no implications for IT arising from this report.

6. RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 6.1 There are no direct implications. Developing a non-statutory LCR Housing Statement and Delivery Plan identifies City Region's current housing ambitions and priorities and is a key consideration of the Liverpool City Region Devolution Agreement as a basis for discussion with Government on future housing needs. Not preparing and publishing the Housing Statement could risk not being able to secure funding and potential further devolution of powers, thus potentially adversely affecting the City Region's abilities to deliver its housing objectives.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The ambitions and priorities of the Housing Statement will clearly address equality issues as it has in its Vision the ambition of meeting the housing needs of the City Region's vulnerable residents. Providing better quality and better designed homes, and improving the quality of the current stock, will address issues of fuel poverty, support public sector service delivery; and benefit the elderly and those with mobility issues. A priority of the Statement is to improve access to a home thus benefitting our most vulnerable residents including those currently without a home. Key ambitions of the Statement include addressing the challenge of an ageing population, improving the quality of renting, regenerating our more deprived neighbourhoods and tackling homelessness. All these ambitions will help the most vulnerable in the City Region

8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

- 8.1 There are no specific stakeholder communication issues resulting from this report. The Housing Statement and Delivery Plan has been prepared in close consultation with the Local Authorities, Homes England and the Mayoral Advisor for Housing. The Housing Association Chief Executives' Group and the North West Chair of the Home Builders Federation have also been consulted.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This report seeks Members' approval of the LCR Housing Statement and Delivery Plan 2019-24 as set out in Appendix One to this report. The LCR Housing Statement and Delivery Plan set out Liverpool City Region's housing ambitions and priorities supported by identified actions for its delivery for the next five years. It has been prepared in close consultation and dialogue with the six constituent local authorities, Homes England and the Mayoral Advisor for Housing.
- 9.2 The Housing Statement is considered key to building on the City Region Devolution Agreement in order to deliver the City Region's housing ambitions and priorities. It will help deliver an improved housing offer across the City Region for all residents, including the most vulnerable; guide investment decisions (including the SIF); support public service reform and support further devolution of powers and funding to the City Region.

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Appendices:

Appendix One – Liverpool City Region Housing Statement and Delivery Plan 2019-24

Background Documents:

None.