

## Summary Sheet

### Council Report

Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 10 April 2017

### Title

Update on the delivery of specialist housing

### Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Anne Marie Lubanski, Strategic Director Adult Care and Housing

### Report Author(s)

Jane Davies, Interim Strategic Housing and Investment Manager

### Summary

Rotherham's 2016-19 Housing Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2016, and includes a chapter on 'specialist housing' with the key objectives focused on the housing needs of older people. Although these objectives remain relevant, there have been a number of significant developments since the production of the Housing Strategy including:

- Increased pressure on Council budgets and a more urgent requirement to reduce Adult Social Care expenditure.
- A general movement away from the term 'specialist housing', in favour of consideration of homes that are designed in such a way that people can continue to live there as they develop support needs, or as their needs change. The home therefore adapts with the person through minor modifications, rather than people needing to move out, or the home requiring major adaptations.
- A more ambitious housing growth programme with recently secured financial resources from government to deliver a range of new tenures.
- Consideration of the needs of a wider cohort including people with physical and learning disabilities.
- The government's proposed introduction of Local Housing Allowance caps for supported housing is causing great uncertainty in the market with providers considering new development financial viability and long term sustainability.

A more focused set of strategic objectives has therefore been developed for specialist housing, to complement and enhance the Housing Strategy, and this is presented to Cabinet for approval. Appendix 1 sets out outcomes, objectives and a detailed action plan.

The report demonstrates the key contribution housing can make to improving people's health and wellbeing, preventing people from requiring residential care, and savings on adult social care expenditure.

The Council has ambitious housing growth plans, to achieve the overall target of 900 new homes each year and it is essential that appropriate targets for housing for adults with support needs are established, across a range of tenures and types, to ensure the needs of Rotherham's residents can be met now and in the future.

### **Recommendation**

That the revisions to the strategic objectives and action plan within the Housing Strategy 2016-19, included at appendix 1, be approved.

### **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 – Strategic objectives and action plan for the delivery of specialist housing

### **Background Papers**

The Rotherham Place Plan  
Rotherham's Housing Strategy 2016-19

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Presentation to Health Select Committee Sub-Group on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2016

### **Council Approval Required**

No

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Update on the delivery of specialist housing**

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the revisions to the strategic objectives and action plan within the Housing Strategy 2016-19, included at appendix 1, be approved.

### **2. Background**

#### **2.1 Rotherham's Housing Strategy**

- 2.1.1 Rotherham's 2016-19 Housing Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2016. The fifth chapter focuses on 'specialist housing' with the key objectives being to:

- Ensure older people have access to excellent information and advice about housing options
- Develop and maintain a clear understanding of the current and future housing needs of older people in Rotherham
- Support older people to live independently for as long as they choose
- Ensure a range of homes are available that are suitable for older people
- Ensure delivery of accommodation for children and young people identified in the Sufficiency Strategy for Looked After Children
- Develop a clear programme of specialist housing for other groups (this includes both learning and physical disability) and ensure alignment with the Housing Growth Plan

- 2.1.2 These objectives were developed following consultation with staff, residents and partners, driven by an awareness of Rotherham's changing demographics, and largely aligned with the outcomes of a multi-agency task group which had worked on an older people housing delivery plan during the preceding 18 months.

#### **2.2 Key developments since the publication of the Housing Strategy**

- 2.2.1 Although these objectives remain relevant, there have been a number of significant developments since the production of the Housing Strategy:

- The recruitment of a new Strategic Director and much closer, more integrated working between Housing teams and Adult Care teams.
- Increased pressure on Council budgets and a more urgent requirement to reduce Adult Social Care expenditure.
- An increased focus on prevention and the need to deliver services differently, arising from the Care Act 2014.
- Development of Market Position Statements for learning disabilities and older people.
- A decision within the Adult Care and Housing directorate not to focus primarily on 'housing for older people', and instead broaden the scope to housing for all adults with support needs.
- A general movement away from the term 'specialist housing', in favour of consideration of homes that are designed in such a way that people can

continue to live there as they develop support needs, or as their needs change. The home therefore adapts with the person through minor modifications, rather than people needing to move out, or the home requiring major adaptations.

- The agreement of the Rotherham Place Plan.
- A more ambitious housing growth programme with recently secured financial resources from government to deliver a range of new tenures.
- A new governance framework for asset management that ensures a more holistic and efficient approach is taken to identifying and meeting accommodation requirements.

2.2.2 A more focused set of strategic objectives has therefore been developed for specialist housing, to complement and enhance the specialist housing chapter of the Housing Strategy, and this is presented to Cabinet for approval.

2.2.3 Appendix 1 sets out:

- The key issues
- The evidence
- Key actions to achieve these outcomes with accountability, timescales and progress updates

2.2.4 **The required outcomes:**

- a. Clear understanding of need, shared across teams within Adult Care and Housing.
- b. Excellent information and advice on the housing options available for people with support needs.
- c. A range of accommodation options available in Rotherham to provide choice, quality and opportunities for people with support needs to continue to live independently.
- d. Clear targets in place within housing growth plan to reflect demographic changes.
- e. A reduction in the number of people living in residential care or out of borough due to a lack of suitable accommodation.
- f. More people supported to maintain independent living, in a way that demonstrates good value for money for the Council.
- g. More flexible short stay accommodation focused on complex needs and help with timely discharge from hospital.
- h. Council housing stock that meets the needs of its residents and supports people to live independently.
- i. Homes available across a range of tenures to suit all needs and circumstances.
- j. A full equalities impact assessment to ensure the needs of all communities are taken into account.

2.2.5 This document focuses on delivery of the Housing Strategy. However this should be read in conjunction with other key publications including the new Market Position Statement for Adults and Older People, which provides detailed statistical evidence and information about the wider transformational programmes being led by Adult Care and is due to be published on the Council website shortly.

### **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 The new strategic objectives seek to address nine key issues as set out in appendix 1. Additional detail is provided below.
- 3.2 Rotherham has an objectively assessed need for 900 new homes each year, which represents a 50% increase on delivery rates in recent years. It is important that through the Council's ambitious housing growth plans, the needs of Rotherham's changing demographic profile are met:
- The most recent national population data shows that Rotherham's population has grown and that people are living longer. Rotherham's population is expected to grow by around 3% by 2025 with the over 65's seeing the biggest rise (currently 19.3% are over 65, and this is expected to increase to 21.7% by 2025). The proportion of people aged over 75 will increase nine times faster than the borough average.
  - The gap in healthy life expectancy is much greater at 5.4 years for men and 5.3 years for women. On average, a Rotherham male can expect to live 19.2 years with ill health (15.2 years nationally) and a female 22.6 years with ill health (19.2 years nationally).
  - Older people in Rotherham are 30% more likely to have a seriously limiting long term condition or disability than the national average. Those aged 65-74 are 46% more likely to be affected.
  - There are currently 4595 adults accessing care, support and long term services, with the majority of support for working age people being in relation to learning disabilities and mental health support. It is estimated that 36% of adults with learning disabilities are living with their parents.
- 3.3 The Council has a key role to play in delivering social rented housing that meets the needs of Rotherham's residents, and allows them to maintain independent living. Through the Housing Revenue Account strategic acquisition and growth programme, utilising Government grant funding, and making the best use of Council land and assets, the number of affordable rented homes suitable for adults with support needs will increase year on year. Improvements will also be made to the Council's existing stock for example by remodelling redundant neighbourhood centres into new homes, revitalising outdated former sheltered housing schemes, and the use of assistive technology.
- 3.4 However, this is also important for tenures other than the social rented sector. Through its strategic enabling role the Council can encourage private sector and housing association partners to build homes for sale and rent on the open market and via shared ownership arrangements. Shared ownership allows people to buy a share of the property and pay rent / service charge on the un-owned portion, and can offer a good, affordable alternative to standard home ownership. Consultation with residents has demonstrated an appetite for shared ownership and the Council is working with a developer to provide this on the Braithwell Road site in Maltby as part of a broader mix of housing tenures proposed to be delivered. The Council will also encourage developers to consider private retirement housing for sale and shared

ownership on a range of other key developments, including Waverley, Bassingthorpe and the town centre.

- 3.5 Through the Shared Ownership and Affordable Housing programme administered by the Homes and Communities Agency, the Council will work in partnership to deliver over 100 new shared ownership homes and a number of these could be designed specifically for adults with support needs. The locations and delivery mechanisms for the shared ownership homes are currently being planned.
- 3.6 Increasing opportunities for people to live independently in their own home contributes to both the Corporate Plan priority 'every adult secure, responsible and empowered' and the Health and Wellbeing agenda; if people are able to live in homes that meet their needs, with easier access to services and opportunities to connect with other people, their overall wellbeing will be improved.
- 3.7 These new homes will help to prevent people from requiring residential or nursing care, thereby resulting in significant savings to Adult Care and Health budgets.
- 3.8 Extra care housing (ECH) can provide an alternative to residential care. In ECH schemes, residents have the benefit of independence / their own front door, but also access to a range of facilities and services including care, which can be delivered flexibly according to a person's changing needs. This is different from sheltered housing which typically offers a warden service but no care provision. Three ECH schemes currently exist in Rotherham, delivered via partnership between the Council and Together (formerly Chevin) housing association: Oaktrees (Stag), Bakersfield Court (Herringthorpe) and Potteries (Swinton). These collectively comprise 115 units which are all occupied. Officers are undertaking research and benchmarking visits with other local authorities to analyse the ECH financial model and determine whether further schemes would be viable in Rotherham. As part of this consideration will be given to the viability of a large mixed tenure extra care retirement village.
- 3.9 One of the key issues affecting the financial viability of ECH and other supported housing models, is the recent legislative change to housing benefits for supported housing tenants. Whereas currently, housing benefit generally covers the additional costs of supported housing over and above core rent, from 2018 supported housing tenants will receive the equivalent private rented sector housing benefit rate (Local Housing Allowance). Government recently issued a consultation on the means by which financial support to bridge the resultant 'affordability gap' will be administered and Rotherham Council submitted a response to this in February 2017, which highlighted concerns about the affordability of supported housing, and the stark geographical variations in terms of the impact of these changes.
- 3.10 This change has led to uncertainty across the sector and a hiatus in the development of new supported housing in a number of areas. However despite this, when a Housing Developer Summit was held in Rotherham in October 2016, a number of ECH and other specialist providers demonstrated

an appetite to continue to work with the Council to identify partnership opportunities to deliver supported housing in Rotherham, whilst recognising the risks from further legislation changes.

- 3.11 If as a result of the research being undertaken, ECH is considered to be financially viable in the context of Rotherham's local demographics and income levels, officers will identify suitable sites, based on evidence of need in the locality, and conduct soft market testing to develop proposals for Cabinet's future consideration.
- 3.12 Providing an alternative offer for people who are living in homes that may be too large and otherwise unsuitable for their needs, will help to reduce the Council's expenditure on aids and adaptations. This will also free up (typically) three bedroom houses, thus helping families who need these homes, and stimulating the wider housing market.
- 3.13 The development of new housing schemes will have a wider economic impact, providing social value through employment and training opportunities.
- 3.14 Enabling people to stay living in or close to their community as their support needs develop / change, will help to ensure balanced and sustainable communities.

#### **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 4.1 Consideration was given to producing a separate accommodation strategy for adults with support needs. However this could lead to a disjoint with the overall Housing Strategy and other key documents. It is therefore recommended that the revised set of strategic objectives be adopted and reported on as part of the overall Housing Strategy monitoring process.

#### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Extensive consultation was carried out with older people in Rotherham during 2015, particularly on ECH provision, and the views of approximately 300 individuals were taken into account. Residents said they want to see more ECH in Rotherham, as well as more smaller scale sheltered housing schemes in local communities.
- 5.2 Over 2000 individuals, Council teams and partner organisations were consulted during the development of the overall Housing Strategy 2016-19 and clear priorities for residents emerged about the importance of more housing that is suitable for people with support needs.
- 5.3 The 'where do you want to live?' survey (2012) and Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015) clearly demonstrated the need for more housing suitable for older people and people with disabilities.
- 5.4 A presentation was delivered to the Health Select Commission sub-group composed of Elected Members on 24th November 2016, and their views have been taken into account in drafting detailed plans, and will continue to be reflected in consultation plans and future proposals / reports to Cabinet.

## **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 6.1 The proposed action plan is included in appendix 1. Progress will be overseen by the new Housing and Regeneration Programme Delivery Board and officers group, and regular updates will be provided to the Adult Care and Housing Directorate Leadership Team.

## **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 7.1 A detailed financial appraisal will be conducted of the extra care housing model, and if a proposal for new ECH is presented to Cabinet the report will include a clear business case with financial and procurement implications.
- 7.2 An allocation of £10m has been made in the Council's approved Capital Strategy (2017-22) for an extra care housing scheme.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Care Act 2014 and accompanying regulations and guidance set out how housing can support a more integrated approach to meeting the at-home care and support needs of older and vulnerable people. The actions identified in appendix 1, particularly around improving advice and information and supporting people to live independently, contribute to meeting the requirements of the Care Act.
- 8.2 The contractual delivery arrangements for new shared ownership homes (funded by the Shared Ownership and Affordable Housing grant), and legal implications for the Council, are currently being explored. Shared ownership purchases involve legal transactions and documents that are more complicated than outright ownership or tenancies. If the Council decides to directly deliver shared ownership rather than in partnership with an external provider, this will result in legal and financial risks, and there would be a resource implication for Legal Services.

## **9. Human Resources Implications**

- 9.1 The tasks set out in the action plan will be carried out within existing staff resources. Additional project management resources will be required in the future if new extra care or supported living projects are identified.

## **10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 10.1 This report includes a range of measures to improve and increase housing options for people with support needs.
- 10.2 The Council wants to help all adults enjoy good health and live independently for as long as possible and to support people to make choices about how best to do this. The Council wants a Rotherham where vulnerable adults, such as those with disabilities and older people and their carers, have the necessary support within their community.



## **11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

- 11.1 The needs of all communities will be taken into account in developing design briefs and referrals criteria for new housing schemes. This will include BME communities, people with disabilities and LGBT communities, and a full equalities impact assessment will be carried out.

## **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

- 12.1 The main benefits of this proposal are for Adult Care and the health services. Progress will be discussed with colleagues in other departments and agencies via Rotherham's Strategic Housing Forum.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 The Government's decision to cap rents at the local housing allowance rate presents a challenge to ECH, supported living and sheltered housing, and has stalled developments across the country during the period of ongoing uncertainty regarding the future funding of supported housing. Despite this, a number of housing associations and private developers have expressed a keen appetite to work with the Council on delivering supported accommodation and work will continue to explore the optimum delivery models.
- 13.2 There are risks associated with the rent model for people with learning disabilities, with respect to exempt accommodation.
- 13.3 If the Council does not take action to increase the number of homes that are suitable for adults with support needs, there is a wider risk that people will continue to live in homes that do not meet their needs, increasing the likelihood of their requiring hospitalisation, major adaptations, major adaptations or residential care in the future and continuing to exert pressure on Adult Care budgets.

## **14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Tom Bell, Assistant Director, Housing and Neighbourhood Services

Nathan Atkinson, Assistant Director, Strategic Commissioning, Adult Care and Housing

This report will be published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories>