

<b>Item No.</b> 15.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 27 January 2015	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Southwark's Housing Strategy to 2043	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>		Councillor Peter John, Leader of the Council	

## **FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

This report sets out Southwark's first long-term housing strategy. Looking over the next 30 years it is probably the first genuine attempt to develop a long-term housing plan in London for many years. But the challenges which we face are huge and it is vital that we and others across London develop a specific plan to address the chronic shortage of all types of housing which is blighting the lives of too many Londoners.

There is an urgent need for new housing in London – particularly quality affordable housing – and in Southwark we are leading the way in delivering new homes. But we cannot provide the answer for London, and all 33 London local authorities must play their part in developing a coherent and deliverable solution.

This strategy builds on the strong foundations we developed through the work of the Independent Housing Commission chaired by Jan Luba QC, and the subsequent community conversation on the future of council housing – the most extensive engagement exercise ever undertaken by a council.

But this strategy is not just about council homes. We have particular concerns about conditions in parts of the private rented sector ('PRS') and this is why we are currently consulting on the introduction of licensing for private landlords across the borough. The consultation closes on 14 March 2015. And we know that we need more homes of every type and every tenure to meet the massive demand for housing in Southwark.

The commitments and actions proposed within this strategy are cross-cutting – working across all cabinet portfolios to ensure that they are delivered. These range from the opportunities to build new homes through Section 106 planning agreements, to promoting better public health by ensuring that all of our council homes are Warm, Dry and Safe, to being more than a landlord and offering support to help people into work so that they are able to make choices about the type of housing that they want.

It is a “one council” plan – shaped by and with the emerging Southwark Plan, links to our economic wellbeing strategy, our plans around public health, community safety, the children and young people's plan and the wider environment as we push for more energy efficient homes.

And it is a “one borough” plan – not just being about housing as bricks and mortar and buildings, but about quality homes of all tenure; homes which put people first as we work with developers, housing associations, the voluntary sector, the police, the health service and others to support individuals and families to live independent, active and healthy lives.

Most of all it rests on our pride in being a landlord in a borough which our residents are

proud to call home. It is a strategy which puts rights and responsibilities at its heart and sets us a challenge to continue to build on service improvements and demand even higher standards in the years to come.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the cabinet approves Southwark's Housing Strategy to 2043 (Appendix 1).
2. That cabinet notes the single page summary of the Housing Strategy to 2043 (Appendix 2).
3. That cabinet notes that implementation plans will be developed collaboratively across all council services and with our private, public and third sector partners.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

4. In 2011 Southwark Council began a process of looking at the future of council housing in the borough. The cabinet agreed to set up a commission, independent of council influence, to explore options for the future financing, ownership and operation of Southwark's housing stock beyond 2015/16. That work was completed in October 2012.
5. The Independent Housing Commission's work was followed by a very extensive engagement with residents on the future of council housing in Southwark. In total there were over 80 different key events, activities or other ways of engaging. This included engagement at area housing forums, tenant council, homeowners' council, community councils, and other meetings. It also included engagement targeted at young people including work with a local youth radio station, and on the housing needs of older people. There were also community conversations, led by councillors, in a variety of locations across the borough.
6. In July 2013 the report on the outcome of this community conversation was considered by cabinet. Cabinet restated the council's commitment to council housing as a long term community asset to the benefit of Southwark residents, and ruled out any wholesale or large-scale transfer of its stock to another provider. It also recommended that the council should provide as many homes that are as genuinely affordable as possible and look creatively at different options for financing these homes. At the same cabinet meeting, the leader of the council set the target of building 11,000 new council homes by 2043. Cabinet also agreed an action "to review the council's housing strategy across all tenures and sectors, having regard to the detailed assessment of the council's own stock."
7. In January 2014 cabinet agreed the vision for a new housing strategy and plans for developing a new borough-wide housing strategy for Southwark. The vision emerged from the extensive community conversations on the future of council housing following publication of the Housing Commission's report. The housing strategy describes the key housing issues in the borough and the council's priorities and commitments for tackling these over the life of the strategy. It covers housing across all tenures (both public and private sector housing).
8. The housing strategy sits alongside the council's planning policies, most notably the Core Strategy and the New Southwark Plan, which the council is currently consulting on and which will replace the Core Strategy. This will set out a

development strategy for the next 15 years. It will set out both strategic and detailed planning policies. This will be subject to an extensive statutory consultation exercise. The timetable for completion of the New Southwark Plan is late 2017. Officers have been working together to ensure the two documents are and will continue to be consistent. The housing strategy will set the key strategic direction for housing which will also be reflected in the New Southwark Plan. The more detailed housing targets and other further housing planning details will be included in the New Southwark Plan.

9. The July 2014 cabinet report “Next Steps on Developing Long Term Plans for the Delivery of New Council Homes” established a clear direction of travel for the delivery of both new council homes and investment in the existing housing stock, key components of the housing vision. The October 2014 cabinet report “New Southwark Plan – Issues and options” also contributed to establishing the housing strategic vision. The council’s plans for improvements to the private rented sector in the borough are also well underway.
10. Agreement of the housing strategy will provide a clear policy statement to support the ongoing delivery of the Fairer Future promise to deliver 11,000 new homes, and the other commitments in the housing strategy vision.
11. All London boroughs’ housing strategies and housing policies have to be in general conformity with the Mayor of London’s Housing Strategy and London Plan. The Southwark Housing Strategy has taken account of the objectives in the Mayor’s London housing strategy .officers at the Greater London Authority (GLA) have confirmed that they are very supportive of our strategy but also made some useful suggestions for our consideration. Some of these have been included in the final draft, while others such as suggestions around wheelchair housing will be taken as part of the implementation of the strategy.

### **Consultation and engagement on Southwark’s housing strategy**

12. The housing strategy has emerged and been shaped by a number of engagement exercises over the last few years. The process started in 2011 when cabinet recognised the need for a long-term strategy for the council’s housing stock and established the independent Housing Commission to make recommendations for an investment strategy for the housing stock for thirty years. The commission consulted widely in developing its proposals. The strategy has also been shaped by the following:
  - The extensive community conversation conducted by the council on the future of council housing in Southwark (as detailed in paragraph 5).
  - Three focus groups in February 2014 which were undertaken by Cobweb consultancy on behalf of the South East Housing Partnership (including Southwark), with representatives from housing associations, developers, private landlords, local authorities, voluntary, health/social care and homelessness sectors. These were part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) of the South East London Housing market.
  - The ongoing extensive consultation on the development of 11,000 new council homes. As part of this, over 2,000 responses were received on the consultation on the Charter of Principles as detailed in the November 2014 cabinet report “Update on Consultation and Plans for the Delivery of 11,000 New Homes”.

13. Following these consultations there was a very clear direction from residents and other stakeholders about the future of housing in the borough. While some of the consultation had focused on the future of council housing, it had also taken account of other tenures. Many residents expressed views about other forms of housing in Southwark, including concerns about the high cost of renting privately, young people having to move out of the borough to find housing, and a need for more shared ownership options.
14. As a very clear direction was already emerging, it was decided to focus any subsequent engagement on areas not covered by the community conversation. These were considered to be with housing associations, developers, and private sector landlords. A workshop was held with housing associations and developers, and a meeting took place with the Private Landlords Forum to capture their views. In addition, key external stakeholders including representatives from Southwark Legal Advice Network, and Community Action Southwark were invited to a cross council officer consultation event. Meetings also took place with the Futures Steering Board. Further engagement took place through the annual Tenant Conference. The strategy was also discussed at the Forum for Equalities and Human Rights (FEHRS).
15. Cabinet agreement of this housing strategy is not the end of the consultation and engagement process. Some of the commitments in the housing strategy will require further continued consultation and engagement. Key examples of this include:
  - The on-going consultation on the delivery of the 11,000 new council homes. The December cabinet Report “Update on the Proposed Pipeline for the Delivery of 1,500 New Council Homes by 2018” (paragraph 90) sets out the stages and phases of the consultation going forward. The next phase is consultation on the borough-wide principles, followed by estate-by-estate engagement, leading to engagement with local residents around involvement in management of new homes.
  - The consultation on introducing a private sector licensing scheme, which closes on 14 March 2015.
  - Engagement with advice and voluntary sector partners via the Council’s Homelessness Forum on the development of a new homelessness and rough sleeping action plan.
16. The council will continue to engage with partners to develop implementation plans, collaboratively across all council services and with our private, public and third sector partners. Given the length of time the strategy covers, there will be actions and impact which cannot be anticipated or will be subject to change. It is therefore essential that there is ongoing engagement between the council and our key partners on its delivery. This ongoing engagement will also allow us to continue to consider broader equality impacts, including appropriate assessment and review.

### **Evidence base for the housing strategy**

17. The housing strategy has been informed by a variety of data. In June 2014 work on the South East London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was finalised. This found that Southwark has an estimated net additional dwelling requirement equating to 1,650 new homes each year, of which 799 need to be affordable housing units (over the 2011-2031 period). In December 2014 the

sub-regional report on the lower quartile private rented sector was finalised, which revealed a number of issues with how the sector is operating. Other data has been used to inform the strategy including census data, and the council's internal data on homelessness and the housing register. A summary of this data is included at the end of the strategy. Southwark's housing data is available online at [www.southwark.gov.uk/housingstrategy](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/housingstrategy).

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

18. Southwark's Housing Strategy to 2043 is attached as Appendix 1. It is our first long term housing strategy. It is also our first age-friendly housing strategy.
19. The housing strategy provides a detailed narrative about the housing challenges in Southwark, our ambitions, and more information about how we will deliver our commitments over the duration of the strategy.
20. The strategy has been designed from the principles and commitments that were agreed by cabinet in January 2014 in the report "Vision for a new housing strategy for Southwark." The vision consists of four key principles. Each principle is underpinned by key commitments which summarise the steps required to deliver on the principles over the duration of the strategy. These are set out below:

**Principle 1 – We will use every tool at our disposal to increase the supply of all kinds of homes across Southwark.**

- Building 11,000 new council homes for rent, and hundreds more to be made available on a shared ownership basis.
- Creating a new Southwark Plan and getting the most from regeneration opportunities to encourage and support housing growth across all tenures.
- Delivering a mix of homes, of different types and sizes, which are accessible and respond to people's changing needs over time, through direct provision and in partnership with housing associations.
- Ensuring a supply of new homes which are affordable to people on a range of incomes, through our major regeneration schemes in the Elephant & Castle, Aylesbury Estate, Canada Water and beyond.
- Seeking opportunities to work in partnership with the private sector to develop good quality, well managed privately owned and rented homes.

**Principle 2 – We will demand the highest standards of quality, making Southwark a place where you will not know whether you are visiting homes in private, housing association or council ownership.**

- Delivering the successor to our "warm, dry and safe" housing investment programme to make all our council homes fully fit for the twenty first century.
- Using our powers as the local planning authority to ensure that all new homes, regardless of ownership, are built to high standards of quality and design.
- Implementing a licensing and accreditation scheme for private landlords to drive up standards and reward good practice in the sector.
- Encouraging private landlords to offer greater security, certainty and stability for their tenants, especially families with children.
- Taking tough enforcement action against rogue landlords and letting agencies.

**Principle 3 – We will support and encourage all residents to take pride and responsibility in their homes and local area.**

- Enabling council tenants and homeowners to take greater control over their local housing services, and supporting the development of tenant management organisations.
- Working with local housing associations to promote resident involvement and a more consistent Southwark wide service standard.
- Providing advice and assistance to private landlords and tenants on their respective rights and responsibilities.
- Working in partnership with local residents to tackle antisocial behaviour where it blights neighbourhoods and people's lives.
- Providing advice to private leaseholders on their options including the right to manage their blocks or estates.

**Principle 4 – We will help vulnerable individuals and families to meet their housing needs and live as independently as possible.**

- Building lifetime homes, delivering extra care housing, exploring other specialist housing options for older people, and adapting properties to enable older and disabled residents to live independently as long as possible in their communities
- Providing incentives and opportunities for under-occupiers in social housing to downsize, releasing larger homes to help reduce overcrowding.
- Being 'more than a landlord' by connecting residents to the services and support they need across health, education, training, and employment, especially those facing particular barriers and less able to help themselves.
- Preventing homelessness wherever possible through self-reliant individuals and resilient communities.
- Working in partnership locally and across London to bring an end to rough sleeping in Southwark.

21. A single page summary of the strategy is attached at Appendix 2.
22. The key actions of the housing strategy will be monitored ultimately through the Council Plan alongside relevant action plans. As this is a long term housing strategy there will be need to review and update our plans on a periodic basis.

**Policy implications**

23. The housing strategy has been developed to work with and complement the council's other high level strategies and plans. This new housing strategy will replace the current seven year (2009 to 2016) housing strategy, agreed by the council's executive in 2009.

**The Council Plan and Fairer Future Promises**

24. It is a council plan target to have a housing strategy completed by autumn 2015. The housing strategy is consistent with the council's overarching vision to create a fairer future for all. The four principles which comprise the housing strategy vision as set out in this report have particularly strong links to the following fairer future principles:
  - Treating residents as if they were a valued member of our own family
  - Working for everyone to realise their own potential

- Making Southwark a place to be proud of.
25. The draft Council Plan for 2014/15 to 2017/18 was agreed by cabinet in July 2014. It included a number of promises which the housing strategy will help deliver, namely:
- Promise 3: Quality affordable homes “We will improve housing standards and build more homes of every kind including 11,000 new council homes by 2043 with 1,500 by 2018. We will make all council homes warm, dry and safe and start the roll out of our quality kitchen and bathroom guarantee.”
  - Promise 9: Revitalised neighbourhoods “We will revitalise our neighbourhoods to make them places in which we can all be proud to live and work, transforming the Elephant and Castle, the Aylesbury and starting regeneration of the Old Kent Road.”

### **The New Southwark Plan**

26. The housing strategy will sit alongside the New Southwark Plan, which the council is currently consulting on. This will replace the Core Strategy and saved former Southwark Plan policies. The New Southwark Plan will set out a development strategy for the next 15 years. This will be subject to an extensive statutory consultation exercise. The timetable for completion of the New Southwark Plan is late 2017. The housing strategy will set the key strategic direction for housing which will be reflected in the New Southwark Plan. The more detailed housing targets and other further housing planning details will be included in the New Southwark Plan.

### **Economic Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2020**

27. This is the council’s strategy for delivering jobs and growth. Building new homes creates jobs in construction, and also in other sectors, such as logistics and retail. The fourth strand of the strategy- promoting financial wellbeing and independence- has particularly strong links with housing, in terms of helping to develop a strategic response to welfare reform, and contributing to developing long term solutions for those living in insecure housing conditions who are at risk of homelessness, exacerbated by reliance on benefits/low paid work.

### **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

28. Homelessness and poor housing conditions have a proven link to a number of health problems including respiratory diseases, and can contribute to poor mental health. The first Southwark Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-14 was developed between the council and its partners in health, police, community and voluntary sectors, and its three priorities are:
- Giving every child and young person the best start in life
  - Building healthier and more resilient communities and tackling the root causes of ill health
  - Improving the experience and outcomes for our most vulnerable residents and enabling them to live more independent lives.

### **Children and Young People’s Plan**

29. The Children and Young People’s Plan 2013-16, contains the vision that ‘Every

child, young person and family in Southwark thrives and is empowered to lead a safe and healthy life'. It goes on to state that 'We will work together to deliver high quality services that make a measurable difference in helping to overcome inequality and disadvantage, and strengthen families' abilities to raise their children successfully and independently'. One example of the impact that a family's housing circumstances can have on a child's life chances is if they live in an overcrowded home. Overcrowding can have a negative impact on a child's educational attainment, as there may be no suitable place to complete their homework without distraction. Tackling this type of issue through a cross-service approach is fundamental to securing the changes necessary to improve a child's life outcomes.

### **Community impact statement**

30. It is anticipated that the commitments of the housing strategy will benefit all communities in Southwark, as the objective is to improve the housing conditions of the borough, irrespective of housing tenure. However, with such a long-term housing strategy there will be a number of actions linked to delivery of the strategy which will be implemented over time, and where further equality assessments will be required.
31. It is our first age-friendly housing strategy. While many of the age-friendly measures in the strategy are aimed at older people, there will also be wider benefits for all communities in the borough, by providing better designed homes and neighbourhoods. Our 'more than a landlord' approach will also provide a supportive housing service to our residents, tailored to their individual needs. This approach will also help to reduce homelessness, through earlier intervention.
32. An Equalities Analysis on the housing strategy to 2043 has been produced and this is attached as Appendix 3. The housing strategy is a high-level document that sets out the ambitions of the council and its long-term plans. The key to ensuring equality will lie in the implementation of the strategy, where equality assessments will be carried out for specific projects, examples of this include:
  - The ongoing work on the 11,000 new council homes and housing investment work stream, which will take account of residents' specific needs. There will also be an equality assessment of the planned Local Lettings Policy for the 11,000 new homes.
  - The proposals for introducing a private sector licensing scheme
  - The development of a homelessness and rough sleeping action plan.
33. A senior officer housing strategy steering group with representatives from across the council will continue to meet quarterly. This group will have a role in ensuring that the equalities impacts continue to be reviewed.

### **Resource implications**

34. There are no resource implications at this time.



## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Director of Legal Services**

35. Under section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Secretary of State can require local housing authorities (LHA's) to produce housing strategies. This power has not been used although in practice many LHA's have produced strategies. While there is no requirement to produce a housing strategy, where one is prepared it must, pursuant to section 28 of the Greater London Authority Act 2007, 'be in general conformity with the London housing strategy' prepared by the Mayor of London. Cabinet members are referred to paragraph 11 of the report that confirms the objectives of the Mayor's London Housing Strategy have been taken into account and that input to the council's proposed housing strategy has been provided by officers at the GLA.
36. The report sets out the consultation that has taken place throughout development of the strategy. The outcome of consultation should be taken into account when considering the recommendations in this report.
37. Cabinet members attention is also drawn to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires the council, when making decisions, to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The relevant characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty also applies to marriage and civil partnership but only in relation to the elimination of discrimination. Cabinet members are referred to the community impact statement in the body of this report and the equalities analysis at Appendix 3 setting out the consideration that has been given to equalities issues which should be considered when making decisions on the recommendations in this report.

### **Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services (FC14/0039/FH)**

38. The strategic director of finance and corporate services notes the report; financial implications will be incorporated into the council's budget setting and decision making processes as these arise.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
December 2014 Cabinet Paper - Update on the Proposed Pipeline for the Delivery of 1,500 New Council Homes by 2018 (Item 8)	Southwark website	Dave Markham, Housing and Community Services - 020 7525 7201
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4865&amp;Ver=4">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4865&amp;Ver=4</a>		
July 2014 Cabinet Paper - Next Steps on Developing Long Term Plans for the Delivery of New Council Homes (Item 14)	Southwark website	Stephen Gaskell, Corporate Strategy - 020 7525 7293
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4861&amp;Ver=4">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4861&amp;Ver=4</a>		
January 2014 Cabinet Paper - Vision for a New Housing Strategy for Southwark (Item 12)	Southwark website	Claire Linnane, Corporate Strategy - 020 7525 0732
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4554&amp;Ver=4">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4554&amp;Ver=4</a>		
July 2013 Cabinet Paper- Independent Housing Commission- Conclusions and Next Steps Following Community and Stakeholder Engagement	Southwark website	Graeme Gordon, Corporate Strategy- 020 7525 7384
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4549&amp;Ver=4">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=4549&amp;Ver=4</a>		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark's Housing Strategy to 2043
Appendix 2	Single page summary of the Housing Strategy to 2043
Appendix 3	Housing Strategy to 2043 - Equality Analysis

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Peter John, Leader of the Council	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Eleanor Kelly, Chief Executive	
<b>Report Author</b>	Claire Linnane, Housing Strategy & Partnerships Manager	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	15 January 2015	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	15 January 2015	