

## CABINET

21 January 2020

<b>Title:</b> Housing for Vulnerable People Programme	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care Integration and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
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<b>Accountable Strategic Leadership Directors:</b> Graeme Cooke, Director of Inclusive Growth and Elaine Allegretti, Director of People and Resilience	
<b>Summary</b>  Next spring, three strategies will be taken forward to Cabinet and then Assembly: Inclusive Growth; Prevention, Independence & Resilience and Participation & Engagement.  Central to the Inclusive Growth strategy is our ambitious plans for providing homes and housing. Aligned to this and the aims of the Prevention, Independence & Resilience strategy, the Council has recently launched a corporate programme around Housing for Vulnerable People. The aim of this programme is to ensure no one is left behind as Barking and Dagenham's accommodation supply increases: providing vulnerable residents with suitable accommodation which is inclusive of complex and changing needs and provides a platform to improve their prosperity and well-being.  This report seeks Cabinet endorsement of a set of commitments related to housing for vulnerable groups which will guide the delivery of this programme.  Once adopted, they will be integrated into the strategic framework brought forward next spring.	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>  The Cabinet is recommended to:  (i) Note the background and aims of the Housing for Vulnerable People Programme as set out in section 2 of the report; and  (ii) Endorse the commitments set out in section 3 of the report.	

## **Reason(s)**

The development of a housing offer for vulnerable residents which enables outcomes and makes cost-effective use of supply is a priority for the Council. Inadequate housing is currently a major cause of several issues facing the borough's population, and for the Council services who support residents.

Recognising the importance and complexity of this issue, the Council has launched a corporate programme which is working across Inclusive Growth, People and Resilience, Community Solutions, My Place and other areas to align the housing need of vulnerable groups in the borough with the delivery of our new build programme and other improvement activities, ensuring no one is left behind as the borough grows.

## **1. Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 Inadequate housing is a major cause of several issues facing the borough's population, and for the Council services who support residents. This ranges from overcrowding, to residents with high needs having to live in inappropriate accommodation.
- 1.2 Some of the effects of this are easily quantifiable – financial pressures placed on council budgets, or departmental caseloads. But there are several wider social issues that are exacerbated by poor housing – such as child poverty, loneliness/isolation and impacts on children's performance at school.
- 1.3 A key pillar of our Inclusive Growth strategy is our ambitious programme for homes and housing. This is about the cost of housing, security of tenure, quality of homes, and the ability of our housing provision to meet changing needs – whether around size of home needed, supporting households to get on the housing ladder, or specialist and adapted housing to enable vulnerable residents to remain part of the community and receive the support they need.
- 1.4 The growth in the number of homes in the borough in the coming years is an opportunity to increase the amount and quality of housing provision for more vulnerable residents. A significant proportion of the new homes built in the borough will be delivered by the Council directly – built by Be First and managed by Reside.
- 1.5 However this also needs to be supported by joint-working which ensures that we allocate homes in a way that supports residents – understanding their wider circumstances – and making best use of available properties. It is also essential that we have in place robust processes which ensure that the homes are good quality, well design and well managed. This includes making the best use of existing homes.
- 1.6 The corporate programme brings together all of these points with an aim to develop a housing offer that enables the best possible outcomes for our vulnerable residents.

## 2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 This report seeks Cabinet endorsement for a set of commitments for housing for vulnerable people in Barking & Dagenham. These commitments will be delivered on through a programme of work which seeks to understand demand, align this with supply, and create effective and joined up processes to deliver the best possible outcomes for vulnerable people.
- 2.2 The Housing for Vulnerable People programme sits within the wider Inclusive Growth programme. Its aim to ensure no one is left behind as Barking & Dagenham grows, by building relationships, processes and governance to align the housing need of vulnerable groups in the borough with the delivery of our new build programme and other housing improvement activities.
- 2.3 The programme builds on a number of successes already achieved in this area and is aligned to wider Barking and Dagenham innovations in areas such as prevention and early intervention and the use of data and insight to guide decisions.
- 2.4 The programme is organised into the following workstreams:

### **Workstream 1: Demand modelling**

- Deliver robust demand modelling that can be reviewed and revisited regularly as the population and or policy changes to ensure it is kept up-to-date and responsive.

### **Workstream 2: Process and operational improvements**

- Create new processes and enhance existing process around allocation, placements, lettings and move-on planning.

### **Workstream 3: Ratification and monitoring of housing pathways**

- Joint agreement of the overall process and user journey – connecting demand, process, policy and supply

### **Workstream 4: Policy**

- Ensure the needs and aspirations of vulnerable residents are captured in relevant policy and strategy frameworks, with policies clearly articulating how the available supply is apportioned to ensure that we are using our available resources in the best possible way.

### **Workstream 5: Supply**

- Deliver new housing supply as part of the Council's new build programme to meet the needs of vulnerable residents

- 2.5 While there are specific vulnerable cohorts which have been identified as a priority within the programme, the programme will be dynamic and run on the premise that it support work on accommodation solutions for a broad cohort of vulnerable individuals based on insight and evidence from Care and Support and Community Solutions. As such, it will include, but will not be limited to:

- Care leavers
- Older people
- Mental Health
- Disability

- Domestic violence
- Substance misuse
- Homeless 16/17 year olds.

### **3. Housing for Vulnerable People commitments**

3.1 As part of the housing for vulnerable people programme, the following set of commitments have been developed for endorsement by Cabinet:

- We will ensure the Barking Riverside development leaves no one behind: to date, we have secured an extra care scheme for older residents of 60 units, 35 units for vulnerable adults with learning disabilities and a further 35 for young people leaving care within general needs schemes.
- We are the corporate parents of our children leaving care – and our new build programme will provide stable accommodation that supports their social and mental wellbeing, including shared accommodation and one bedroom flats integrated into the existing community.
- Older people in our borough should live independently wherever possible in a setting that supports this. We will initiate a comprehensive review of our provision for sheltered housing and extra care and bring forward a plan of investment, improvements and new provision to best meet the needs of individuals and our future older population.
- Every new build development will consider the needs of vulnerable people. We will build specialist accommodation – purpose-built properties for people with physical disabilities, severe and enduring mental health needs, older people and care leavers. These properties will be future proofed – with the capacity for adaptations and care technology.
- All accommodation for vulnerable people must consider how they are connected to their wider communities, including avoiding social isolation, having access to shops, green spaces, transport, healthcare, community facilities and a social life. All vulnerable people should be able to be part of a thriving community.
- Vulnerability exists outside of statutory social care responsibilities as well. Inclusive Growth means everyone, and we will assess and deliver according to the housing need of groups beyond Care Act eligibility such as victims of domestic abuse, those with substance misuse issues and those with no recourse to public funds.
- When allocating housing we will work in a relational way with vulnerable residents to understand their wider circumstances and ensure that housing can best support their needs and their wellbeing and provide choice and control – not just allocating the first available accommodation.

## 4. Options Appraisal

- 4.1 The only other option would be to not adopt these commitments, but this was discounted as Cabinet-level endorsement demonstrates the importance of this issue.

## 5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the following in preparing this report and commitments:

- Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care Integration
- Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing
- Corporate Strategy Group
- People & Resilience Management Group

## 6. Financial Implications

Implications completed by Katherine Heffernan, Group Manager – Service Finance

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report at this state. However, it is important to recognise that the commitments must be delivered in ways that are financially sustainable and this could be a limiting factor to the scale and method of delivery. There are several potential funding streams for new housing including capital receipts (including Right to Buy receipts,) GLA and Central Government grant funding, borrowing secured against and repaid from future rent income and investment by developers as part of the planning requirements. All proposed schemes and developments will require a full financial appraisal of their viability and the options for funding.

## 7. Legal Implications

Implications completed by Dr Paul Field, Senior Governance Lawyer

- 7.1 This report sets out policy considerations to be considered when determining the housing dimension component of the Housing for Vulnerable People Programme and will inform the developing Inclusive Growth and Prevention, Independence & Resilience strategies. Setting policy consideration accords with the performance regime established by the Local Government Act 1999 as amended by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 together with supporting legislation, requires the Council to work to achieve continuous improvement and best value as it provides a tool to assess whether plans and actions will secure the objectives agreed by the Cabinet to be housing for vulnerable people commitments.

## 8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Risk Management** – The following risks are associated with the commitments

Risk	Mitigation
The commitments are not delivered on, causing reputational damage to the Council.	Successfully deliver the Housing for Vulnerable People programme.

The housing for vulnerable people programme does not operate according to these commitments.	Ensure these commitments and this report is held as part of the project documentation and referred to when different project elements, such as new build plans, come forward.
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8.2 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** – This report is a set of Cabinet commitments and therefore does not directly impact residents.

This report does indirectly have a positive impact on certain protected characteristics given the intentions of the Housing for Vulnerable People Programme. This is because the commitments support the Housing for Vulnerable People programme which seeks to ensure that no one is left behind as Barking and Dagenham’s accommodation supply increases: providing vulnerable residents with suitable accommodation which is inclusive of complex and changing needs and provides a platform to improve their prosperity and well-being.

The vulnerable groups to be supported as part of this programme include care leavers, people with disabilities, older people, and people with severe and enduring mental health needs.

An equalities screening tool has been completed and included as an appendix.

8.3 **Safeguarding Adults and Children** - These commitments support the Housing for Vulnerable people programme and will guide its delivery. This programme seeks to improve the housing offer for vulnerable groups including care leavers and looked after children, older people, people with disabilities and people with severe and enduring mental health issues. In improving the housing offer for these groups it seeks to improve well-being and reduce inequalities, delivering on the Council’s statutory responsibilities under the Children Act 2006 and the Care Act 2014.

8.4 **Health Issues** - These commitments support the Housing for Vulnerable people programme and will guide its delivery. In seeking to provide housing for vulnerable groups, this programme will improve health and well-being outcomes.

8.5 **Property / Asset Issues** - These commitments support the Housing for Vulnerable people programme and will guide its delivery. This programme will seek to align the needs of vulnerable groups with the new build programme.

**Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:** None

**List of appendices:**

- **Appendix 1:** Equalities Impact Assessment Screening tool.