

ADOPTION OF POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

Reporting Officer: Head of Democratic Services

Copies of the Housing Strategy, Accessible Hillingdon Supplementary Planning Document and Interim Planning Policy on Houses in Multiple Occupation are available for reference in Group Offices or online at www.hillingdon.gov.uk

SUMMARY

Following Cabinet endorsement and referral of the Borough's new Housing Strategy, Accessible Hillingdon Supplementary Planning Document and Interim Planning Policy on Houses in Multiple Occupation at its meeting on 25 April, Council is requested to formally agree their adoption as a policy framework documents.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Borough's Housing Strategy 2012/15, Accessible Hillingdon Supplementary Planning Document and Interim Planning Policy on Houses in Multiple Occupation be adopted as part of the Council's policy framework.

INFORMATION

Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy sets out how the Council will enable residents to live in homes of all tenures which are in good condition, energy efficient and well managed. It also describes services and specialist housing for vulnerable people who require assistance to live independently in the community. The strategy takes account of the flexibilities offered by the Government's localism agenda and implications of welfare reform including the opportunity to offer flexible (renewable, fixed term) tenancies for new social housing tenants rather than the tenancies that are currently offered.

Cabinet considered the Strategy alongside the Tenancy Strategy, Tenancy Policy and Housing Allocations Policy, providing a comprehensive, consistent and integrated approach to housing policy, housing demand and supply and housing management.

Accessible Hillingdon

Adoption of the Revised Accessible Hillingdon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will ensure the Council can deliver a clear message on the standards expected in terms of inclusive design. Specifically, the revised document specifies in fine detail accessible housing standards, how the standards should be integrated into the design, and at what stage in the development process they should be demonstrated. The SPD will increase the scope to secure Brown Badge parking provision within development proposals.

The adoption of the SPD will enhance the weight that can be attached to it as a material consideration when deciding planning applications.

Interim Policy on Houses in Multiple Occupation

Following concerns expressed by local residents relating to the continued loss of family housing in the area surrounding Brunel University, the Council agreed to the declaration of an Article 4 Direction for Uxbridge South & Brunel wards, removing permitted development rights for the conversion of individual houses to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). A subsequent

statutory 12-month notice period commenced on 24 March 2012 prior to the Direction coming into effect from 24 March 2013.

In order to have an effective means of considering future HMO applications it will be necessary for the Council to have a policy in place to determine new planning applications received now that the Article 4 Direction is in force.

Consultation carried out

Comprehensive and lengthy consultation with residents and relevant stakeholders has taken place on all documents as set out in the related Cabinet reports considered on 25 April 2013.

Financial implications

Approval of the Housing Strategy itself will not give rise to any immediate financial implications, though such programmes, once planned and implemented, will require resource allocation. This will be achieved via the Council-wide MTF process.

Any associated costs of the Accessible Hillingdon SPD can be accommodated within the existing Residents Services revenue budget for 2013/14.

The net cost to the Council of this a revised Interim Policy on Houses in Multiple Occupation is relatively minor and will be managed within existing revenue budgets.

Legal Implications

Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 requires the Council to periodically review the provision of housing accommodation in the Borough. The Housing Strategy outlines how the Council will discharge its duties to secure accommodation within the Borough.

The Accessible Hillingdon SPD has been produced fully in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (the 2012 Regulations).

The draft Interim Planning Policy Document will assist decision makers in determining planning applications where a change of use of a single family dwelling to a HMO is proposed. The currently adopted policy (the 2004 SPG) is out of date and that a more robust and up to date policy needs to be put in place before the Article 4 direction takes effect.

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Cabinet reports 25 April 2013 relating to the three policy framework documents.