

Leicester
City Council

All Wards

CABINET

30th July 2001

THE "HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME STRATEGY 2001-06"

Report from the Director of Housing

1. Purpose of report

To approve the Council's "Housing Investment Programme Strategy 2001-06" (HIP Strategy).

2. Summary

The HIP Strategy sets out the Council's [policies and priorities over the next five years for council housing, affordable housing provided by Housing associations, private landlords and owner-occupiers. It sets out the resources required to deliver this strategy and acts as a bid for government support.

The Strategy has been through a series of consultations within the Council and with partners. A copy of the HIP document has been placed in the Members area for reference.

3. Recommendations

Members are recommended to

(a) approve the HIP Strategy;

(b) endorse the process to complete the HIP Strategy, and to support the six principle 'themes' that have been used to shape the overview of strategy for future housing services in the city area.

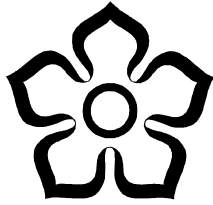
4. Financial & legal implications

The direct financial implications arising from this report will be the level of central government finances the HIP strategy is able to secure for the local authority and other providers of housing services across the city area.

5. Report author

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Report

- 1.1 This report provides detail of the HIP Strategy 2001-2006 that is currently being finalised. It is required to be in the hands of the DTLR at GO-EM by Monday 30th July 2001.
- 1.2 The Local Authority is the statutory 'housing strategy body' with an obligation to prepare a comprehensive strategy for the overall development of housing services in the city area, across all tenures. The Housing Investment Programme (HIP) Strategy sets the context for this overall strategy and is intended to be the key strategy for all housing providers in the local authority area.
- 1.3 The key Government Guidelines for this year's HIP Strategy have significantly revised the format for what the Strategy is required to do. In particular government policy is to promote a clear separation for how the overall 'strategic' position is developed distinct from any remaining 'landlord responsibilities' of the local authority. The 'HIP Strategy' will focus upon the wider 'strategic' position of promoting housing services to meet housing needs in general over the next five-year period. The production of a formal "Housing Revenue Account Business Plan" will be a new requirement on the local authority to plan for how any of its own core finance and 'landlord' services – housing management, maintenance, rent collection, etc. – will provide ways and means to meet this local need.
- 1.4 The formation of this revised HIP Strategy has taken the approach to separate key concerns and objectives for housing services into six main 'themes' that relate to current activity, in order to consider how their agreed priorities can fit with and link into wider strategies and policies. These six themes have then been used as the basis for the planning and consideration for how options for action(s) and resources could be secured to address each theme, and how they can be combined within an holistic pattern of city-based services.

The rationale for separating the stated priorities for future housing provision into the six main themes is as follow.

1.4.1 'LCC Core Roles'

Leicester City Council has at least two distinct roles in the realm of city-based housing services. It is the 'strategic authority', charged with preparing key housing strategies such as this current HIP Strategy, and it is a significant 'landlord' in its own right, having nearly 26,000 properties within the social housing sector, with all the attendant housing management and maintenance responsibilities.

This theme will consider how LCC can carry out those 'strategic' responsibilities and how this could be strengthened through the liaison it has with other strategic partners. It will also consider on how policy imperatives for its separate landlord responsibilities will demand other developments for securing overall improvements or change to its stock condition and management.

1.4.2 'Addressing Homelessness'

This theme will be focused upon 'homelessness' in its widest sense, and not solely what the local authority currently is legal obliged to provide. It will consider how assessment, advice and support services might benefit those experiencing, recovering from and/or at risk of homelessness, and how an understanding of demand noted on the Housing Register can focus upon imbalances between supply and demand.

1.4.3 'Sustaining Urban Renewal'

This theme is centrally focused upon improving all aspects of the condition of stock in the private sector. This will include renovation and renewal grants, environment improvements, home improvement and maintenance support services, and personalised improvements via Disabled Facilities Grants.

1.4.4 'Supported Housing Initiatives'

This theme will address all kinds of housing and support-related needs of specific groups or households. It will have a key regard for the development of the local 'Supporting People' programme, although it will also consider any current concerns about discrepancies between demand for existing services and their present supply.

1.4.5 'Promoting Affordable Housing'

This theme will focus upon requirements for the development and delivery of all kinds of 'affordable housing' across the city area. It will clearly include concerns for the future use of the ADP programme, in particular for rental properties, however it will also note priorities for the supply of a range of housing tenures and a range of property sizes.

1.4.6 'Community Development'

This theme will consider the development of various community partnership initiatives, involving tenants and residents from all housing tenures in local neighbourhood initiatives and in the management of stock. It will also include consideration of priorities identified to address 'crime & disorder' and 'anti-social behaviour' issues.

- 1.5 In previous years it has been the HIP Strategy document that has been the basis of what resources central government has made available to the authority for its housing services. This year, the different changes to how housing provision is being funded, has seen the introduction of the Major Repairs Allowance as a new means of providing funds for stock improvement and renovation that previously would have been sought through the shape of the HIP Strategy. The introduction of the new "Single Capital Pot" financial mechanism process will be further innovation for how the authority decides what other resources will be directed towards fulfilling the housing purposes set out in the new HRA Business Plan. Together the level of these resources will determine the extent to which the Council is able to meet Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets for the degree of substantial improvements required to social housing properties within the PSA's 10-year deadline.

The main way in which finances for housing services are likely to be secured from the HIP Strategy will therefore be:

- (a) through the overall strategic context and support it provides to the City Council's new "Housing Revenue Account Business Plan"; and
- (b) through its usefulness as a summation of city-wide needs that can influence the award of resources from complementary programmes, such as Housing Corporation funds for housing association development under the Approved Development Programme.

- 1.6 The final copy of the HIP Strategy is available from the Members area in B Block from the 30th July. A draft copy of the Strategy can be obtained from the author prior to that date (ext. 8713).

2. Consultations

Versions of the Strategy's text have been circulated to the following contacts for comment and consultation to:

- (a) All LCC Departments
- (b) Registered Social Landlords operational in the city area.
- (c) Other local housing service agencies and providers
- (d) Other relevant community-based bodies

Presentations on this year's HIP Strategy have been made to meetings of the Leicester Housing Forum, the LA/Housing Association Liaison Group and to Tier I. A further public consultation meeting held on 5th July provided other useful suggestions for points to add to or amend in the text.

3. Aims and Objectives of the Housing Department

The overall background context for the HIP Strategy is the aims adopted by the City Council and the Housing Department for the provision of local services:

- * 'to promote the integrity and sustainability of Leicester for its people in the interests of their past, their present and their future'.
- * 'to provide a decent home within the reach of every citizen'.

4. Background Papers : Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

2001 HIP Guidance (DTLR papers, May-July 2001)
 Draft versions of HIP Strategy, 2001-06 (LCC, June-July 2001)
 "HIP Strategy", placed in the Members area in B Block.
 "HRA Business Plan", placed in the Members area in B Block.

5. Financial, Legal and other Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. [*See point 1.5 above.*]
- 5.2 Other implications for 'equal opportunities' are as follows:

Other Implications	Yes / No	Paragraph reference within supporting papers
Equal Opportunities	Yes	
Policy	Yes	
Sustainable & Environmental	No	
Crime & Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	

6. Author of this Report

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