

COPELAND HOUSING STRATEGY YEAR 4 DELIVERY PLAN

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor George Clements
LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Regeneration and Community
REPORT AUTHOR: Debbie Cochrane, Housing Services Manager

WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS?

The Council is receiving increasing demand for strategic housing support and services from residents and landlords. Our commitment to effective housing options support, homelessness prevention, enabling best use of local housing supply and assisting residents to stay in their own homes or find appropriate housing is best delivered through effective partnership working and using resources on our priority services. The Annual Action Plan sets out the priorities for services and partnership activity in the next year.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?

(eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council, etc.)

The Annual Delivery Plan outlines the partnership and Council actions required to deliver the overarching strategic objective 'to ensure the housing available in the Borough support the health, safety, welfare, sustainability and distinct economic and social ambitions of our communities'.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Executive is requested to

- a) endorse the Year 4 Strategic Housing Delivery Plan, 2014/15, attached as Appendix A.
- b) agree to the release of £10,000 from the strategic housing ear marked reserve set aside to resource evidence gathering in support of our statutory duties to the strategic housing cost code to fund the refresh of the 2010 Copeland Housing Survey in 2014/15 financial year.
- c) agree to the release of £10,000 from the strategic planning ear marked reserve set aside to resource evidence gathering in support of our planning policy statutory duties to the strategic housing cost code to fund the additional business and temporary accommodation needs research to inform our revised Strategic Housing Market Assessment in 2014/15 financial year.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Full Council adopted the Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 – 2015 in June 2011. Annual Delivery Plans have been developed by the Copeland Housing Partnership to deliver against priorities each year.
- 1.2 The Year 4 (2014/15) Delivery Plan consolidates progress made in years one, two and three and develops actions from those years into the present. Priorities of the Housing Strategy delivery are reviewed annually and new priorities and tasks are included by all delivery partners particularly the Council.
- 1.3 The year 3 plan progressed on all the actions with only two subject to delays in completion due to capacity. Key achievement areas include:
 - Continued to facilitate the delivery of energy efficiency installations in private sector housing
 - Maintained an average 8 weeks waiting time from to approval of Disabled Facilities Grants despite an increase in referrals – 1 week below our target of 9 weeks
 - Provided funding and support to residents with disabilities to adapt 113 properties
 - Undertook our statutory homeless review with full consultation with stakeholders and produced a new five year Homelessness Strategy and action plan approved by Full Council
 - Prevented homelessness by providing financial assistance to tenants with small amounts of rent arrears threatened with eviction
 - A reduction in homelessness applications by over 60% due to the active prevention work being provided by the council team and partners
 - Held open days for tenants of social housing in partnership with other agencies to provide advice and support on under occupation
 - Reduced the time spent in bed and breakfast by residents who may be homeless
 - Completed a count of rough sleepers – no rough sleepers recorded
 - Implemented no second night out to ensure when rough sleepers are identified they do not spend a second night out and continued to work with partners, specifically 'Streetlink' to support rough sleepers
 - Copeland is one of the first Cumbrian districts to implement the 16/17 year old young persons' protocol, developed with partners during 2013/14
 - Inspected 40 properties in the private rented sector prior to funding rent deposits for residents who were homeless or at risk of homelessness
 - Re-instigated the County Homelessness Forum

- Continued the Landlords Forum, meeting twice during the year
- Worked with private landlords to bring 38 unfit properties back to a decent standard
- Brought six empty properties back into use using external 'cluster funding'
- Joint working through the Copeland Housing Partnership on welfare reform, particularly ensuring shared activity around the impact on local residents of the implementation of the 'bedroom tax'
- Using the Copeland Housing Partnership to discuss development sites and opportunities with particular focus on extra care and affordable housing
- Work with Age UK to encourage them to take the leadership role of a Copeland Housing Improvement Agency which has now been registered
- Continued partnership support for the Whitehaven Foyer.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The delivery plan has been designed to build on the momentum of the previous three annual action plans. The Plan is divided into actions under the four Strategic Objectives; 1) Facilitate the right housing offer to support economic growth and community sustainability, 2) Make the best use of existing stock, 3) Enable people to access the housing and support they need, when they need it and 4) An integrated delivery approach.
- 2.2 Actions are included that can only be delivered through partnership working and the Copeland Housing Partnership have been actively involved in reviewing priorities, developing the plan and the consultation process. A particular example is the strong partnership working on issues relating to welfare reform and housing which was a priority in the Year 3 Action Plan and continues as a priority in year 4.
- 2.3 During year 4, the Council are commissioning a light review of the Copeland housing survey undertaken in 2010. The updated information will then be used to refresh the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Copeland and in turn assist with a further four year Copeland Housing Strategy by the end of March, 2015. In addition we will be commissioning a focused business survey to gather validated evidence on the temporary and additional accommodation needs from the nuclear sector and supply chain and other key sectors to inform our update Strategic Housing Market Assessment, planned for 2014/15.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 No alternatives to an annual plan were considered but alternative options of achieving results are looked at annually.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The delivery plan addresses the partnership priorities and housing issues identified in the Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015. It places actions on partners including this Council to deliver aspects of the plan. The Council elements are detailed and resourced through the Strategic Housing Service Plan for 2014/15.
- 4.2 The Council has a statutory duty to produce and keep updated a Copeland Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This document relies on maintaining an up to date housing survey which provides the evidence base for the affordable housing requirements amongst other items covered by the SHMA. The Council has set up an earmarked reserve to draw on for producing and updating statutory housing documents. The Executive is requested to release £10,000 from this specific reserve to resource the housing survey refresh in 2014/15 and £10,000 from the strategic planning reserve to resource the focused business survey on temporary and employment related accommodation needs.

5. STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer's comments are: This report requires Executive approval following consideration by Strategic Housing Panel.
- 5.2 The Section 151 Officer's comments are: The Council recognises the importance of establishing, maintaining and building on partnership working. Whilst the current report and plan do not state any financial implications over and above the refresh of the 2010 Copeland Housing Survey (recommendation b)) and the additional business and temporary accommodation needs research (recommendation c)) the works would need to be managed within the existing resources available and balanced with existing commitments. Any resources in addition to those specifically requested in recommendations b) and c) of this report would need to be subject to future approval.. The EMR is at a sufficient level to release 2 x £10,000 to fund the works detailed in recommendation b) and c).
- 5.3 EIA Comments: The annual action plan picks up our and partners activities to enable appropriate housing options and support to all Copeland residents and deliver against our Strategic Housing Market requirements for affordable housing and an appropriate mix of all housing types and tenures.

5.4 Policy Framework: Partnership working is increasingly important to delivering our Corporate Plan where the annual implementation of the Copeland Housing Strategy is a core deliverable in priority 1 and 2.

5.5 Other Consultee Comments, if any: Agencies, landlords and partners have discussed and contributed to the Year 4 Action Plan.

6. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

6.1 The Housing Strategy Year 4 Delivery Plan will be project managed by the Housing Services Manager with support from the Head of Regeneration and Communities. Reports will be made quarterly to the Strategic Housing Panel and the Strategic Housing Partnership.

6.2 The annual Housing Strategy Delivery Plan forms the core element of the Council's Housing Service Plan 2014/15 and is subject to the risk assessment and management outlined in that plan.

7. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

7.1 The Annual Action Plan sets out the Council's delivery against its statutory housing duties and how it will work in partnership during the year to deliver against our Housing Strategy priorities. Every action within the plan has a 'due date', 'milestones' and 'how measured' section as can be seen in Appendix A.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Copeland Housing Strategy Year 4 Delivery Plan.

List of Background Documents:

Copeland Housing Strategy, 2011 – 2015. Previous annual action plans.

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Delivery Plan Year 4: 2014 – 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
Strategic Objective One: Facilitation the right housing offer to support economic growth and community sustainability				
Objective 1.1: Facilitating the right supply of new homes				
1.1.1 Annual review of New Homes Bonus, performance and opportunity to inform New Homes Bonus Strategy for 2014/15 which may include request for an element of New Homes Bonus to underpin additional new homes	New Homes Bonus Annual summary paper, performance and delivery against NHB framework principles using other resources NHB Strategy 2014/15	To CLT, Copeland Strategic Housing Panel December 2014	Annual review paperwork discussed NHB Strategy 2014/15	Copeland Borough Council
1.1.2 Working in partnership to identify and inform strategy and lead partners to deliver against the SHMA requirements including identifying potential sites in the SHLAA for specific housing needs such as gypsy and traveller site locations, extra care provision and affordable housing	SHLAA consultation Using the Partnership meetings to develop priority sites and discussions	Special meeting Q1 and October 2013 housing partnership meeting	Priority investment sites to feed into LEP and HCA New Developments seeking planning applications Enable housing element through input into the SHLAA and working within relevant development briefs and Supplementary Planning Documents	Copeland Borough Council / Copeland Housing Partnership
1.1.3 Co-ordinated approach to discussing developments to maximise partnership and development opportunities.	Housing Development discussions at Housing Partnership meetings	Quarterly	Housing impact on developments	Copeland Housing Partnership

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
Objective 1.2: Improving the quality of our places				
1.2.1 Continue to work with locality projects to identify common ground between community, parish and locality plans and the overarching housing strategy in rural areas, including investigating local lettings policy in rural areas	Locality Plans cross referenced with the Copeland Housing Strategy Deliver Millom Empty Homes Project	Refreshed Locality housing related elements of Plans in 2014/15 March 2015	Update issues and any housing project in each locality plan monitored by locality	Locality partnerships, Copeland Borough Council via SLA with Cumbria Rural Housing Trust
Objective 1.3 Ensuring sufficient affordable housing				
1.3.1 Lever Homes and Communities Agency and Partners capital investment in Copeland, including through the Affordable Housing Programme (AHP)	Annual review of priorities in Q4 LEP Cumbria Infrastructure Fund new round for applications	New 4 year HCA programme In 2014/15	38 additional new units of affordable housing delivered by April 2015 with 78 planned and resourced for future years. Link to LEP Cumbria Infrastructure Fund	Copeland Borough Council, Registered Providers and developers, LEP
1.3.2 Continue six-monthly monitoring of the housing market and access to housing	Half year economic assessment report as part of the performance management framework	October 2014 April 2015	Impact Reported to Executive Report shared with partners	Copeland Borough Council
Objective 1.4 Developing the role of the private rented sector				
1.4.1 Continue to work with landlords, using the Landlord Forum, on relevant issues to Copeland residents and the private rented market and to provide information	Information and training delivered through regular six-monthly Landlord Forum with annual programme of topics incl welfare reform	April 2014 November 2014	Landlord Forum topics, decisions log and action plan	Copeland Borough Council and private landlords Copeland Borough Council

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
and training on issues including welfare reforms, the Green Deal, stock condition and others as required	Annual Landlord survey	March 2014	Survey results reported Training delivered	
1.4.2 Maintain, co-ordinate and raise awareness of support to new tenants including the Copeland Rent Deposit scheme	Website maintained Information updated and distributed	Monthly management reports Quarterly Performance Reports to SHP	Quarterly assessment on use and applications to Strategic Housing Panel and shared with partners	Copeland Borough Council
Strategic Objective Two: Making the best use of existing stock				
Objective 2.1: Focus attention on the energy efficiency of existing stock				
2.1.1 Continue to support the delivery of affordable warmth schemes in and across Copeland to enable access by targeted residents	Energy Company Obligation scheme in Copeland	ECO scheme milestones at Cumbria level	Monitor the take up of the schemes in Copeland	Cumbria Affordable warmth co-ordinator Procured providers Registered Providers
Objective 2.2: Enable improvements in private sector stock condition				
2.2.1 Copeland Housing Partnership to Maintain an overview of unfit and dilapidated residential properties and co-ordinate priority list for enforcement interventions and impact across the borough's housing stock.	Quarterly data and overview as part of housing partnership and reported to Strategic Housing Partnership	Quarterly	Number of dilapidated residential buildings reported Enforcement activity taken Enforcement outcomes	Copeland Borough Council

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
Objective 2.3: Reduce the number of empty homes in the borough				
2.3.1 Using the learning from Year 3 actions to develop and deliver actions and projects to return empty homes into use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress one or two empty home projects with partners; • Support local housing providers and landlords schemes; • Maintain and update register of empty residential homes; • Reduce and monitor void levels, turnaround times and other issues with social landlords. 	Quarterly reporting against actions and projects to SHP	6 monthly performance report - July 2014 January 2015	Monitor council tax changes through transfer of empty to occupied; Number of empty homes; Number of empty homes bought back into use; Social housing void levels; Social housing turnaround levels	Revs and Bens Shared Service Copeland Borough Council Copeland Housing Partnership Local housing providers Private landlords
Strategic Objective Three: Enabling people to access the housing and support that they need, when they need it				
Objective 3.1: Ensure the right housing provision for older people				
3.1.1 To deliver a strategic approach to Older People's housing options and issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting an Extra care scheme in Whitehaven • Maintain overview of potential and identified housing options for older 	Copeland Housing Partnership regular agenda item Extra care scheme developed Priority project plans and reports against SHMA and Housing Strategy To identify priorities and links	March 2015 Quarterly	Extra Care Scheme resourced Improved joint working in support of older people's housing options and	Copeland Housing Partnership Impact Housing Age Uk / Copeland Borough Council Project Leads identified

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping an overview of issues and actions needed 	to Health and wellbeing priorities and ageing well agenda		support	
Objective 3.2: Continue to prevent and deal effectively with homelessness				
3.2.1 Review the impact and use of the revised discretionary housing payment with the revisions made to the Copeland scheme in line with welfare reform	Monthly DHP officer panel Partnership delivery in support of hardship	May 2014	Detailed monitoring against target beneficiaries of discretionary housing payments being made to those in greatest need and to prevent homelessness	Copeland Borough Council
3.2.2 Deliver against homelessness strategy action plan	Homeless strategy milestones – review quarterly	Quarterly SHP and Housing Partnership	Homeless Action Plan agreed as part of Copeland Housing Strategy Delivery Plan	Copeland Borough Council
3.2.4 Establish and delivery against framework for the use of the repossession funding in preventing homelessness	Framework established Quarterly delivery monitoring	Monthly Panel Quarterly performance reports	Detailed monitoring of repossession funding provided - Number / type of evictions prevented	Copeland Borough Council
3.2.4 Continue to use Homelessness Prevention Fund to provide financial support to tenants with small amounts of rent arrears if they are being threatened with eviction	Quarterly delivery monitoring	Ongoing activity, monitored Quarterly	Targeted prevention activity agreed by partners Monitoring of targeted joint activity	Copeland Borough Council
3.2.5 Pro-active partnership approach to deliver and raising awareness of	Linked to service and partner operational plans	Quarterly performance	Homeless prevention data shared and monitored	Strategic Housing Partnership

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
Homelessness Prevention routes available	Identify specific target audiences through the housing partnership	reports	quarterly by members and the housing partnership	
3.2.6 Joint and co-ordinated approach to residents impacted on by welfare reform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring bedroom tax impacts in second year; • Cumbrian roll out of Universal credit during 2014/15 to new claimants 	Joint project plans County Policy Group meets Monthly liaison between key partners on issues Quarterly discussion at Housing Partnership Link to Skills and Work Partnership co-ordination activity	Quarterly performance reports to Strategic Housing Panel and the Copeland Housing Partnership	Collate available stats on impact and outcomes from revs and bens and agencies Targeted joint activity monitored Case assistance by partners	Range lead partners depending on activity Copeland Housing Partnership to maintain housing element overview
Objective 3.3: Respond appropriately to the opportunity of more flexible affordable homes, tenancies and allocations				
3.3.1 Use the Strategic Housing Partnership to discuss and identify work in response to developments in tenure and social housing reforms	Policy Discussion against timetable	Regularly refreshed forward plan Discussion of responses to be included under all Partnership agendas	Extent to which developments promote sustainable communities in social housing	Copeland Housing Partnership
Objective 3.4: Ensure that the housing needs of vulnerable and socially excluded people are met				
3.4.1 Continue the focus on younger people's housing issues to facilitate joint working and shared strategy approaches in support of young residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor local joint working 	Quarterly reporting to Housing Partnership	Quarterly performance reports 6 monthly – July	Protocol in use by all partners Project targets	Copeland Housing Partnership

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
<p>on protocol for 16/17 year old housing support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint projects identified against issues 		2014 and January 2015		Project lead
3.4.2 Progress the Whitehaven Foyer project to completion	Project Plan delivered Start on site in Q1 2014/15 Completion 15/16	Sept 2015 June 2014	Project Build complete Partnership work in readiness for opening	Whitehaven Foyer Company
3.4.3 Copeland sites identified to meet the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller Community in line with research undertaken in year 3.	Needs assessment revised Longlist of sites Shortlist of sites to consult on	June 2014 September 2014 March 2015	Suitability of sites to needs assessment	Copeland Borough Council with county partnership
3.4.4 Maintain time taken to approve Disabled Facilities Grants within the anticipated increase in demand	Quarterly monitoring of applications, grants and turnaround times Evidence produced to obtain additional resources to meet demand as required	October 2014 March 2015	90% target of average of 9 weeks beginning from date of referral from Occupational Therapist	Copeland Borough Council
3.4.5 To support the delivery of the Copeland Home Improvement Agency led by Age UK	Partnership delivery plan to enable increased partnership working to underpin the HIA	July 2014	Signed Partnership Agreement HIA Delivery Plan agreed	Age UK
3.4.6 Increase effective referral to floating support throughout Copeland	Annual review of referral mechanisms Communications plan to improve referrals	September 2014	Referral data Floating support take up stats	Housing Partnership Floating support providers

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
Strategic Objective Four: An integrated delivery approach				
Objective 4.1: Working with partners				
4.1.1 Copeland Housing Partnership Delivery and influence maintained	Quarterly meetings of the partnership	April, July, October, January	Deliver against decisions and agreed actions	Copeland Borough Council
4.1.2 Continue partnership working within and across Cumbria	Delivery Cumbria Housing Strategy Priorities in Copeland Investment	Quarterly meetings and updates	Delivery Plan targets and outcomes monitored	CHEG/LEP (Copeland Borough Council – Chair) Registered Providers
4.1.3 Refresh of the Copeland Housing Survey 2010	Survey refresh start Survey completed SHMA updated New Copeland Housing Strategy 2015-19 draft Consultation Final strategy agreed	June 2014 October 2014 November 2014 December 2014 Jan – Feb 2015 March 2015	Survey results and analysis Impact on existing SHMA New strategy consulted on and agreed	Copeland Borough Council
4.1.4 Copeland Housing Strategy Delivery Plan delivered, reviewed and revised annually	Annual review of Housing Strategy Delivery Plan 2014/15	November 2014 start January 2015 end	Outcome report Year 4	Copeland Housing Partnership
4.1.5 Choice based lettings Board review	Local analysis for Copeland applicants and outcomes from the scheme	October 2014	Review outcome paper	Cumbria Choice Board

Copeland Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015

Tasks	Milestones	Due dates	How measured	Lead partner
4.1.6 Increase active links with Copeland Health and Wellbeing Forum agenda and public health delivery	Identify issues and actions for joint action by partners	Throughout the year	Action Plan targets	Housing Partnership and Individual partners
4.1.7 Actively link with Community Safety Action Plan	Highlight any key issues arising from Action Plan monitoring by West Cumbria CSP.	Monthly operationally Quarterly strategically	MARAC, LMAPs and CSP reporting	Partners
Objective 4.2: Monitoring and Reporting				
4.2.1 Continue to report quarterly on the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan to the Copeland Borough Council Strategic Housing Panel and Copeland Housing Partnership	Quarterly Reports Annual Summary to Executive and Full Council	Quarterly Meetings, April, July, October in 2014, January 2015	Quarterly performance Reports against targets and activities planned	Copeland Borough Council
4.2.2 To revise and monitor registered providers performance reporting framework	Revised framework agreed Quarterly monitoring and liaison	Sept 2014 Quarterly performance reports	Range of PIs to monitor delivery of social housing	Copeland Borough Council + Registered Providers
Objective 4.3: Localities and Copeland Partnership				
4.3.1 Continue to report to Copeland Partnership and localities at least once a year on the progress of the Strategy and Delivery Plans and discuss and gather feedback on future priorities	Targets within Copeland Partnership Plan monitoring Annual Summary shared with Copeland partnership.	March 2015	Against Copeland Plan priorities Number localities worked with	Copeland Borough Council / Cumbria Rural Housing Trust