

Item 6

KEY DECISION

REPORT TO CABINET

14th February 2008

Report of Deputy Chief Executive

Housing & Community Health Portfolios.

OLDER PERSONS ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **SUMMARY**

1.1 In May, 2006 the Council commissioned Peter Fletcher Associates to assist in the development of an Accommodation and Support Strategy for Older People with a view to informing the development of the strategy by:-

- Taking account of relevant housing, social care and health systems in the Borough – providing the strategic context.
- Examining the types of housing care and support services available to older people in the Borough – providing a situational analysis.
- Examining how existing buildings and services work to support older people to remain living in the community – undertaking a ‘Fit for Purpose’ Assessment
- Drawing on each of the above to inform the strategy and make recommendations about future services commissioned by the Borough Council and its partners in housing, social care and health.

1.2 Integral to development of the strategy was a second piece of work undertaken by the consultants which comprised an appraisal of options in relation to the Borough Councils 13 principle sheltered housing schemes.

1.3 This report summarises the key elements of the Older Persons Accommodation and Support Strategy and includes recommendations which give strategic direction and informs future service delivery options.

2. **RECOMMENDED**

2.1 That the Older Persons Accommodation and Support Strategy and the Recommendations set out in Section 4 of the report be approved.

3. **DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY**

3.1 **Policy Context**

- 3.2 It is well established that government policy requires local authorities and their partners to plan for an ageing population, to promote the well-being of older people and to work with older people to inform planning and delivery of local services. This policy approach is reflected within the County Durham Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011 (a sub regional Housing Strategy developed for County Durham and its constituent authorities) and is consistent with Sedgefield Borough Corporate Ambitions and Sedgefield Borough Housing Strategy 2006/7 – 2008/9.
- 3.3 Policy across government led by the Department of Health and Communities and Local Government in relation to services for older people is focussed on personalisation of public services to give individuals independence, choice and control. Additionally, there is a policy shift towards prevention and making the best use of all local community services to support all older people, not just those in need of care.
- 3.4 With regard to national policy on accommodation for older people in terms of the ‘bricks and mortar’ solutions, we see a consistency in moving away from institutional care towards community based independent living with support. The traditional focus of a housing strategy for an ageing society taking account of housing markets, home ownership and equity release as well as specialist forms of housing should now be enhanced by Social Care commissioners and strategic housing authorities facilitating an expanded role for the private and voluntary sector working with them to develop new and innovative accommodation and support solutions.
- 3.5 **Baseline Data Analysis – Need, Supply and Demand**
- 3.6 Nationally the older population is growing and will continue to do so until 2021. In Sedgefield the percentage of people aged over 60 in 2006 was estimated at 22% which is 1% above the 2006 national average. By 2026 people aged 45 – 64 will form around 27% of the Borough Council’s population. We also know that in Sedgefield Borough up to 2021 we will see an 81% increase in the 85 plus age group.
- 3.7 Additionally, more people with physical and learning disabilities will live into old age and the number of people with dementia will grow. By 2026 it is estimated that around 3,822 people in the Borough will have dementia the majority of whom will require some form of housing care and support services.
- 3.8 This data on need helps us shape our strategic approach to accommodation and support services for the future.

- 3.9 We also look to take account of the type, condition and demand for our current sheltered housing stock. The study undertaken by consultants sought to establish to what extent the principal 13 SBC Category 2 Sheltered Housing Schemes were 'fit for purpose' taking a broad view based on Physical Viability, Service Quality and Financial Viability which when taken together with prospects for future demand produced a viability rating providing a comparative indication of the need for strategic intervention, represented by a simply Traffic Light system. This 'fit for purpose' assessment provides a useful tool in assessing the viability of each scheme which in turn will inform future investment decisions to facilitate the continued viability of existing schemes or accommodation based solutions developed to replace those which are not sustainable in the medium to long term. The use of such 'fit for purpose' assessments should be promoted with providers of accommodation for older people in the Borough and should be repeated periodically.
- 3.10 Additionally, our strategy must be built around what we know about the aspirations of older people and of course subsequent generations of older people. We know from the research undertaken by Peter Fletcher Associates to inform the review that older people in Sedgefield want:
- Better information about services, advice and support to help them make informed choices.
 - Better information about the respective roles and responsibilities of Local Authorities and other agencies to avoid confusion.
 - To remain in their own home if possible.
 - To make choices about services in particular those they may purchase privately or where they are required to make a financial contribution.
- 3.11 When we then match needs and aspirations with current accommodation and service supply we see that within Sedgefield Borough:
- There is an over supply of in sheltered housing. This accommodation does not meet current and future needs and additionally there is very little sheltered or retirement housing available for sale or shared ownership for those who would consider this as a preferred option to renting.
 - There is a shortage of publicly funded floating support services for older people living in general needs housing.
 - House prices in the Borough are rising making it more difficult for older people to buy suitable housing such as two bedroom

bungalows which is in any event in limited supply.

- There are areas with old, poor quality terraced housing such as Dean Bank, Chilton and Ferryhill Station some of which is owned / occupied by some of the oldest and most vulnerable people in our communities.
- Flexible service models must continue to develop to ensure they are consistent with a strategic direction which focuses on the individual rather than the accommodation.
- There is a particular opportunity to promote the development of new models of Extra Care which are service based rather than accommodation based providing Extra Care at Home under-pinned by new support services and Assistive Technology.

3.12 **Developing Strategic and Service Solutions for Sedgefield Borough.**

3.13 Based on this evidence, in terms of direction of travel for the Strategy we need to:-

- Work with partners to use existing resources effectively.
- Improve information and advice for older people and involve them in planning, commissioning and evaluating services, particularly for services that involve a number of different organisations.
- Address the identified needs of older home owners.
- Develop new opportunities to provide services on behalf of health and social care specifically through Carelink Monitoring & Response and Sedgefield Supported Housing Service.

3.14 It is recognised that in some of these areas we have already made significant progress and therefore it is a question of building upon what we already have. Other areas will require a continued shift in direction to consolidate us on our new course.

3.15 Certainly, housing and support services for older people are well developed in Sedgefield Borough. Sedgefield Borough Council is part of a robust partnership with social care and the primary care trust through the Integrated Teams and these arrangements for the delivery of housing care and support are seen to work well. There are in fact numerous examples of how closer working between health, social care and housing staff has resulted in better outcomes for service users. This is acknowledged by the fact that The Department of Health White Paper *our health, our care our say* includes Sedgefield Borough Integrated Teams as an example of good practice.

- 3.16 Given recent organisational changes within both Health and Adult Social Services a countywide review of a range of integrated working arrangements used throughout the county has been commissioned, however, both County Durham PCT and DCC Adult Social Care have confirmed their continued committed to integrated working.
- 3.17 Looking beyond current integrated working arrangements within Sedgefield Borough there are opportunities for further joint working between the Integrated Teams and strategic and Landlord Housing functions around sheltered housing lettings and housing adaptations.
- 3.18 Additionally, work has already begun on establishing a commissioning framework for older peoples services taking account of social care, health and housing perspectives; this can only be beneficial in terms of providing joined up commissioning and service solutions.
- 3.19 In terms of the Borough Council's housing stock and services for older people, historically, Carelink has provided the main service focus for Supported Housing. Certainly since the early 1990's and the birth of the community care agenda Carelink has gone through a series of change programmes in response to policy shifts. Over that term the establishment of the Community Alarm Service element and continually being at the forefront of assistive technology pathfinder programmes enhanced the reputation of Carelink beyond the Borough Council area. The year 2003 and the introduction of the Supporting People regime brought further service changes culminating in a restructuring of services within:-
- Carelink Monitoring & Response Service which holds the Supporting People Community Alarm contract for Sedgefield, Wear Valley, Teesdale and the monitoring element for Derwentside.
 - SBC Supported Housing Service which provides Housing Revenue Account funded services focusing for the most part on the 13 Principal and 9 Secondary Sheltered Housing Schemes in the Borough.
- 3.20 The Borough has high numbers of older people with high dependency levels living in sheltered housing, higher infact than other comparator authorities. Part of the challenge therefore in schemes which lend themselves to supporting higher dependency is to re-engineer services accordingly. There is clearly potential for joint working with social care services to reconfigure the way in which care and support services are delivered into schemes. The majority of the schemes already offer a range of activities for their local communities all of which are well attended.
- 3.21 Additionally for the Borough Council Sheltered Housing stock the Landlord faces issues of lettability in many sheltered schemes – almost 25% of the accommodation is bedsit flats with poor space standards

and accessibility. Similar issues relate to bedsit bungalows. This is a reflection of the increasing expectations of older people for two bedroom accommodation

- 3.22 Traditionally the Borough Council has maintained high levels of investment in its sheltered housing stock. Our approach now needs to take account of the cost and logistics of meeting Decent Homes Standard in Sheltered Housing Schemes and funding the not insignificant non Decent Homes costs associated with lift, boiler and other infrastructure maintenance costs along with refurbishment of communal areas. This investment requirement is against a background of an acknowledgement of the minimal impact achieving such standards is likely to have on the popularity of such accommodation given the needs and aspirations of older people to remain living in their own homes and to receive services to support them to do so. This trend of support at home is also already resulting in the Borough Council seeing increasing pressure on budgets for housing adaptations for both private and Council stock.
- 3.23 Overall Sedgefield Borough Council is seen to have a sound infrastructure upon which to continue the development of
- New accommodation based solutions
 - Support services which underpin our strategic objectives.
 - Strong partnerships with health and social care to improve services and value for money.

4.0 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 This section of the report reflects the options and recommendations contained within the Strategy making a distinction between those which relate to the local authority and its partners as the Strategic Commissioners of Services and those which relates to Departments and Divisions within the local authority undertaking Service Provider roles.
- 4.2 The recommendations will set strategic and provider direction for the next 10 years and will be underpinned throughout that period by the development of specific Action Plans for each area of recommendation. Additionally, the Strategy will be available to inform the work of appropriate workstreams supporting transition to a new unitary authority for county Durham.
- 4.3 Each of the Recommendations is supported by a series of options to be considered as part of the Action Planning process. Over time these options will be added to as new challenges and further opportunities arise.

Building an integrated approach to commissioning and service delivery

- 4.4 There is good joint working between the Borough Council, social services and the PCT, primarily through the integrated teams.

However, similar to many other authorities sheltered housing and housing related support services still sit outside the local health and social care economy and there is currently no Countywide joint commissioning group to drive change and provide leadership. There are opportunities to realise the potential for joint commissioning between social care, PCT and housing.

Recommendation 1:

Support the development of joint commissioning of services for older people taking account of social care, health and housing perspectives.

Working with older people to deliver the Supported Accommodation Strategy for Sedgfield

- 4.5 A key message within national and local research regarding older people relates to engagement and their desire to play a more active role in planning, commissioning and evaluating service.

Recommendation 2:

Engage with older people on developing the vision for housing and support services for the next 10 years

Rebalancing the specialist accommodation and service system

- 4.6 There is a clear message from older people and those looking ahead to the types of accommodation and services they would require that traditional current accommodation and service models are not appropriate for the future. The need for older people to retain independence, choice and control is reflected in their vision of accommodation and services for the future.

Recommendation 3:

Identify and develop new models of housing care and support for the next ten years, in partnership with the

Social Care, Primary Care Trust, Registered Social Landlords, Supporting People, private sector and older people.

Establish a periodic review of the asset management strategy for all 13 SBC category two sheltered housing schemes and where appropriate seek a dispensation to remove schemes from the Decent Homes requirement to facilitate increased investment in the remaining schemes to maintain viability.

Review the asset management strategy for 9 secondary Sheltered Housing Schemes, one bed bungalows and bedsits.

Within the broader context of Choice Based Lettings, identify ways to improve working with the integrated teams such as joint allocation and letting of sheltered housing and the role for integrated teams in the adaptations and HIA process.

Investigate options to improve marketing, information and access to services for older people in the Borough.

Work with social care and health and private sector partners to develop new models of Extra Care both Scheme based and Extra Care At Home under-pinned by new support services and assistive technology and to consider opportunities for service integration between existing Extra Care and Sheltered Housing Schemes in the Borough.

Consider options relating to the development of new financially viable low level preventative services such as gardening and cleaning (funded by older people themselves and/or social care funding) or develop a list of accredited providers

Sedgefield Borough Council Supported Housing Services

- 4.7 The changes to the Supporting People contract specification for Community Alarms and associated services and the outcome of the review of sheltered housing and older people's services provides an opportunity to review the role of supported housing services in the Borough which will continue to be funded by the HRA. Establishing the Supported Housing role clearly as a Landlord function provides the opportunity to redefine supported housing providing support to a wider range of vulnerable tenants, clarifying management responsibilities within the Sheltered Housing Schemes, supporting Housing Department in its management function including Tenant Participation, Intensive Housing management and lettings, enhancing work with the Integrated Teams, supporting initiatives to maintain viability of Sheltered Housing Schemes and contributing to the development of new accommodation and service solutions. There may also be additional opportunities for Supported Housing to develop services that

will meet the needs of social care and health commissioners, including services for vulnerable groups such as people with learning disabilities.

Recommendation 4

A review of Sedgefield Borough Supported Housing Service be undertaken to establish how the service might best support the landlord function and the implementation of the Accommodation & Support Strategy.

Improving housing assistance services

- 4.8 There is benefit in seeking to review current arrangements for housing assistance services and community equipment at Countywide level. Work is currently underway in relation to the Home Improvement Agency services across the county. There would be clear benefit in factoring in consideration of related services such as Alterations & Adaptation Services in the local authority and Registered Social Landlord sectors and community equipment services.

Recommendation 5

Support the review of the range of Housing Assistance services across the County.

Older people in the housing market

- 4.9 Older people wishing to move to accommodation that is better able to meet their needs as they age (level access, near to shops and local amenities) have limited choices.
- 4.10 There is a need to develop a vision for older people's housing in the Borough looking ahead to the next ten years.

Recommendation 6

Work with local residents groups and the LSP within the LDF planning framework to develop new models of provision such as mixed tenure and shared ownership, rented and sale

Develop partnerships to factor in private finance to deliver new models of accommodation and support.

Improving information and access to services

- 4.11 Consultation with older people identifies the need for better information and advice.

- 4.12 There is an opportunity to develop an advice and support service for older people in the Borough. There are a number of options from signposting residents on to appropriate services through to the development of a comprehensive single point of access for all housing and support services, potentially not just in the Borough but Countywide. The latter could be developed in conjunction with the RSL's operating in the County and linked to a specialist lettings service for sheltered housing.

Recommendation 7

Consider the good practice models around improving information and advice.

Explore the potential to develop an on-line service in partnership with the County Council (including Trading Standards accredited trader scheme), Districts and RSL's

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Viability of each of the 13 primary Sheltered Housing Schemes has been taken into account in developing the Strategy. A review of the Asset Management strategy for all 22 schemes and one bed bungalows and bedsit bungalows is highlighted.
- 5.2 Spending on schemes to achieve Decent Homes Standard is factored into the Councils Decent Homes programme; removal from that requirement for any of the schemes will only assist the overall programme.

6. CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Changes to the Supporting People Contract for Community Alarms and related Housing Support Services have been subject to consultation with local authority and Registered Social Landlord providers, stakeholder and service users.
- 6.2 Extensive consultation was undertaken with service users by Peter Fletcher in the development of their report on the Older persons Accommodation and Support Strategy.
- 6.3 Consultation with key partners and stakeholders will continue throughout the development of Action Plans to implement the strategy.

7. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Links to Corporate Objectives / Values

The Community Strategy Outcomes include a Borough with Strong Communities where residents can access a good choice of high quality housing and a Healthy Borough where we support independent living. The Council's ambitions, which are linked, to the Community Strategy outcomes and are articulated through the Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan. These proposals will contribute to both of these Corporate Ambitions.

7.2 Risk Management

The key risks associated with the report relate to failure to develop accommodation and service options for older persons accommodation in the future. An associated risk relates to viability of SBC Sheltered Housing Schemes and services. These identified risks are addressed within the current proposals.

7.3 Health and Safety

There are no additional health and safety implications over and above those for existing staff of the Borough Council.

7.4 Equality and Diversity

Full account will be taken of the Borough Council's obligation to promote equality and diversity. These proposals will result in improved service access for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

7.5 Legal & Constitutional

There are no additional legal and constitutional implications.

8. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

9. **LIST OF APPENDICES**

None

Key Decision Validation: Has a significant impact on 2 or more wards

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Background Papers:

- SBC Housing Strategy 2006/7 – 2008/9
- Sub Regional Housing Strategy – 2007 – 2011

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>