

## Report for Information

**Report to** Executive  
13 January 2010  
**Report of** Director of Regeneration and Development  
**Subject** Refresh of Greater Norwich Housing Strategy 2008-11

---

5

### Purpose

To update the Executive of the refresh of the Greater Norwich Housing Strategy 2008-11.

### Recommendations

- (1) approve the amendments to the Greater Norwich Housing Partnership 2008-2011 Action Plan, as summarised in appendices A, B and C;
- (2) approve the Progress Report (Appendix D), and 2009-11 Update document to go to partners and stakeholders;
- (3) note the proposal for the Housing Strategy project planning for 2011-2014.

### Financial Consequences

There are no financial consequences of this report.

### Risk Assessment

The actions of the strategy are regularly risk assessed by the Greater Norwich Housing Partnership and the eight sub-groups that carry out the work in the action plan.

### Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the strategic priorities:

- Strong and prosperous city
- Safe and Healthy neighbourhoods
- Opportunities for all
- Aiming for Excellence

**Executive Member:** Cllr Brenda Arthur

**Ward:** All wards.

**Contact Officers**

Chris Hancock  
Alison Spalding

01603 212884  
01603 212871

**Background Documents**

Greater Norwich Housing Strategy 2008-11 Draft Revised Action Plan

## Report

### Refresh of the Greater Norwich Housing Strategy Action Plan 2008-11

#### 1. Background

2. The Greater Norwich Housing Strategy is a three year strategy covering all types of housing across the three local authority districts of Norwich City Council, Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council. The strategic aims of the strategy are:

- 2.1. Moving towards a balanced housing market;
- 2.2. Building towards sustainable and thriving communities;
- 2.3. Maximising opportunities for delivering more affordable housing;
- 2.4. Achieving decent, healthy and environmentally sustainable homes across all tenures;
- 2.5. Providing choice and fair access to services;
- 2.6. Delivering outcomes through effective partnership working.

3. Some of the main highlights of the strategy since its inception in February 2008 have been:

- 715 affordable housing completions across the sub-region in 2008/09. This figure exceeded the LAA target of 465.
- Supported housing schemes opened for 4 client groups
- On course to achieve the government's decent homes target (2010) for local authority and housing association stock
- Co-ordinated activity to make better use of the private sector:
  - Sub-regional action on empty homes which has brought 443 homes into use since January 2007
  - Use of the private sector for homeless households
  - Private sector landlord accreditation scheme now has 90 members

4. When the Strategy was written in 2008, it was recognised that the housing market is dynamic, and is subject to change through normal market conditions and demographic changes. Consequently the need to refresh the strategy and action plan during the life of the strategy was built into the plan from the beginning. Recent circumstances in the financial world, which have seriously affected housing in a number of ways, has also made the reassessment of the relevance of the actions first designed in 2008 necessary and timely. Other considerations, such as the creation of the Housing and Communities Agency (HCA) and Tenancy Services Authority (TSA), the 'Single Conversations', and the County-wide CAA/LAA regime have also been considered as relevant to the delivery of the Strategy.

5. On 23 April 2009 the strategic leads from the sub-region met to discuss reviewing the Greater Norwich Housing Strategy 2008-11 and its accompanying action plan. From this meeting the Greater Norwich Housing Strategy was deemed to be still relevant and fit for purpose, however, in light of the considerations mentioned above, a review of the actions was deemed necessary. The action plan refresh process started in June this year with a project plan being created. The work led to a refreshed version of the GNHP Housing Strategy Action Plan, a detailed progress report and a summary update document showing the achievements of the partnership since February 2008. Part of the refresh was an evaluation of which actions are still relevant and making sure that any national and local indicators are reflected.
6. As part of the refresh of the Greater Norwich Housing Strategy Action Plan 2008-11, and number of alterations to the plan were made,
  - **37 changes to actions (including milestones)**, to make them more reflective of current priorities and circumstances;
  - **6 new actions** arising from issues and circumstances that have arisen during the past year, which are considered a priority;
  - **10 items were deleted**, as either being complete, being no longer relevant, or were merged into other actions.

These changes are summarised in the attached documents, Appendix A, B and C.

7. As mentioned above, a detailed progress report has also been collated, against which actions have been assessed, and which has also informed the refresh process. The report is attached (Appendix D), for information. In addition, a 2009 -11 summary update document outlining the achievements of the Strategy thus far has been written for distribution to partners and stakeholders to highlight the work of the councils in bringing forward affordable housing, and how the sub-region is tackling housing related issues.
8. Finally, the Sub-regional Housing Strategy itself is coming to the end of its life, and as such will require a full refresh during the next year, ready for adoption in March 2011. By planning for this work now, there should be a seamless transition between the current and new strategies, thus avoiding a period when the council is without a current housing strategy in place. A project plan for a new Greater Norwich Housing Strategy will be in place by March 2010 for work to commence in April 2010. This work will be carried out by Keith Mitchell at South Norfolk District Council, Adam Banham and Katherine Chambers at Broadland District Council and Alison Spalding and Chris Hancock at Norwich City Council.