



Subject:	Delivering the Belfast Agenda: Housing Update
Date:	13 February 2019
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, City Regeneration and Development Lead Officer
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update Members on key housing-related activities and integration of this work into the Belfast Agenda Living Here Board and associated Action Plan.• Update Members on the proposal to hold Members' and City Partners Housing Workshops to review and understand the key challenges and opportunities in relation to housing and the key areas for priority focus.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update in relation to housing and the proposal for alignment and integration of housing related work strands into the Belfast Agenda Living Here Board. • Agree to hold a Members' and City Partners workshop(s) on housing as set out below, with the first workshop proposed for March 2019.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Background</p> <p>The Belfast Agenda and Local Development Plan set out the target to grow the population in Belfast by 66,000 by 2035. To achieve this target there is a need for approximately 31,600 new homes between 2020-2035. Aside from this overall requirement to increase the population, a specific stretch goal within the Belfast Agenda is to deliver 1,800 social housing units and agree a city target for affordable housing by 2021. The Belfast Agenda also contains objectives on increasing the supply of mixed tenure housing and encouraging city centre living. In addition a key policy with the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy is to increase the residential population of the city centre.</p> <p>3.2 These represent challenging targets and it is clear that significant work and collaboration is required to support the provision of total housing supply across the city.</p> <p>3.3 Although Council does not have responsibility for the statutory delivery of housing it has a range of powers and is involved in various activities relating to housing. These cover the regulatory functions of planning and building control and the LDP; disposal of various Council lands for housing; city regeneration activities; city marketing and HMO licencing (due to transfer on 31 March 2019). Housing related reports have been brought into various Council Committees on all these issues, including reports to the City Growth & Regeneration Committee on city centre living, but it is recognised that there is scope to try and align some of these workstrands to ensure a joined up approach in the context of the Belfast Agenda objectives</p> <p>3.4 Achieving the overall Belfast Agenda housing target requires a step change in the current level of delivery and it is critical that key statutory partners and wider stakeholders work together. As the lead body for the Belfast Agenda, the Council has an important role</p>

3.5	<p>alongside other partners on this major issue. Through the Community Planning Partnership, strategic delivery boards, which includes the Living Here Board, have been set up to provide a structure for governance and support collaborative working across city partners on a range of issues.</p> <p><i>Belfast Agenda Living Here Board</i></p> <p>At the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 7 December 2018 Members received a presentation on the Belfast Agenda that outlined the areas of attention for the next 3-9 months for the Living Here Board. Under the housing aspect within the Living Here Board, the agreed focus was on “Planning for housing that meets the needs of everyone”. The key issues identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the total housing supply • Consideration of published commitments, particularly if they reflect the level of ambition needed to achieve long-term outcomes. <p>Three actions and timeframes were agreed by Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping of existing activity across the Council and key partners • Elected Member Workshop to shape strategy and the Community Planning Partnership focus • Development of cross partners action plan to support the Belfast Agenda
	<p>Progress and next steps</p>
3.6	<p>Members will be aware of previous activities undertaken to identify the key housing issues and challenges to the supply and delivery of housing to meet the needs outlined in the Belfast Agenda and LDP growth strategy. Recently, Members have been involved in the following work:</p>
3.7	<p><i>London Study visit, 12-13 October 2017</i></p> <p>Five Members from across the political parties, along with representatives from the NI Housing Executive, NI Federation of Housing Associations and the BCC Local Development Plan and City Centre Development teams visited a number of mixed-use, mixed-tenure housing developments.</p> <p><i>City Centre Living Workshop, 23 October 2017</i></p>
3.8	<p>The London study visit shaped the City Centre Living workshop that was attended by 53 people (inc DfC, NIHE etc.), including 18 Members. The session was externally facilitated and considered a range of issues around city centre living. Various topics were identified and a</p>

subsequent report brought into Committee in January 2018. The key issues included the need to understand the city centre residential market; the need to consider potential intervention; a pilot scheme to delivery city centre living principles in a mixed-used development and Living Over The Shops.

Living Over The Shops (LOTS) Workshops, June 2018

3.9 These workshops explored issues around developing LOTS-type of accommodation in Belfast City Centre. As part of the workshops, officers from Dublin City Council working on the Living City Initiatives presented their approaches, challenges and experiences. There are elements of LOTS now coming forward in Belfast city centre but there remains a need to consider this in more detail if it is to be successful.

Housing Workshop, 18 December 2018

3.10 A joint BCC/DfC officer workshop took place with NIHE, DfC and internal council officers as a stocktake to explore how collectively we can work to improve the total housing supply in Belfast. Key blockages and challenges were identified and various initial issues and actions were identified as requiring further consideration by the respective organisations including land supply; procurement issues; a City Centre Waiting List; assessment of public land available for development and the need to explore financial/funding models to support housing development.

Meeting of the Living Here Board, 28 January 2019

3.11 The Living Here Board had developed a high-level action plan that brought together certain aspects of the housing work streams as identified in the Belfast Agenda,. The Community Planning Planning Partnership agreed the initial action plans for the Living Here Board including the housing strand. Subsequently there has been further engagement with partners and at a meeting of the Living Here Board on 28 January it was proposed that any additional work strands as identified in the Housing Workshop of 18 December and those emerging from any follow up session(s) are also integrated into an updated action plan linked to the Living Here Board. This would provide for a more coherent and joined up approach amongst partners and provide a conduit for housing related issues to be considered. This action plan remains a work in progress however and there is an opportunity now for Members input to this in order to further inform and shape the Action Plan.

3.12 As referred to above, following the SP&R meeting in December and as discussed at the Living Here Board, it is now proposed to hold an Elected Members' and City Partners

	<p>workshop (or workshops) in order to further support decision making and enhance Members' understanding of the wider housing context, with the following key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and understand the key challenges and opportunities on housing (including demand and supply issues). - Understand the role of city partners - To brief Members on developments in social and affordable housing and on the operation of the private rented sector across Belfast. - To provide information on trends in the housing market. - To consider examples of successful practice from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland regarding approaches to new supply, models that encourage mixed tenure and positive placemaking - To discuss ways to best use the Council's powers and obligations to enable the supply of housing - in support of the Belfast Agenda and aligned with other BCC strategies and frameworks, including the Local Development Plan. - Update and explore the key areas for priority focus and embed the updated actions in the Living Here Action Plan <p>3.13 It is proposed to hold the first workshop in March subject to getting a suitable date arranged, with a further workshop to follow thereafter as required.</p> <p>3.14 In addition, options for a conference on housing hosted by the Lord Mayor are among the plans to be considered at the workshop and further details will be brought back to Committee.</p> <p>3.15 <u>Equality and Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications</u> There are no negatively equality, good relation or rural needs implications at this point. The Council's Equality & Diversity Officer will be consulted during this process and any proposed approach will be subject to the Council's screening requirements to ensure that Equality and Good Relations implications and rural needs are fully considered.</p> <p>3.16 <u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> The cost of hosting the Workshops will be met from within the Place & Economy departmental budget.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None

