

Executive

Next Steps for Housing Cross Sector Working

Item no: 6

Report by: Eloise Shepherd **Job title:** Head of Housing and Planning Policy

Date: 06/2019

Contact Officer: Eloise Shepherd

Telephone: 0207 934 9813 **Email:** Eloise.shepherd@londoncouncils.gov.uk

Summary This paper builds on previous discussions among members of the Executive in May 2019, as well as the success of London Councils' cross sectoral Housing Conference in March 2019. It recommends creating a clear suite of policy asks in the housing and residential development area via a time limited, focused working group drawn from Local Government, Housing Associations and the Private Sector.

Recommendations That the Executive agree that London Councils help establish and participate in a time limited, Task and Finish Group with Housing Association and Private Sector representation, and comment on potential work areas.

Next Steps for Housing Cross Sector Working

1. In March 2019 London councils held a cross sectoral housing conference, drawing together 111 senior level stakeholders in different housing sectors (e.g. the private sector, housing associations, central government and local government). At the conference several substantive policy areas were identified as being potentially useful for further joint working between these partners.
2. In May 2019 members of the Executive considered some potential ways forward for developing the areas identified. Members of the Executive favoured a means of progressing some discrete areas via time limited, task and finish working between partners.
3. Members of the Executive suggested that these be focused on specific task and finish work that should generate some proposed collaboration that could be endorsed by respective participants including London Councils, subject to agreement by Executive.
4. The proposal for the membership of such a Cross-Sectoral Task and Finish Group on Barriers to Delivery is as follows:
 - a. The group will be chaired by the London Councils Executive Member for Housing and Planning
 - b. The membership will include representation from all three political groupings
 - c. Other membership will be drawn from senior individuals in London local government, and the Housing Association sector and private sectors.
5. The broad categories of task and finish activity could include items from the following list:
 - Technical issues on which the in-house knowledge of either private sector, or housing association developers is important when designing new ways of working.
 - Co-designing a protocol on community engagement for potential adoption by developers working in London and other partners. Individual councils would, of course, determine whether they engaged such a protocol.

- Co-designing an approach to small site development that allowed small builders to enter the market by seeking to reduce the uncertainty associated with aspects of the planning system.
 - Identifying issues in the development of new homes in suburban London and seeking ways to collaborate to address these issues.
 - Identifying the challenges of densification in central London and developing agreed approaches to developing proposals involving densification.
 - Developing common approaches to scaling up the use of modular building and related precision manufacturing of homes across London.
 - Broader policy issues, where the support of the private and housing association sectors would increase London Councils influence in negotiation with government.
 - Developing proposals to government for greater access to public sector land in London.
 - Developing proposals to government for improved borough access to infrastructure funding; including but not limited to better borough access to the Housing Infrastructure Fund. (HIF).
 - Improving the use of apprenticeship funding across borough borders as recommended by the Homes for Londoners Construction Skills Sub-Group.
 - Agreeing a position on greater devolution of decisions concerning NHS estates to London in line with the London Estates Board strategy and the MoU agreed with government in 2017.
 - Agreeing proposals on financial flexibility to fund housing in London.
6. It is anticipated that the group would report back to constituent partners, including the London Councils Executive in early 2020 with a series of developing recommendations. Reports, as appropriate, would also be submitted to Leaders' Committee, contain recommendations that could be adopted by the decision of individual boroughs.
7. The group will draw on the expertise of other officer groups and existing panels in its work, and other discussion or focus groups may be pulled together to augment the work.

Recommendations and decisions:

That the Executive agree that London Councils help establish and participate in a time limited, Task and Finish Group with Housing Association and Private Sector representation, and comment on potential work areas.

Financial Implications for London Councils

Work contributing to the establishment of a proposed Task and Finish Group can be progressed within existing resources. Once the scale of the work programme has been identified, further consideration will need to be given to resourcing the work.

Legal Implications for London Councils

None

Equalities Implications for London Councils

None