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**Title:** NPH Older Persons' Strategy Update

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2012 NBC undertook a review of its sheltered housing stock which was followed by a further, external review by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) who were commissioned to '*review the strategic and operational options available to the Council for improving upon the existing service model for the provision of sheltered housing accommodation and services in the Borough*'.

Following this Shirley Davies was appointed as an Interim Project Manager to analyse the CIH's recommendations and translate these into a vision for the future which provides long-term, high quality designated older person's accommodation.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 NPH was created by NBC and Shirley Davies was appointed in April 2015 as Executive Director of Housing for NPH. NPH have subsequently taken this work and research further and fed this into a wider "Older Persons' Strategy" project which will produce a more holistic Strategy that meets the future needs and aspirations of older people in Northampton. To support this work NPH have engaged a specialist consultant: Althea Howarth of Ridgeway Consultants.

This report is now provided to update the committee on progress and provide an anticipated timescale for completion.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the report.

## 3. BACKGROUND AND DETAIL

Prior to the formation of the ALMO on the 5<sup>TH</sup> January 2015 the NBC had commenced a review of its sheltered housing stock which was supported by a further, external review in 2012 by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH).

The CIH were commissioned to ‘review the strategic and operational options available to the Council for improving upon the existing service model for the provision of sheltered housing accommodation and services in the Borough’.

Following this Shirley Davies was appointed by NBC as an Interim Project Manager to analyse the CIH’s recommendations and translate these, in partnership with tenants and other stakeholders, into a shared vision for the future which provides long-term, high quality designated older person’s accommodation.

Following Shirley Davies appointment as Executive Director of Housing for NPH, NPH have taken the work and research commenced with the Sheltered Housing review and fed this into a wider “Older Persons’ Strategy” project which will produce a wider and more holistic Strategy that meets the future needs and aspirations of older people in Northampton. To support this work NPH have engaged a specialist consultant: Althea Howarth of Ridgeway Consultants.

The work is being undertaken at a time of significant change both within the Housing sector itself and within the older people’s housing and support sector. A robust strategy devised in partnership with stakeholders will be an essential tool for highlighting the priorities for the future and supporting the delivery of high quality, cost effective services. The Government’s agenda to increase housing development and the welfare reform legislation, coupled with budgetary constraints, has moved ‘housing and services’ up the priority agenda for statutory authorities.

In addressing these issues the strategy will look at demand for housing and services for older people across Northampton, the issues for the current stock, affordability challenges for tenants (rent and support costs) and will deliver a range of options for reducing rent loss and delivering cost-effective refurbishment / development opportunities.

The work undertaken to date already illustrates the significant challenges in drafting a robust strategy that meets the future needs of the predicted increasing population of older people in Northampton shown in the table below:

**Older people in Northampton: Projected change to 2030 (%)**

<b>NBC Projections (%)</b>	<b>2015 - 2020</b>	<b>2015 - 2025</b>	<b>2015 - 2030</b>
<b>65 +</b>	+ 13%	+ 28%	+ 47%
<b>75+</b>	+ 16%	+ 47%	+ 70%
<b>85+</b>	+ 16%	+ 40%	+ 77%

Source: IPC POPPI

The above research confirms that there is significant projected growth in the older population generally. We would draw attention to projected growth in 85+ populations who are more likely to require the specialist housing which is currently lacking in Northampton.

Furthermore, this ‘older old’ population is likely to include a significant percentage of people living alone who are likely to require support services in their own homes where specialist housing is unavailable. An additional factor to take into account involves projections for people predicted to have Severe Limiting Long Term Illnesses (LLTI), where the overall increase is approximately 54%, the increase for those aged 75-84 is 66% and the increase for the 85 plus age group is 73%.

The above facts are evidenced in background research papers which give the detail and will be included as appendices in the Older Persons Strategy when it is finalised.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

The desk research element of this project continues and will be supported by extensive field research which is about to commence which will include surveys and follow up face to face consultation as appropriate. The groups to be consulted with include:-

- Tenants in older persons' housing - a survey has been chosen in this instance as experience has shown more vulnerable tenants are less likely to attend focus groups and so their views are not heard. (A process will be put in place to assist tenants who require help completing a survey)
- Surveys with a sample of people aged 50+ in general needs housing, on the waiting list, and in other tenures
- In-depth face to face / telephone interviews with stakeholders, e.g. NPH / NBC Council staff, Health, Adult Social Care

We are also working with staff to undertake a needs mapping exercise to understand the profile of existing tenants in each of the blocks and bungalow schemes in terms of, for example, age, gender, health issues, disabilities and services received.

Following on from the work undertaken in the original Sheltered Housing Options Review, a number of older persons' schemes were identified as being most unsuitable for older people. These will now be included for further consideration within the review and subject to verification will be recommended for decommissioning within the first phase of the older person's strategy confirming the decision as reported to the Sheltered Housing Option Review Project Board on 28 January 2015 and the NPH Operations Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

At present substantive work to move forward with potential decommissioning of these schemes will be scheduled to commence after the Older Persons' Strategy has been formally approved and adopted. We feel it is important and would be beneficial to undertake some "concept testing" to understand the likely options for future housing and related services these tenants would choose which will inform the strategy in terms of the shape of the housing and services recommended.

These are all mixed general needs and sheltered blocks which would not normally be the recommended model for sheltered housing in the future.

The original review identified properties in 3 schedules (priorities) and to continue this work already undertaken to the next stage the following tasks will be undertaken:

##### **Schedule 1**

- An exercise to understand the current care and support needs of residents of two schemes where when the original assessments were undertaken) there were 6 tenants in one scheme and 17 in the other receiving level 2 support services).
- The working group reviewing this stock will analyse the outcomes from this exercise and put forward proposals on the approach to be taken in decommissioning this stock while safeguarding the needs of the more vulnerable tenants. At this stage a timeframe for completion of the work will be established.
- Proposals will also be put forward on the re-letting of any future void sheltered stock within the schemes to general needs tenants.
- Following this process consultation will take place with individual tenants and action plans drawn up detailing their housing preferences and support needs if appropriate.

## **Schedule 2**

- An initial phase of consultation has taken place with tenants in some of this stock. Further detailed consultation with individual tenants in each scheme will take place and a detailed plans of their chosen options and support needs, where applicable, will be drafted
- It will be important for staff to identify potential accommodation for those tenants who wish to move to another property and these tenants will need to be given priority for suitable void stock.

## **Schedule 3**

- More detailed work is required on the options for the future of these blocks of flats and this work will be undertaken as part of the development of the Older Persons' Strategy which is due to be completed in March 2016.

## **5. FINANCIAL AND VFM IMPLICATIONS**

The Strategy represents an opportunity for NBC and NPH to move towards achieving a stock of sustainable and desirable accommodation for a growing population of older people across Northampton. Importantly it will also inform of future demand, failure to deliver this the implications are:-

- Increased void properties and resultant rent loss
- Increased turnover of stock resulting in additional management obligations
- Inappropriate provision not meeting demands and expectations
- Increased re-let times which reflects on organisational performance.

No financial details or forecast can be made at this stage of the work; however the finalised report will include full financial forecasts.

## **6. TIMESCALES**

Consultation with stakeholders is due to commence in January 2016 and is expected to be completed by March 16.

Feedback from the consultation will be fed into the strategy with a view to completing and presenting the finalised report to NPH Operations Committee on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May and NPH Board on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016, prior to subsequent submission to NBC.