

Project structure and accountabilities

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Chapter 3. Project structure and accountabilities

3.1 Summary

The SHMA is being carried out under the structure of a management protocol to provide research work to complete a sub regional strategic housing market assessment, assisted by the SHMA project team, guided by the SHMA Partnership Team and the Cambridge Sub Regional Housing Board (CRHB).

A summary of the protocol is included below to explain the relationship between the partners at the outset of the SHMA work, and is supplemented with descriptions of the work needed to move the SHMA from its initiation stage into ongoing update, extension and refreshing, following its formal launch in June 2008.

3.2 Partners

- Cambridge City Council (City)
- East Cambridge District Council (ECDC)
- Fenland District Council (FDC)
- Forest Heath District Council (FHDC)
- Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)
- South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC)
- St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC)
- Cambridgeshire Horizons (CH)
- Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

3.3 Service Provider

Research Group, Chief Executive's Department, Cambridgeshire County Council (CCRG)

3.4 Purpose

This is a management protocol between CCRG and the partners listed in paragraph 1, to provide research work to complete and keep up-to-date, a sub regional strategic housing market assessment, supported by the SHMA project team, and sponsored by the Cambridge Sub Regional Housing Board (CRHB).

3.5 Background

In 2006 CLG published guidance on SHMAs. These replace housing needs surveys as a measure of the functioning of local housing markets, the guidance outlines what is needed and where to gather the necessary data. The SHMA partnership produced a first SHMA for the housing sub-region, published in May 2008. This management protocol updates our previous agreement, and is necessary in moving from the creation phase to the updating and improvement phase.

3.6 Participants and structure

The Cambridge sub-region local authorities and partners meet monthly as a housing group, known as the Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Board (CRHB). The meeting addresses the supply and management of housing and matters connected with this, across the sub-region. It includes senior representatives from each of the seven local authorities, together with Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Horizons, GO-East and the Homes and Communities Agency (which combined the previous Housing Corporation and English Partnerships). CRHB is supported by topic groups, which progress specific housing issues.

CRHB members agreed to work together to undertake our SHMA, including consultation of a wide group of partners from across the sub region to make sure the work is as useful as possible to all of us, and reflected the wealth of knowledge and understanding of housing and related issues for the sub-region.

CCRG brings the necessary relevant research and statistical expertise to the partnership. Research and intelligence expertise is essential, particularly with regard to the maintenance, development and interpretation of information, which requires a degree of continuity of investment and specialist knowledge. The County Research Group can also commission new research where needed.

To progress the development of the first SHMA, a Project Team met regularly to discuss issues, interpret planning and other guidance, and ensure the SHMA focussed on the issues of greatest priority and that partners were contributing all the information needed to progress and develop the assessment.

Following publication in May 2008, the SHMA project team continues to progress consultation with the wider SHMA Partnership and supports communication and consultation on the project, as well as more routine matters such as finances, data improvements and group membership issues.

3.7 Management of the SHMA

The objective of this agreement is to develop, evolve and update the strategic housing market assessment for the Cambridge sub region launched in May 2008. There is a core of work common to all seven local authorities, with additional elements defined locally, according to local needs and priorities.

The following staff in the County Research Group are involved in the project

- Trevor Baker – Research Manager. Relevant experience: housing, surveys, consultation.
- Rebecca Roebuck - Research Officer, Economy
- Hendrick Grothius - Senior Research Officer, Data Mapping
- Julia Gummy - Research Officer Population
- Polly Jackson - dedicated SHMA researcher

Trevor Baker leads on managing the research aspects of the SHMA project.

The apportionment of time throughout each financial year is subject to agreement between CCRG and partners via the project team.

All SHMA partners on the project team need to agree those areas of work which are to be carried out for all districts. Some work is periodic, requiring greater commitment in one year than in another. Other areas of work are subject to local need, and time can be allocated for such tasks at the discretion either of individual districts, or of two or more districts seeking to work together on issues of common interest. For example, supporting districts undergoing planning inspection, or various individual challenges to the SHMA data or methodology.

3.8 Management, Review and Communications

Project Teams will be held approximately every 3 months to discuss performance, data, progress and priorities for the period ahead.

- The original agreement was 1 September 2006 to 31 May 2008 (inception)
- The second phase agreement is 1 June 2008 to 31 May 2011 (first 3 years of SHMA application and development)
- The third phase is 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2014 (second 3 years of SHMA development)

At any time after 1 June 2007, the agreement may be ended by either the CCRG or CRHB giving a minimum of 6 months' notice effective from 1 April in any financial year.

Should any of the partners or local authorities decide to withdraw from the SHMA, they will give 6 months' notice effective from 1 April in any financial year.

The Project Team (including CCRG) will recommend how to proceed to CRHB, who will decide on the best option to pursue.

3.9 Cost and phasing

Work and costs divide into three successive phases:

Phase 1 ran from Autumn 2006 to 31 May 2008, and consisted of gathering secondary data CRG and primary research as necessary to ensure a robust assessment of the housing market, sufficient to support LDF housing and related policies. Cost: £67,000 in 2006/7 and £91,000 in 2007/8. Includes £62,000 for primary research.

Phase 2 runs from 1 June 2008 (publication date) to 31 March 2011 – a 3 year period of building of data and knowledge, refining and adding issues as resources, time and circumstances allow under the guidance of the SHMA project team, partnership team and CRHB. Continual updating of secondary data and commissioning of new primary research as agreed. Cost: £67,360 per year (effective from 1 April onwards). Includes £27,360 for primary research each year as required.

Phase 3 runs from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2014, a further 3 year period to roll the SHMA forward in the longer term.

3.10 Funders

There are three main groups of funders:

1. **Local authority “full” participants** who have agreed to contribute £57,000 over the first 5 years of the project from 2006/7 to 2010/11 (end of Phase 2). Authorities may vary the “spread” of their contributions over the 5 years provided

each party contributes the same amount overall.

2. **Local authority “observer” participants.** These are authorities who could not participate fully in the SHMA work from its start in 2006/7, having completed surveys on housing need and housing markets recently. Instead they agreed to contribute £10,000 over the first five years. As a contribution of £10,000 only secures a maximum of 40 day's work per district over 5 years, the observers would be asked to contribute any information already available from existing studies at no additional cost, to enable their contribution to be put to best use. Following review in 2009, the two “observer” districts agreed to participate fully from 1 April 2009 onwards, contributing £9,400 each per year, as agreed by the SHMA project team, until 2010 when a SHMA-wide review of costs will be carried out, effective from 2011/12 (Year 6) onwards.
3. **Other contributing agencies** – Cambridgeshire Horizons and the HCA (formerly English Partnerships) are funding “partner” agencies, contributing various amounts to the project over its life. These agencies also form part of the Project Team.
4. **Other non-contributing agencies** also form part of the project team, including GO-East and EERA, and agree to contribute time and advice to the Team, though not financial resources. Other partners will be encouraged to participate, to ensure the relevant expertise and advice is available for the Assessment.

3.11 Income

Amounts, timing and distribution of payments to be proposed by funding partners at Project team level, and approved by CRHB.

The principal will be one of equal total contributions by each full participant over a 5 year period, with other contributors making individual payments as agreed and depending on their level of participation in the SHMA.

3.12 Spending

Core spending includes:

- Funding SHMA researcher.
- Resource contribution to CCRG for staffing time spent by other team members.
- Primary research and any related needs assessments as agreed by CRHB.
- Securing secondary data.
- Publicity including costs for publications and events run for the SHMA partnership team.

3.13 Availability and copyrights

The study will be owned by CRHB.

The final report and updates are publicly available on the Cambridgeshire Horizon's website.

The Cambridgeshire Horizons weblink is www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/shma

Local needs information aggregated to an agreed level will be made available, but access to individual surveys will be protected to participating local authorities only. All information will conform to the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

Each participating local authority may be asked to supply information from their Council Tax Register, for the purposes of primary research, although this will not include individuals' personal information.

Each participating authority agrees as part of this partnering agreement to supply this information as and when required. In the event of any personal information being handled, this will be treated in compliance with Data Protection Act principles around privacy and disclosure.