

Name of Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny		
Committee Date:	18 October 2023		
Report Title:	Housing Strategy		
Responsible Officer:	Patrick Lee, Executive Head of Housing and Communities		
Cabinet Lead:	Cllr Robinson, Cabinet Lead for Housing and Communities		
Status:	Non-Exempt		
Urgent Decision:	No	Key Decision:	No
Appendices:	A: PowerPoint Presentation		
Background Papers:	None		
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Report Number:	HBC/		

Corporate Priorities:

Pride in Place.

To facilitate the delivery of and improve the quality of our affordable housing.

Executive Summary:

To provide an outline and direction of travel for a housing strategy to provide a strategic direction for HBC and partner organisations to meet the housing needs and demands of local people.

The strategy aims to provide an opportunity to set entire system responses to achieve four key aims:

- Increasing the supply of housing including, affordable housing, to ensure the right types of housing are available in the right locations.
- Helping housing choices to enable independence
- Improving the quality of rented housing
- Preventing Homelessness and helping those who are homeless move on to stable housing solutions

Recommendations:

That members note the information, evidence and data presented.

Introduction

- 1.1 The council has a responsibility to respond to Government, sub-regional, countywide, and local housing priorities. These include the creation of sustainable communities and the provision of decent homes for all through a fair and balanced housing market.
- 1.2 The strategy is intended to provide a framework to help meet these responsibilities.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Considering the level of change anticipated in national policy, the housing market, the local government sector and our communities, it is considered that the final housing strategy will need a degree of flexibility. The level of complexity means the Council will need to develop solutions in partnerships and influence national government, particularly to secure further funding, as the strategy cannot be delivered by the Council alone. The structure of the strategy is unlikely to change over the course of its life and will remain focused on the four key aims, but the Council will review regularly with the aim of producing an annual action plan which will enable the Council to respond to the changing housing landscape.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 Continue with the past direction of travel.
- 3.2 Revise the direction of travel as proposed based on the evidence presented with greater focus on preventing homelessness and delivering more homes.

4.0 Relationship to the Corporate Strategy

- 4.1 A key aim of the Corporate Strategy is to facilitate the delivery of and improve the quality of our affordable housing.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 It is important to recognise the scale of the challenges that exists in the present housing market and its impact on housing availability,

especially first-time buyers, affordability and homelessness. This cannot simply be addressed by the council alone and therefore our role should be as much about influencing partners and lobbying funders for greater resources and delivery of more homes.

- 5.2 This report outlines the risks and priorities. The council needs to understand the level of focus needed to develop our homelessness aims and objectives.
- 5.3 To maintain and improve housing standards in the Borough.
- 5.4 Members are asked to advise on the aims and objectives, including any further considerations.

6.0 Implications and Comments

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report have no immediate financial impact or commitments. Any subsequent changes which may have financial impacts will be subject to budget assessment and/or business cases review by the finance team and reviewed by the Section S151 Officer.
- 6.2 Financial Implications: Delivery of future direction will largely be through existing resources but require a greater focus on cross council action, partnership and national funding. One-off funding may be needed for development and change such as training.
- 6.3 Monitoring Officer Comments: Overview and Scrutiny Committees play a valuable role in developing the Council's Policy and Strategy framework. This report allows an early opportunity for pre scrutiny of this important strategy at the start of the Council's governance process.
- 6.4 Legal Implications: The Legal Team shall be consulted on the emerging Housing Strategy.
- 6.5 Equality and Diversity: Some of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents may need homelessness support. Affordable housing is an important element to ensure housing for all in the borough.
- 6.6 Human Resources: To continually monitor the demand and any impact of that demand on the capacity of teams.

6.7 Information Governance: There are no specific implications arises at this stage. The Information Governance Team shall be consulted on the development of the Strategy.

6.8 Climate and Environment: The strategy will seek to improve the quality of housing and working in partnership, improve the energy efficiency of homes in the Borough.

7.0 Risks

7.1 Failure to reduce the present demand for homelessness support and its impact on residents and Council budgets.

7.2 Failure to provide adequate housing to meet different needs including disability needs and affordability.

7.3 Failure to secure resources and funding to meet our strategic ambitions.

8.0 Consultation

8.1 Once a draft strategy has been agreed a stakeholder and public consultation will be undertaken.

9.0 Communications

9.1 Appropriate communication will be undertaken to publicise any consultations and to publicise the final strategy and action plans.

Agreed and signed off by:		Date:
Cabinet Lead:	Cllr Robinson, Cabinet Lead for Communities and Housing	04/10/23
Executive Head:	Patrick Lee, Executive Head for Communities and Housing	05/10/23
Monitoring Officer:	Jo McIntosh	04/10/23
Section151 Officer:	Steven Pink	02/10/23