

HOUSING STRATEGY 2017

Housing and Health Advisory Committee - 20 June 2017

Report of	Chief Planning Officer
Status	For consideration
Also considered by	Planning Advisory Committee - 22 June 2017 Cabinet - 13 July 2017 Council - 18 July 2017 (decision)
Key Decision	No

This report supports the Key Aim of housing, health and wider community strategy as set out in the District Council's Community Plan.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Michelle Lowe

Contact Officer Gavin Missons, Ext. 7332

Recommendation to the Housing and Health Advisory Committee (HHAC): That Members recommend approval of the Draft Housing Strategy.

Recommendation to the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC): That Members recommend approval of the Draft Housing Strategy.

Recommendation to Cabinet: That, subject to comments from the HHAC and PAC, Members recommend approval of the Draft Housing Strategy to Full Council.

Recommendation to Full Council: That Members approve the Draft Housing Strategy as District Council policy.

Reason for recommendation: To agree new approaches to the delivery of housing, health and wider community strategy in the District.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Back in 2016, the District Council's Housing and Health Advisory Committee agreed to review its existing housing strategy with a view to developing an updated version which would better integrate housing and health services.
- 2 The Council's elected members were invited to a housing strategy development workshop led by the Council's Portfolio Holder for Housing and

Health. Participating members were able to agree a short-list of preferred options and this subsequently formed the general direction of travel for a new Housing Strategy. This was then presented to a wide-ranging audience at the Council's housing forum with Marcus Jones MP and Minister for Local Government as keynote speaker.

- 3 In order to progress the project, a Local Housing Needs Study (LHNS) was commissioned to build on evidence contained in the District Council's latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). **As part of the study a wide ranging survey was sent to every household in the District in order to understand local needs and aspirations and how these might differ around the District. An impressive 18% response rate was achieved which adds strength to the LHNS as an important evidence base.**
- 4 Whereas the aim of a SHMA is to provide high-level data in order to balance the housing market, the LHNS is intended to qualify housing aspirations and provides much more detailed housing intelligence presented at place-making level (six geographically grouped ward areas).
- 5 The key findings of the LHNS are, as follows:
 - Lower quartile house price to lower quartile income ratio of 13.4;
 - Limited private rented sector - lower quartile and median rental prices more expensive than the county, region and England as a whole;
 - House prices and access to deposits will be major stumbling blocks, particularly as there are relatively few intermediate housing products;
 - Skilled middle-income groups excluded from affordable rented housing but struggle to access home ownership;
 - Affordable housing delivery should be more focussed towards sale rather than rent (aspirational, however; LHNS recommends further investigations on economic viability, local income, savings and newly-introduced intermediate housing products etc);
 - A need for smaller social sector and a demand for larger private sector dwellings;
 - A growing need for disabled adaptations and other assistive technologies to support independent living;
 - The majority of older people want to stay put in their own homes with housing-related support and other in situ solutions;
 - A wide-range of housing types and tenures required for older people that *do* intend to down-size to more suitable housing; and

- A continuing need to improve the private sector housing stock condition.
- 6 The completed LHNS has subsequently informed the new Draft Housing Strategy (Appendix A). The strategy sets out a series of strategic priorities, many updated from the previous housing strategy, under the following three headings:
- Providing a good mix of decent and affordable housing across tenures
 - Improving the quality and use of existing housing stock
 - Meeting the needs of vulnerable and low income households
- 7 The Draft Housing Strategy has been made available for three weeks for public comment. The consultation period runs until 9 June 2017 and comments received will be considered when finalising the Draft Housing Strategy.
- 8 In addition to providing an evidence base to the housing strategy, the LHNS is also a key part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan and has also helped to inform its Issues and Options document.

Next steps

- 9 If approved, the District Council will prepare more detailed action plans (where required) to deliver on the agreed strategic priorities as contained in the Draft Housing Strategy. Once complete, these will be made available to Members as internal working documents.
- 10 The District Council will formally launch the published Housing Strategy at a housing forum which is currently planned for late 2017. Members will be formally invited to the event and a copy of the final document will be provided.

Key Implications

Financial

The Housing Strategy will be delivered with existing resources and by bidding for additional external funding, where required.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The District Council has certain statutory duties related to this Draft Housing Strategy and it is good practice to set out its approach to strategy in this respect.

Equality Assessment

The Draft Housing Strategy has been developed taking into account all residents in the District and with the aim of improving housing conditions, tackling health

