

**CABINET
8 JULY 2025**

CONSULTATION ON A HOMES STRATEGY FOR THE BOROUGH

**Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Chris McEwan, Economy Portfolio
Councillor Matthew Roche, Health and Housing Portfolio
Councillor Jim Garner, Stronger Communities Portfolio**

**Responsible Director -
Trevor Watson, Executive Director Economy and Public Protection**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek members approval to undertake a public consultation on the draft Homes Strategy (**Appendix 1**).

Summary

2. The draft Homes Strategy 2025 – 2030 provides a framework for the actions of the Council and its partners with regards to housing. The focus of the strategy is providing high quality homes across all tenures, meeting local needs and addressing the borough's housing challenges. It is designed to inform officers, members, partners, key stakeholders, and residents of our approach and priorities on a range of housing matters.
3. The strategy sets a high-level vision, and three key objectives focused around building new homes, improving standards, meeting the needs of our ageing population and supporting people to live independently. The document also contains a number of associated outcomes and actions which we aim to achieve over the next five years (summarised in Appendix 1 of the draft strategy).

Recommendations

4. It is recommended Members consider the draft Homes Strategy at Appendix 1 and approve the document for public consultation.

Reasons

5. The recommendation is supported as the Homes Strategy will provide a clear framework for the Council's strategic direction and actions on housing matters.

**Trevor Watson
Executive Director Economy and Public Protection**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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Council Plan	The strategy supports the core priority of homes that are affordable, secure and meet the current and future needs of residents. There are also a range of indirect benefits for the other priorities of the Council Plan.
Addressing inequalities	The draft strategy considers inequalities around age and disability. It sets priorities and actions to provide positive impacts on these inequalities in relation to housing provision. This will help to ensure opportunities are accessible to everyone for good housing. It is important to note that the strategy brings together a number of existing Council policies and strategies which have been subject to equality impact assessment.
Tackling Climate Change	Includes measures and actions the Council aims to achieve in terms of housing to mitigate climate change and reduce carbon emissions.
Efficient and effective use of resources	A number of the existing policies and strategies referenced in the document support the efficient and effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	High quality homes in the right places supports the health and wellbeing of local residents.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are benefits in reducing levels of crime through several of the priorities in the strategy. For example, encouraging good design and placemaking, urban regeneration and tackling homelessness.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The Homes Strategy will be monitored and reviewed by the planning policy team and other related service areas. There will be no direct impact on the Council's budget. When approved it will form part of the Council's policy framework.
Key Decision	Yes
Urgent Decision	No
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	Positive impacts with regards to the provision of supported and specialist housing.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

- The Council has a wide variety of roles and responsibilities with regards to housing in the borough. The homes and the places in which people live are vital to our local

communities, influencing overall health and wellbeing. The draft Homes Strategy (appendix 1) provides a framework for the actions of the Council and its partners. The document sets out our strategic direction to maintain and improve the quality of housing to meet local needs and to address the boroughs housing challenges.

7. Given the breadth of the Council's work in housing matters, officers have worked across services areas to produce a draft Homes Strategy. The previous strategy covered the period from 2012 – 2017. Although a number of the key issues remain the same, much has changed since the publication of the previous strategy.
8. The draft strategy sets a high-level vision - to provide high quality homes in attractive places across all tenures; meeting the housing needs of residents and ensuring access to safe, secure, comfortable and sustainable housing for all. There are also three associated objectives which are set out below and a number of actions which we aim to achieve over the next five years. These actions are summarised in Appendix 1 of the strategy:
 - (a) Objective 1: Building homes, with an emphasis on affordable and social homes, to meet local needs;
 - (b) Objective 2: Improving the standards of existing housing, achieving net zero carbon and revitalising neighbourhoods;
 - (c) Objective 3: Meeting the needs of our ageing population and supporting people to live independently.
9. The document recognises the importance of a variety of housing matters that the Council is involved in. This includes, delivering new homes, including affordable and social housing, ensuring good placemaking, upgrading existing stock, addressing the needs of specific groups, providing specialist/supported housing and tackling homelessness.
10. Some early engagement was undertaken with the Council's developer's forum (consisting of house builders and registered providers) and a supported living and extra care providers forum. Responses back were however limited, and the intention now is to undertake a wider public consultation on the draft strategy for a period of six weeks.
11. Following the consultation, it is intended that responses will be analysed and changes made to the strategy if required. The final document will be brought back to Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet for formal approval.

Consultation

12. Consultation will occur for a six-week period, with internal consultees, external consultees and the wider population.

Outcome of Consultation

13. A further report will be prepared following the end of the consultation and will be brought back to Cabinet with recommendations.