Housing Strategy and delivery plan

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	25 March 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Hilary Cole
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	15 January 2021
Report Author:	Janet Weekes
Forward Plan Ref:	EX3833

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek approval for the Housing Strategy and delivery plan 2020 - 2036.

2 Recommendation

The Executive to approve the Housing Strategy 2020 – 2036 and the delivery plan, as set out at Appendix A.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The financial implications relate to costs associated with the delivery plan, and pressure bids have been submitted in preparation for approval to adopt the housing strategy.
Human Resource:	There are no HR implications.
Legal:	Whilst section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 conferred the power on the Secretary of State to require local housing authorities to have a housing strategy, this was repealed by section 29 of the Deregulation Act 2015. This means there is no statutory requirement for the Council to have a Housing Strategy. However, the Council's constitution includes a Policy Framework and the Housing Strategy is one of the key strategies that will be delivered as part of this. It is also considered best practice for a local housing authority to set out its future strategic plan in a Housing Strategy, and for

	that strategy to have been developed through evidence and consultation. The Council has a range of statutory duties relating to housing, homelessness, and reviewing housing conditions. This strategy will assist the Council in meeting those duties.			
Risk Management:	The risk management for the housing strategy is set out in the delivery plan along with the mitigation to manage the risk. These risks broadly cover resources, planning issues and external factors such as, lack of interest that may arise once the actions are undertaken.			
Property:	Whilst it is not anticipated that the housing strategy will have any immediate impact on Property, the Housing Service regularly liaises with Corporate Property where there are property related matters and will continue to do so in relation to this strategy and the delivery plan.			
Policy:	This housing strategy is a high level outward facing document therefore policies such as, the Local Plan, Affordable Housing Planning Policy, Housing Allocations Policy, Grants and Loans Policy and the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy will all feed into the Housing Strategy and any reviews will be completed in consideration of the Housing Strategy.			
	Positive	**Neutral**	**Negative**	**Commentary**
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			The Housing Strategy will have a positive impact because it will enable every resident to have access to a home that meets their needs

B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The draft housing strategy will benefit the lives of people with a protected characteristic as it is a strategy to enable and increase housing in the district.
Environmental Impact:		X		The draft housing strategy has a number of measures identified on page 18 along with the approach taken through the Environmental Strategy 2020 – 2030 that will support the environment.
Health Impact:	X			The draft housing strategy supports people who have housing issues which significantly impact upon their health.
ICT or Digital Services Impact:		X		The draft housing strategy will not have any ICT or Digital Services impact.

Council Strategy Priorities or Business as Usual:	X			The housing strategy will support the following Council Priorities: Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes; • Improve the health and wellbeing of our residents through appropriate interventions and policies. • Help people to help themselves and others. • Support everyone to reach their full potential. • Improve the health and wellbeing of our residents through appropriate interventions and policies. Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy; • Develop an Integrated Infrastructure Plan to deliver regeneration, housing, flood prevention and alleviation schemes, and travel and transport infrastructure. Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships; • Use data to better understand our services and to improve the way we interact and deliver services.
Data Impact:		X		The housing strategy will not have any impact on the rights of data subjects or how their data is used by the Council.
Consultation and Engagement:	Full details of this consultation can be found in the consultation report at Appendix B			

4 Executive Summary

4.1 The Housing Strategy 2020 – 2036 is a key corporate strategy that sets out how the Council intends to influence and intervene within the local housing market for the benefit of residents. It has been developed in light of legislative, national and local changes that has emerged nationally and locally. It is a strategy that is outward facing with a focus

on enabling every resident to have access to a home that meets their needs and to reduce homelessness.

4.2 The Housing Strategy will enable the Council to set out the strategic housing framework for the period up to 2036 and will link with the Council's corporate vision, and provide the ability to secure longer term interventions in the housing market.

4.3 The Housing Strategy 2020 - 2036 has therefore been updated to reflect these changes.

4.4 The Council carried out consultation for the draft Housing Strategy between 18 September 2020 until 01 November 2020 and this provided for a period in excess of 6 weeks and complies with the requirements of the Council's Consultation Policy.

4.5 We developed and implemented a comprehensive communication plan to ensure that we consulted extensively and in a range of different ways using social media, attending meetings, the website, questionnaire and a press release.

4.6 A total of 477 stakeholder's submitted feedback but of these only 271 responses were viable for data analysis due to not being fully completed.

4.7 We received feedback relating to environmental issues, infrastructure, and affordability, the requirement for a range of accommodation, Covid-19 and a glossary of terms to name a few.

4.8 Feedback from partners demonstrated support for the draft Housing Strategy and delivery plan and changes have been made to the Housing Strategy to take account of all the feedback received.

4.9 The full consultation report is attached as Appendix B

4.10 The final proposed Housing Strategy following consultation is attached as Appendix A.

4.11 If the recommendation to adopt and approve the proposed Housing Strategy is not agreed this will delay the progression of the Housing Strategy and its key priorities.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 This report seeks approval to adopt the Housing Strategy 2020 – 2036 and the delivery plan.

5.2 The Housing Strategy has two key priorities:

Priority 1 – Enable every resident to have access to a home that meets their needs
Priority 2 – Reduce homelessness

5.3 The Delivery Plan sets out how the Council will work with partners to deliver the actions from the Housing Strategy.

Background

5.4 The Council has a range of statutory duties relating to housing, homelessness, and reviewing housing conditions. This strategy will assist the Council in meeting those duties and the delivery of the 'Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy'.

5.5 It is considered best practice for a local housing authority to set out its future strategic plan in a Housing Strategy, and for that strategy to have been developed through evidence and consultation.

5.6 The draft Housing Strategy will enable the Council to set out the strategic housing framework for the period up to 2036 and will link with the Council's corporate vision, and provide the ability to secure longer term interventions in the housing market and enable access to housing.

5.7 The draft Housing Strategy was developed in conjunction with other corporate strategies and policies, with engagement from our internal and external partners, key stakeholders and residents and by reviewing new legislation, national policy changes and updated guidance from central government.

5.8 The draft Housing Strategy details how a thriving housing market can positively influence and support the delivery of the Council's vision and priorities:

Priority 1 - Enable every resident to have access to a home that meets their needs

Priority 2 - Reduce homelessness

5.9 The draft Housing Strategy will also complete our commitment to answer and respond to the question, 'What does housing mean to us in West Berkshire Council?' following our Peer Review.

Proposals

5.10 To adopt and implement the draft Housing Strategy and delivery plan.

5.11 Publishing a Housing Strategy is therefore key to ensuring that the Council is clear about the strategic plan to meet housing need, support other plans such as the Local Plan, lead and influence the housing market, support the delivery of the Council's vision and priorities; and enable every resident to have access to a home and reduce homelessness.

6 Other options considered

6.1 The option not to review and develop a new draft Housing Strategy was dismissed due to changes nationally and locally and due to changes in legislation.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The draft Housing Strategy 2020 – 2036 is a high level document that has been developed in accordance with the Council's consultation policy and constitution to ensure a range of views and the results have been taken into account as part of the evidence base.

7.2 The Housing Strategy provides the framework and direction for enabling and delivering new homes, ensuring access to good quality homes in the private rented sector, influencing the housing market, enabling residents to remain in their homes and reducing homelessness.

7.3 The Housing Strategy links to a number of corporate priorities that align with the Council's vision such as;

- Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes,
- Develop local infrastructure, including housing to support and grow the local economy
- Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships and
- Support everyone to reach their full potential.

7.4 This report seeks approval to adopt the draft Housing Strategy and delivery plan.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Draft Housing Strategy and delivery plan

8.2 Appendix B – Consultation report

Background Papers:

None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

Wards affected: All wards

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Document Control

Document Ref:	1	**Date Created:**	29/12/2020
Version:	0.1	**Date Modified:**	16/03/2021
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Owning Service	Housing		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
0.1	05.01.2021	Draft Housing Strategy changes made following closure of consultation on 01/11/2020 – Housing Board	
0.2	26.01.2021	Change of Committee considering report – Overview & Scrutiny	
0.3	23.02.2021	Change of Committee considering report – Corporate Board	
0.4	04.03.2021	Change of Committee considering report – Operations Board	
0.5	25.03.2021	Change of Committee considering report – Executive	