

TO: **EXECUTIVE**
27TH SEPTEMBER 2016

DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY
Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To ask Executive to consider the draft Housing Strategy report as the basis for developing the Council's Housing Strategy Statement via consultation.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That Executive agrees:

- 2.1 To the draft Housing Strategy as at Appendix A providing the basis of consultation to develop the Housing Strategy Statement.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Local Authorities have a statutory obligation under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 to periodically undertake reviews of housing needs in the Districts and to develop strategies to address those needs.
- 3.2 The Council's Annual Plan 2015 to 2019 has set six strategic objectives. The Housing Strategy will directly support the objective to support a strong and resilient economy as well as strong, safe, supportive and self reliant communities.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There is no alternative than to develop a Housing Strategy statement.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Council's previous Housing Strategy statement ran from 2009 to 2014. There has been significant legislation recently such as the Housing and Planning Act which will have a major impact on the development of the Housing Strategy.
- 5.2 Appendix A includes the draft Housing Strategy which it is proposed as a basis for consultation to develop the Housing Strategy Statement. The report proposes the following main points as the basis of Council intervention in the housing market place:-
- Visioning for Bracknell Forest 2036 by supporting the communities of Bracknell Forest to think through where, their children and their grandchildren and parents will live.
 - Taking the debate about future economic growth, health and social care, and housing affordability to the community to inform about options and requirements to secure and or keep a home in Bracknell Forest.

- Undertaking a review of the Council assets or development vehicles, land and property and the scope for prudential borrowing to formulate a strategy for their blended deployment in promoting, incentivising, triggering and enhancing the scale and pace of residential and mixed use development in line with the recommendations of the Housing and Finance Institute.
- Exploring the scope for enlarging the role of Downshire Homes in line with the recommendations of the Housing and Finance Institute to widen the Council's direct involvement in the local housing market and lead new initiatives subject to the Downshire Homes Board agreement.
- Engaging and marshalling the resources of registered providers around the formulation of a Bracknell Social Housing Community Charter which establishes a long term strategic relationship and commitment to the maintenance of a sustainable stock of affordable homes for rent and the stewardship of social investment schemes to support sustainable tenancies.
- Mobilising registered providers to promote, animate and sustain a programme of support for self build housing and to sponsor custom build, co-housing, cooperative and mutual home ownership initiatives targeted on private and social housing tenants and emerging households in the local community.
- Engaging and marshalling the resources of private landlords and lettings agents in the borough around the formulation of an National Landlord Association (NLA) led review which aims to provide assurance and stability to both landlords and tenants in the PRS marketplace, extending rental periods and landlords' indemnification and facilitating discharge of duty into the private rented sector.
- Engaging with Pension Funds and Insurance Companies proposing investing in private rented portfolios and off site construction to offer opportunities for large scale demonstration projects to establish Bracknell as a beacon authority in hosting and promoting this approach.
- Undertaking with service providers, an impact assessment of the welfare benefits, workplace pension and living wage reforms on the ongoing availability, viability and cost of current and future local domiciliary care services.
- Establishing a Bracknell Forest Extra Care and Retirement Village Developers Forum to actively develop a market for these older people's housing developments.

5.3 It is recommended that the report at Appendix A is used as a basis for consultation with stakeholders so as to develop the Council's Housing Strategy.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 The relevant legal issues are addressed within the body of the report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 The draft strategy for consultation contains no direct financial implications for the Council. The costs of the consultation will be met from existing resources.

Chief Officer planning and Transportation

6.3 The comments of the Chief Officer: Planning and Transportation are included in the draft Housing Strategy report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 This report proposes a draft strategy to be offered for consultation. It will be necessary to undertake an equality impact assessment once the strategy proposals are formalised. An equality screening record is included at Appendix B.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 There are no strategic risks stemming from this report. However, failure to develop a housing strategy that can effectively intervene in the housing market to address the identified needs would generate risk for the Council.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation will take place with the Council's existing partnership groups such as registered provider groups, and the Older Persons Partnership. It will also take place with key stakeholders such as residential developers. In addition consultation will take place with the wider community. Consultation methods will include meetings as well as the Council's consultation portal. It will be necessary to undertake pro-active consultation with the local community so as to manage future housing aspirations as well as develop an on going dialogue for the life of the strategy.

Contact for further information

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