

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 8 APRIL 2019

Report Title	A Strategy for Housing and the Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2019-2024
KEY DECISION	Yes
Report Author	Tom Day, Community Partnerships Manager
Purpose of Report	For the Executive to consider the Strategy for Housing and the Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2019-2024 ('the Housing Strategy') and to recommend that Council adopt the strategy.
Reason for Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Housing Strategy will bring the Councils housing functions together and set out the high level priorities for the district in meeting current and future housing needs. 2. The Housing Strategy will support the delivery of housing needs identified in the Local Plan submission. 3. The current Homelessness Strategy is due for review to ensure that priorities remain up to date and take account of recent new legislation. 4. The Government Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 requires that all local authorities adopt a local Rough Sleeping Strategy by winter 2019. 5. There has been a consultation and stakeholder engagement in developing the Strategy. This included the Communities Scrutiny Panel.
Portfolio (holder)	Cllr Phillip King, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration.
Corporate Priorities	CO3 Quality Homes for all CO6 More-accessible Services available 24/7 CO8 Support Vulnerable People
Financial Implications	Resources to deliver the strategy will be met within the Councils budget and reviewed annually. This is in addition to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off Site Commuted sums to invest in new additional affordable homes • Grants from Government to prevent homelessness (£156,00 between 17/18 and 19/20)

	<p>Working in partnership to access external resources will also be important in meeting objectives. This includes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Affordable Homes Programme funding available to Registered Providers • Developer contributions for affordable housing through Section 106 Agreements • Ability of Registered Providers to fund affordable housing development by recycling their own funds or securing additional private sector funding • Government policy initiatives to support first time buyers and encourage development of new housing • Government funding for Rough Sleeping initiatives.
Risk Management Implications	<p>Delivery of the Strategy contributes to the strategic risk that the Council is not able to meet local housing needs in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building enough new homes to meet demand, including specialist and extra care housing • Improving the quality of existing homes to meet long-term needs • Statutory duty to prevent and relieve homelessness.
Environmental Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and landscaping standards for new developments is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan Submission • Measures to improve energy efficiency of existing homes are set out in the strategy.
Legal Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Strategy supports the delivery of statutory duties, regulatory orders and government policy around housing.
Equality Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified in Appendix B
Data Protection Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None directly arising from this report
Consultation	<p>Consultation has been undertaken through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities scrutiny panel • Stakeholder event • Public consultation
Options	<p>To review the Homelessness Strategy (statutory) and develop a Rough Sleeper Strategy separately (which must be completed by the end of 2019 under the Governments Rough Sleeper Strategy) was considered. However this would not identify interdependences or address the lack in supply of</p>

	affordable housing options which is a key contributor to homelessness.
Background Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy, Communities Scrutiny Panel, 28 September 2017 • Draft Housing & Homelessness Prevention Strategy, Executive, 12 March 2018
Recommendation	<p>1. That the Housing Strategy set out in Appendix A is recommended to Council for adoption.</p>

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a Local Authority, Harborough District Council has an important strategic and enabling role in relation to housing provision in the District.
- The Council has a strategic responsibility to forecast population growth and housing needs.
 - The Council then works with partners, such as housing developers, private landlords and Registered Providers (RPs) to ensure housing options are available to meet this need.
- 1.2 To deliver this role the Council carries out a number of functions including;
- Producing a Local Plan, which identifies needs and sites for housing and employment
 - Delivering the required housing through the planning system
 - Working with developers and Registered Providers to build, let and sell affordable homes
 - Setting policy on how to allocate social housing to those in need
 - Providing housing advice and preventing homelessness
 - Tools to help minimise empty properties
 - Providing grants, loans and assistance to adapt properties in certain cases
 - Enforcing housing standards in the private sector.
- 1.3 Developing a new Housing Strategy to guide these workstreams is ultimately about ensuring that people in local communities have access to decent and affordable housing. The new Strategy highlights the housing issues facing the district in the short and long term and identifies what the Council is doing to tackle these issues.

2. Key Facts

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy combines a traditional five year Housing Strategy with a five year Homelessness Prevention Strategy and a five year Rough Sleeping Strategy. This recognises the complexities within homelessness and the link

between homelessness and the supply of affordable homes.

- 2.2 The current Housing Strategy covers the period up to the adoption of the new Local Plan. The Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy is intended to be a core document setting out the Councils approach to meeting housing needs in the Harborough district to 2031. Increasing the supply of housing options, particularly affordable housing is a long-term issue.
- 2.3 The current Homelessness Prevention Strategy requires updating to reflect current issues and to set out the Councils response to the extended statutory duties in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 2.4 The Communities Scrutiny Panel, on 28 September 2017, considered a report on the key housing issues as part of the development of this strategy. The key comments from scrutiny included;
 - Promotion of new affordable home ownership properties, such as shared ownership units so that local residents are aware of all options.
 - The importance of specialist housing in meeting the needs of people with disabilities and health issues.
 - Endorsement of the work the Council has undertaken in preparation for the Homelessness Reduction Act. This includes investment in additional staffing and systems that will deliver channel shift and improve the customer experience in applying to join the Housing Register and bid for properties through Choice Based Lettings.
 - Effective use of commuted sums to bring forward more affordable housing.
 - That consideration should be given to the Council purchasing additional properties to use as temporary accommodation – providing a higher quality and cheaper alternative to bed & breakfast.
- 2.5 A public consultation was held on the draft strategy between May and June 2018. This included an email to all Members and Parish Councils in addition to contacting developers and Registered Providers.
- 2.6 A consultation event with developers and Registered Providers was held on 27 September. This was attended by 23 housing stakeholders including developers, Registered Providers, neighbouring Councils, police, NHS and Leicestershire County Council. The key outcomes from the event included;
 - Agreement on the key housing challenges – affordability, getting the right house types in the right location, homelessness prevention, and meeting the needs of an older population.
 - A joint commitment to work together towards meeting affordable housing needs in Harborough District.
- 2.7 The Housing Strategy will be reviewed and performance monitored annually through the overview and scrutiny process