

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
7 NOVEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Peter Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development.	
Contact Officer(s):	Anne Keogh, Housing and Strategic Planning Manager Caroline Hannon, Senior Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer	Tel. 863815 Tel. 863818

THE DRAFT PETERBOROUGH HOUSING STRATEGY 2016 TO 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM Corporate Director of Growth and Regeneration	Deadline date: N/A
1. That Cabinet approves the draft Housing Strategy for public consultation.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report is submitted to Cabinet following recent changes to Government's policy and procedures towards housing, and following the end of the current Peterborough Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an overview of the draft Housing Strategy 2016-21 and seek approval for the document to begin a minimum of 4 weeks public consultation.
- 2.2. On adoption the Peterborough Housing Strategy will be a major policy item for the Council. The draft sets out the Council's priorities and commitments for the period 2016-2021 for a broad range of Housing matters, including rural housing issues. The draft Housing Strategy will be widely consulted on to ensure that all stakeholders and partners have an opportunity to influence the final report.
- 2.3. This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.1.

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	Yes	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	7 November 2016
Date for relevant Council meeting	N/A (consultation only)	Date of submission to Government Dept	N/A

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 Style of the draft Strategy

- 4.1.1 The draft Strategy has been prepared as a document that is:

- Succinct, yet informative

- Written in an easy reading style that will make it accessible to a range of audiences
- Clear as to what the Council wants to achieve and what measures it will take to get there

4.2 Structure of the draft Strategy

4.2.1 The Strategy consists of four main parts:

- An introduction to the Strategy and an explanation as to how to submit comments on the draft during the consultation period (scheduled to commence towards the end of November, for a minimum of four weeks):
- An overview of the National and Local legislative and policy context and the opportunities and challenges they presents for housing in Peterborough
- A set of four priorities, each with their own set of specific measures that the council will implement to achieve them
- Key snapshot facts and figures and case studies relevant to identified priorities

4.3 The Housing Strategy Priorities

4.3.1 Priority one - **How we will support substantial and sustainable growth.** A range of key measures are identified to contribute to the delivery of growth in Peterborough. These include preparing a new Local Plan to ensure Peterborough is equipped to meet our growth needs, but also to ensure that growth is sustainable and responds to the demand for all types of housing including rural housing that is affordable to local residents. Supporting other important initiatives such as Peterborough's new housing Joint Venture with Cross Keys Homes which will deliver new housing of all types and tenures including affordable homes, and ring-fencing funding to support affordable housing providers to meet affordable housing needs in Peterborough, are also identified as key areas that can contribute to Peterborough's sustainable growth.

4.3.2 Priority two - **How we will increase the supply of homes that people can afford.** The key measures identified in this section are; ensuring a balanced mix of property types and tenures particularly recognising the likely reduction in the provision of new rented affordable homes as a result in changes to national policy and funding priorities; ensuring the sustainability of rural communities through affordable housing provision to address local need; supporting community led housing solutions in rural neighbourhoods such as rural exception sites; and ensuring that allocation policies and tenure policies for social housing promote mixed and sustainable communities in the light of Government's social housing and welfare reforms.

4.3.3 Priority three - **How we will improve housing conditions to support health and wellbeing.** This priority focuses on utilising a range of preventative and proactive measures that will improve living conditions in Peterborough's existing homes. The key measures identified are tackling empty homes, addressing serious disrepair in the private sector through grants and through enforcement and providing aids and adaptations to enable frail elderly people and people with disabilities to remain safely in their homes. Maximising the energy efficiency of existing housing particularly in rural areas where there are a significant number of off-gas heated homes, is also identified as an important area for tackling indoor cold and fuel poverty.

4.3.4 Priority four - **How we will ensure that a range of supported and specialist accommodation is available.** The key measure identified to contribute to achieving this priority is ensuring the suitability of accommodation for households with specific housing needs both within the existing stock and within future stock by supporting the provision of a range of property types that will cater for different specialist needs. This involves partnership working with key stakeholders including Adult and Children's services, private sector housing and care providers, affordable housing registered providers and health.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Housing Strategy and Enabling team (part of Sustainable Growth Strategy service area within the Growth and Regeneration Department) has coordinated the preparation of the Strategy in association with the relevant service areas within the council, which reflect the wide range of issues which the Strategy covers. Therefore officers across the council have been consulted with and involved in the development of areas of the Strategy that reflect their service areas.
- 5.2 Comments from the Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities held on 6 September 2016 have helped to inform the development of the draft Strategy thus far. In addition, the Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Strategy on 25 October, and made the following comments:
1. The Committee endorse the draft Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021 and recommend it to Cabinet for approval.
 2. The Committee also recommend that Cabinet note the following concerns of the Committee:
 - a. Homelessness is a growing issue and that the Council should continue to make reducing this a priority.
 - b. There is a lack of affordable housing and the Council should deliver more affordable homes through initiatives such as the new housing company with Cross Keys.
 - c. There are a number of empty and derelict properties with planning permission and the Council should do everything within its power to address this.
- 5.4 Assuming the draft Housing Strategy is approved by Cabinet on 7 November 2016 for public consultation, a minimum of a four week consultation will take place on the attached document during November and December 2016. Issues raised during that consultation period will be fully considered, and changes made to the Strategy where appropriate, before submitting the final version of the Strategy to Cabinet and Full Council in the new year.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1 It is anticipated that Cabinet will seek to approve the attached document for the purposes of public consultation.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The stated lifespan of the existing Peterborough Housing Strategy is from 2011 to 2015. Plans to renew the Strategy were delayed to await the outcome of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The major anticipated announcements have now been made by Government, so the timing to publish our own local housing strategy is very timely.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 A 'do nothing' option (where no new Housing Strategy is developed and the existing Housing Strategy is not updated) was considered. However such an approach would mean that Peterborough would have an out of date Strategy which did not reflect the significant changes to national housing and welfare policy and how we as a council plan to respond to them. A refresh of the Strategy was necessary to ensure that we have a fit for purpose Housing Strategy.

9. IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 **Financial:** Preparation of the Housing Strategy at this stage only involves staffing resource costs that are met within existing budgets. However, the Housing Strategy, once adopted, will commit the council to undertaking various activities in the future, each of which have

varying cost implications. These tasks however, will have been agreed with the applicable service areas, and therefore it is anticipated that the budgets will be in place in order to achieve the measures proposed. As such, there will be no new financial implications directly arising from the Strategy, other than those already accounted for in existing budgets.

9.2 **Legal Implications:** Local Authorities in England are no longer required to have a Housing Strategy (Deregulation Act 2015 amendments apply) however, it is an important strategy to deal with the housing needs of the growing population and an important part of the major policy framework. There are no Legal implications involved in the development of the draft Strategy. The bigger risk in not achieving what we set out in the Strategy is a reputational risk, rather than any legal risk.

9.3 **Environment Capital:** sections of the Strategy relate to environmental issues, such as tackling fuel poverty and bringing empty housing back into use. Overall, the Strategy can be regarded as having a positive impact on tackling environmental issues and our aspirations to create the UK's Environment Capital.

10. **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

10.1 None.

11. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – The Draft Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021