

<b>GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM NO. 6</b>
<b>15 MARCH 2017</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

## **Report of the Corporate Director of Growth and Regeneration**

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## **THE PETERBOROUGH HOUSING STRATEGY 2016 TO 2021**

### **1. PURPOSE**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Housing Strategy and seek comments from the Committee on the final version of the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021 prior to its consideration by Cabinet and Council.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Make comments on the changes arising from the public consultation and consider the final Housing Strategy document and;
2. Endorse the final Housing Strategy for approval at Cabinet and for adoption by Council.

### **3. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND RELEVANT CABINET PORTFOLIO**

3.1 The Housing Strategy cuts across all the corporate priorities but is particularly linked to:

1. Driving growth, regeneration and economic development
2. Implementing the Environment Capital agenda
3. Keeping all our communities safe, cohesive and healthy
4. Achieving the best health and wellbeing for the city

3.2 The Housing Strategy falls under the remit of the Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 On adoption the Peterborough Housing Strategy will be a major policy item for the Council. The Strategy 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 Housing Strategy has been widely consulted on to ensure that all stakeholders and partners have had an opportunity to influence the final report.

### **5. KEY ISSUES**

#### **5.1 Style of the Strategy**

The 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

## 5.2 Structure of the draft Strategy

The Strategy consists of four main parts:

- An introduction to the Strategy and a brief summary of the outcome of the consultation
- An overview of the National and Local legislative and policy context and the opportunities and challenges they present 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

## 5.3 The Housing Strategy Priorities

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1 Financial:** Preparation of the Housing Strategy only involved staffing resource costs that were 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.

**Legal Implications:** Local Authorities in England are no longer required to have a Housing Strategy (Deregulation Act 2015 amendments apply) However local authorities continue to provide Housing Strategy as they are a useful planning tool identifying the needs of diverse, changing and growing communities. The Equalities Act 2012 requires local authorities to consider the needs of diverse communities. The Housing Strategy will enable the Council to identify and plan for current and future needs,

**Environmental:** 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.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

**7.1** 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.

On 25<sup>th</sup> October this Committee commented on the Draft Housing Strategy prior to the public consultation commencing and these comments set out below were presented to Cabinet along with the recommendation that the draft was approved for consultation.

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.

Following approval of the draft Housing Strategy at Cabinet on 7 November 2016, the document was subject to a 6 week public consultation process from 28 November 2016 to 16 January 2017.

Details of the consultation on the draft Housing Strategy were published on Peterborough City Council's Website

A wide range of key stakeholders including all Registered Providers with housing stock in Peterborough were sent electronic notification of the consultation period, electronic copies of both documents with a representation form and a link to Council's online consultation survey as a means of providing their feedback.

On completion of the consultation process, issues raised during that consultation period were fully considered and changes have been made to the Housing Strategy where appropriate. Further details of the consultation responses received can be found at Appendix Two.

We received some useful comments and suggestions alongside considerable support for the Strategy including from key stakeholders.

In response to the consultation, the following notable amendments have been incorporated into the final version of the Housing Strategy:

- The National Context has been updated to reflect changes to Government policy and include the new Housing White Paper
- Expansion of the commentary relating to the City Council's approach to tackling homelessness to reflect the successful bid for additional DCLG funding under the homelessness prevention trailblazer scheme.
- Neighbourhood Plans have been acknowledged as key local documents that will inform and underpin the Housing Strategy and therefore added to the diagram illustrating the local policy context for Peterborough
- Numerous other minor amendments and updates have been undertaken to the document as a result of feedback from the consultation and progress on national policy delivery and local delivery targets.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

8.1 The Housing Strategy and any comments made by Committee will be presented to Cabinet on 20 March for recommendation for adoption by Council.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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

9.1 None

## **10. APPENDICES**

10.1 Appendix 1 The Housing Strategy 2016 to 21

Appendix 2 Key Issues Report on Consultation Responses