

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
17 JUNE 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Adrian Chapman, Executive Director – Place and Economy	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Alison Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	
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THE PETERBOROUGH HOUSING STRATEGY 2024 - 2029

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Executive Director for Place and Economy	Deadline date: 17 June 2024
<p>It is recommended that Cabinet considers the consultation response to the Draft Housing Strategy summarised in Key Issues Report and supports the Housing Strategy and recommends it to council for adoption for public consultation.</p>	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following a referral from CLT on 28 May 2024.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek support from Cabinet for the attached Peterborough Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029 and for Cabinet to recommend its adoption by Council.

On adoption, the Peterborough Housing Strategy will be a major policy for the Council. The draft sets out the Council’s priorities and commitments for the period 2024-2029 for a broad range of housing matters. The Housing Strategy has been widely consulted on to ensure that all stakeholders and partners had an opportunity to influence the final report.

2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its scheme of delegations Nos. 3.2.8. and 3.2.9.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	YES	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	17/06/2024
Date for relevant Council meeting	24 th July 2024	Date for submission to Government Dept. <i>(Please specify which Government Dept.)</i>	N/A

4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 This Housing Strategy sets out the Council’s proposed housing-related agenda between 2024

and 2029 and identifies four overarching priorities that will drive our housing commitments and programmes in Peterborough over this five-year period.

The Housing Strategy is intended to benefit everyone who lives within Peterborough City Council's area. It will set out the key role that housing plays in improving the economic, social, and environmental aspirations of the city as well as identifying we and our partners can work together to address the housing needs of current and future households.

4.2 **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

The structure of the Housing Strategy

The document includes the following elements:

- A Foreword providing an introduction to the strategy and a brief summary of the outcome of the consultation.
- An overview of the national and local policy context and how they impact our housing agenda.
- A set of four priorities which are underpinned by the themes of improving health and wellbeing and protecting our environment as key drivers for delivering each priority. Each priority has a set of achievable and measurable actions that the council will implement to achieve them.
- Key snapshot facts and figures for Peterborough to set the scene and introduce each of the four priorities.
- Case studies to illustrate and demonstrate initiatives and actions that support delivery of each priority.
- A glossary of terms.

4.3 **The Housing Strategy Priorities**

Priority one - How we will deliver sustainable growth and regeneration in Peterborough through high quality place making that enhances health and wellbeing and supports the council's ambitions for Peterborough to become a net zero carbon city.

Measures identified to support the delivery of this priority include:

- Refreshing the Local Plan to identify new locations for growth in Peterborough, to meet both our longer-term housing and employment needs up to 2044.
- Supporting and growing the local economy by boosting local skills and educational attainment through the university working in partnership with employers.
- Reviewing the policies of the Local Plan to support Peterborough to become a net zero carbon city with the aim to be truly sustainable.
- Updating our understanding of the local housing market to ensure we can respond to the housing demand for all types of housing including prestige housing, student accommodation and affordable housing to cater for all our local housing requirements.

- Encouraging a balanced mix of property types and tenures in both urban and rural wards.
- Developing a design code as part of the emerging Local Plan process that delivers quality, accessible homes, and delivers places that enhance the health and well-being of local communities.
- Driving opportunities to regenerate key brownfield sites in the city to provide new homes, commercial development, and amenities that will improve the lives of residents through the provision of high-quality place making.

4.3.2 **Priority 2 - How we will increase the supply of homes that people can afford and tackle homelessness through prevention with a greater emphasis on early help.**

The focus of this priority is on early help and intervention to prevent homelessness where possible. The key objectives are:

- To reduce the number of households who reach a crisis point where they become homeless through early intervention and prevention and thereby reducing the flow of households into temporary accommodation.
- To ensure that those households whose homelessness cannot be prevented are provided with suitable temporary accommodation that minimises the negative impact on their health and wellbeing and makes the best use of our temporary accommodation stock.
- To maximise the supply of affordable homes and deliver on our pledge to secure the delivery of 1,250 affordable homes in Peterborough, between 2023-28, achieving a tenure split of 70% rented tenure homes and 30% affordable home ownership tenure homes.
- To increase the supply of suitable permanent housing options available to accelerate move on into settled housing for those in temporary accommodation and to provide solutions for households seeking our assistance prior to becoming homeless.
- To bring more long-term empty homes back into use and where viable and appropriate, work with owners to secure suitable dwellings as a means of increasing the supply of rented homes available.

4.3.3 **Priority 3 - How we will raise housing quality and standards in existing homes across all tenures to achieve improved health and wellbeing for residents.**

This priority focuses on utilising a range of preventative and proactive measures that will improve living conditions in Peterborough's existing homes across all tenures. The key measures include:

- Managing standards in the private rented sector through mandatory HMO licencing and implementation of a new selective licencing scheme, with the aim of supporting private landlords and tenants to ensure renting remains a sustainable housing option that meets all required standards.
- Exploring introducing an additional licencing scheme as a complimentary measure to regulate the private rented sector in the areas of the city not covered by the selective licencing scheme.
- Implementing an Article 4 direction in four wards to manage the impact of HMO accommodation in those designated areas of Peterborough.
- Tackling empty homes to improve neighbourhoods and increase the supply of housing available to residents.

- Addressing serious disrepair in the private sector through grants where available and through enforcement.
- Maximising the energy efficiency of existing housing including social housing stock to tackle indoor cold and damp and reduce fuel poverty at the same time as reducing carbon impact and improving sustainability.

4.3.4 **Priority 4 - How we will meet the need for accessible and adapted housing, supported accommodation, and housing for specific groups to promote health and wellbeing**

This priority focuses on ensuring the suitability of accommodation for households with specific housing needs and specialist support needs. The key objectives are:

1. Delivering accessible, adaptable housing to maintain independence by:

- Supporting the provision of new homes that are suitable and flexible to support the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life through policies in the emerging Local Plan.
- Securing the provision of wheelchair accessible new homes through planning obligations and working with developers and affordable housing providers to maximise delivery of affordable rented tenure wheelchair homes to meet the needs of disabled households on the housing register.
- Providing Disabled Facilities Grants for adaptations so that people with disabilities in all tenures can live independently in their existing home.
- Ensuring older people and other vulnerable households can live independently and safely in their homes for as long as possible through a range of early help interventions provided through the council's Home Service Delivery model. This service brings together Adult Social Care and Housing teams to deliver therapy services, reablement and assistive technology to improve personal independence skills, provide assistive technology and Care and Repair, the council's Home Improvement Agency to address conditions and safety in the home.

2. Meeting the need for supported accommodation for the following groups:

- Children in care
- 16–17-year-olds and care leavers
- Older people
- Vulnerable adults with social care needs including people with learning disabilities, autism and people with mental health support needs
- rough sleepers

3. Responding to the housing need of the following specific groups:

- Students
- Key workers
- Armed forces personnel
- Gypsies and Travellers
- Refugees

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 The priorities of the draft Housing Strategy links to the Council's Corporate Priorities and in particular:

1.The Economy & Inclusive Growth

- Environment (carbon Impact Assessment submitted with this report).

The Housing Strategy brings together in a single document the various elements that make up the council's strategic housing function. The purpose of the Housing Strategy is to identify the key housing issues and challenges facing the city over the next five years and to set high level priorities and objectives across the full range of housing-related areas.

The Housing Strategy and its Delivery Plan has been developed and prepared in collaboration with the relevant service areas within the Council, to ensure that the housing related themes and issues relevant to the delivery of their service area are reflected in the strategy and inform the priorities and areas for actions set out in the Delivery Plan. The actions are owned by the relevant service area and as council projects and initiatives they have or will undergo the appropriate scrutiny and approval including a carbon impact assessment where required. Therefore, the carbon impact assessment for the Housing Strategy can only provide a high level overview of the CIA for the respective projects referenced within the strategy.

The Housing strategy reflects our commitment for Peterborough to become a net zero carbon city that means that we must work hard to reduce housing related carbon emissions. The strategy also outlines the actions we will take to enhance existing homes by improving standards and safety and increasing energy efficiency.

- Homes and Workplaces
- Jobs and Money

2.Our Places & Communities

- Places and Safety
- Lives and Work
- Health and Wellbeing

The housing strategy provides a framework to draw together the many measures and initiatives and relevant policy strands that councils and their partners are working to deliver into a single, coordinated strategy to tackle local housing challenges. Through the four identified priorities it aims to support the inclusive and sustainable growth of our economy and the creation of healthy and safe homes and communities for Peterborough.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Housing Strategy has been developed and prepared in collaboration with the relevant service areas within the Council, to ensure that the housing related themes and issues relevant to the delivery of their service areas are reflected in the strategy and inform the priorities and areas for actions that it identifies.

Ongoing engagement with our Affordable Housing Provider partners and Homes England has taken place through the Strategic Housing Partnership as the strategy developed.

Following approval of the draft Housing Strategy at Cabinet on 15 January 2024, the document was subject to a 6 week public consultation process from 22nd January to 4th March 2024.

A Microsoft survey form to provide feedback was shared alongside the draft strategy that includes questions requiring a mix of check box responses and free text responses to enable more detailed comments and views to be recorded.

The consultation process was supported by a range of initiatives from our Comms team to help reach the widest possible audience. This included: promotion of the launch of the consultation on the home page of the council's website; full details on the consultation portal including access the draft strategy document and the consultation survey form; an article in the local press; an interview on local radio to publicise the consultation; notifications and ongoing updates on the council's social media platforms to encourage participation; efforts to restimulate interest at the later stages of the consultation by encouraging councillors to repost the information about the consultation to their contacts and constituents.

Our approach to reaching a more targeted audience has been via direct email to a list of 272 stakeholders (not including parish and local councillors) at the start of the consultation period, providing a link to take them to the consultation portal. This was followed up with a reminder email 3 weeks into the consultation period.

An overview of the outcome of the Housing strategy consultation process was presented to Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 19th March 2024 as part of the update report of the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing Growth and Regeneration.

A key issues report summarising the feedback received through the consultation process has been prepared and is attached at Appendix Two.

A total of forty responses were received to the housing strategy consultation. We were pleased to receive feedback from members of the public and key stakeholder groups including our local Affordable Housing Providers partners, landowners, developers and the voluntary sector. The complete list of the stakeholder groups that participated can be found in the introduction to the Consultation Key Issues report.

The majority of respondents agreed with the priorities and actions set out in the strategy. We received numerous comments of support but also some comments expressing concerns. All the main comments are set out in the Consultation Keys Issues report. Below is a brief summary of the key areas of support and concern raised in response to each priority:

Seventy-eight per cent agreed that delivering sustainable growth and regeneration should be a priority, 19% disagreed and 3% were unsure/undecided. Comments received in response to this priority and the actions to achieve this outcome included:

- support for the ambitions to align housing and economic growth
- support for the decision to refresh the Local Plan
- support for the measures to unlock Middleholme site
- Support for preparing a design Code for Peterborough subject to the opportunity to participate in a consultation process
 - concern about the rate of growth and the sustainability of continued growth
 - concern about the suitability of some potential sites to accommodate new homes
 - concern about the adequacy of infrastructure to support existing and future development.

Seventy-six per cent agreed that increasing the supply of homes that people can afford and tackling homelessness through early help and intervention should be a priority, 16% disagreed and 8% were unsure/undecided. Comments received in response to this priority and the actions set out to achieve this outcome included:

- Support for affordable housing delivery in sustainable locations
- Support highlighting the contribution that large scale housing developments make to providing affordable housing through S.106 agreements
 - concern about the affordability of the private rented sector for many households including single people
 - ensuring the availability of a range of affordable housing tenures and products to meet a range of housing need
 - concern about the challenges of reaching young people to successfully prevent homelessness through early intervention

Eighty-seven per cent agreed that raising housing quality and standards in existing homes should be a priority, and 8% disagreed and 5% were unsure/undecided. Comments received in response to this priority and the actions set out to achieve this outcome included:

- support and agreement that housing standards in some of the existing stock need to improve
- support for the actions as a vehicle to achieving improved standards
 - concern about the costs involved and whether it is affordable to implement
 - whether enough enforcement action is being taken to drive higher standards
 - monitoring build standards in new homes to reduce the need for future works and retrofitting.

Eighty-seven per cent agreed that accessible and adaptable housing, supported housing and quality and housing for specific groups should be a priority, 5% disagreed and 8% were unsure/undecided. Comments received in response to this priority and the actions set out to achieve this outcome included:

- support for initiatives to help people with disabilities
- support highlighting the contribution that large scale housing developments make to meeting the need for accessible and specialist housing within inclusive communities
- support highlighting the importance of joined up partnership working for delivering this priority
 - concern about the availability of revenue funding for supported accommodation
 - concern about the level of support available to vulnerable people to help them maintain their tenancies.

All issues and comments received from consultees were considered and a response has been included in the Key Issues report as required. Where issues or suggestions related to specific housing related service areas or functions, this response was informed by liaison with the relevant officers and service area.

The final version of housing strategy, which is attached as Appendix One, includes some minor amendments to the earlier draft document. These amendments are listed at the end of the consultation report. We received numerous comments in support of the strategy but also a notable number of comments expressing concern related to Peterborough's growth. These issues will be the subject of Planning Policy and will be addressed through the emerging Local Plan.

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 7.1 It is anticipated that Cabinet will support the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029. Subject to Cabinet approval, as this is a Major Policy Item, Council will be asked to formally adopt the Strategy.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 The existing Housing Strategy has now lapsed.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 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

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 10.1 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 set out measures and actions for delivery with varying cost implications. These measures and actions will reflect the service plans of the applicable service areas, and developed and agreed with the service area Leads. It is not intended that there will be new financial implications directly arising from the Strategy, other than those already accounted for in existing budgets.

Legal Implications

- 10.2 Local Authorities in England are no longer required to have a Housing Strategy (Deregulation Act 2015 Section 29 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 arising in relation to the development of the draft Strategy. The principal risk in not achieving what we set out in the Strategy is a reputational risk.

Equalities Implications

- 10.3 The Housing Strategy is intended to benefit everyone who lives within Peterborough City Council's area. It will set out the key role that housing plays in improving the economic, social, and environmental aspirations of the city as well as identifying how we and our partners can work together to address the housing needs of current and future households. The preparation of the Housing Strategy does not negatively discriminate against any group with protected characteristics and provides an opportunity to positively address equality and diversity issues through the delivery of the four identified housing priorities.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 11.1 Supporting Local and National Policies and Strategies relevant to the Housing Agenda set out in the Housing Strategy.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix 1 – The Housing Strategy 2024-29
Appendix 2 – The Housing Strategy Consultation Key Issues Report