

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**21 JUNE 2018**

**REPORT OF SENIOR  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **CABINET DECISION**

**Regeneration and Housing – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor N Cooke**

**HOUSING STRATEGY 2018-2023 / HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION STRATEGY 2018-2023**

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to adopt the Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and the Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023. These documents set out the Councils overarching vision and priorities for housing (across all tenures) and homelessness prevention in the borough over the coming 5-year period.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to:

1. Approve the draft Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023.
2. To ensure both strategies remain compliant with any changes in national legislation, and are fit for purpose it is proposed to undertaken an annual review of each document (as detailed in para 13 and as detailed in para 14, if appropriate to undertake an earlier review in response to recommendations arising from the Local Plan enquiry in June 2018. Following both reviews to delegate authorisation granted to the to the Director of Economic Growth and Development in consultation with the Director of HR, Legal and Communications and Cabinet Member for Regeneration to make any necessary changes.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision

To ensure the Council has an overarching Housing Strategy and Homelessness Reduction Strategy which clearly sets out; its long term priorities, the outcomes we are seeking to achieve and provides a clear direction for housing and the delivery of Homelessness services in the borough over the coming 5-years.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and,

if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code).

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**24 MAY 2018**

**REPORT OF SENIOR  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

## **CABINET DECISION**

**Regeneration and Housing – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor N Cooke**

**HOUSING STRATEGY 2018-2023 / HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION STRATEGY 2018-2023**

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The purpose of this report is to seek approval to adopt the Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and the Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023. These documents set out the Councils overarching vision and priorities for housing (across all tenures) and homelessness prevention in the borough over the coming 5-year period.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet are asked to:

1. Approve the draft Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023.
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### **DETAIL**

#### Overview / purpose of the Housing Strategy

1. The Housing Strategy is a framework for how the Council will address the challenges it will face in the coming years, giving direction to our partners and stakeholders involved in housing across all tenures (including residents, registered providers, private developers, government agencies, private landlords and voluntary and community groups), so that they can help and support us provide the right homes in the right places.
2. Both the Council Plan 2018-2023 and the Economic Growth Plan 2017-2020 include a number of housing related priorities. In essence these are collated in the Housing Strategy which details how we will work in partnership and across tenure to deliver the Councils housing ambitions.
3. In addition, the Housing Strategy will support the implementation of the emerging Local Plan.

4. As members will note there are 3 high level strategic objectives detailed in the Housing Strategy and under each of these 3 objectives a series of priorities and actions are detailed. The 3 core proposed objectives are:
  - i. **Supporting housing growth and increasing choice** – which outlines how we will work with partners to support the continued delivery of new housing to meet the needs of our residents.
  - ii. **Stronger Communities** – which outlines our commitment to tackling issues in the private rented sector and working with communities to improve housing standards and tackle social and economic exclusion, poor health and poverty
  - iii. **Meeting housing needs and supporting vulnerable people** – which outlines our approach in supporting vulnerable people to access suitable accommodation

#### Overview / purpose of the Homelessness Reduction Strategy

5. As members will recall the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was enacted on the 3rd April 2018. As detailed in the 'Homelessness Reduction Act' Cabinet Report (January 2018) this Act has significantly reformed England's homelessness legislation by placing duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas. It also requires housing authorities to provide homelessness services to all those affected, not just those who are vulnerable.
6. Previously local authorities could decide whether to prepare a separate Homelessness Strategy, here in Stockton we had decided against a separate strategy and detailed our homelessness key priorities within our former Housing Strategy. However the 2017 Act requires each council to produce a bespoke Homelessness Reduction Strategy, which must detail the key objectives and actions it will undertake to meet the requirements of this legislation.
7. Detailed within the proposed Homelessness Reduction Strategy are 4 strategic objectives (again each is supported by a number of priorities and actions). In developing these 3 over-arching objectives consideration has been given to key national homelessness priorities, the Councils commitment to supporting the most vulnerable in our communities and our bespoke local circumstances. For example detailed analysis has been to how best to intervene and address the year on year increase in the number of households approaching/seeking assistance from the councils Homelessness and Housing Solutions Service and key they reasons why households find themselves homeless or threatened with homelessness.
8. Our proposed 4 key strategic objectives are:
  - I. **Preventing and relieving homelessness** – which outlines our approach to service delivery and meeting the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act
  - II. **Preventing Rough Sleeping** – which highlights our commitment to the Government's No Second Night Out (which the Council has been operating since 2012) with the aim of ensuring no one has to sleep rough.
  - III. **Reducing the use of bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation** – which sets out sets out the circumstances in which Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation may be used and the mechanisms in place to minimise the number households with children placed into B&B
  - IV. **Maximising the effectiveness of commissioned housing related support and accommodation services** – which outlines the functions of the Housing Solutions Gateway Team who manage the Councils commissioned short term accommodation services that provide supported accommodation (generally up to a 26 weeks) to enable

the individual and/or family to address any housing barriers, before moving onto sustainable and independent accommodation.

#### Developing both the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategies

9. The Council recognises that while having statutory duties, it cannot deliver housing quantity and quality to meet residents' needs and aspirations in isolation and we use a number of mechanisms to engage across all sectors and work in partnership with stakeholders to deliver our strategic objectives. As part of the development of each strategy consultation has been undertaken with a range of partner organisations. The draft Housing Strategy and the strategic objectives/priorities and actions detailed within the Homelessness Reduction Strategy were shared with a variety of both internal and external partners (including our neighbouring local authorities, government agencies, our Registered Housing Provider partners, the VCSE, private developers and in the case of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy a range of specialist stakeholder organisations). Each organisation has been encouraged to feedback their views. In addition an on-line survey was made available on the Councils website ('Have your Say' page) to enable wider partners and the boroughs residents to respond.
10. The consultation run for a period of 4 weeks (ceasing on the 4.5.17). A limited number of responses were received none of which raised any fundamental concerns or issues with the strategies or priorities contained within them.
11. In addition, members of the 'Housing, Neighbourhoods and Affordable Warmth Partnership' whose membership includes a range of key stakeholders and representatives of the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors have also been encouraged to feedback on both strategies.

#### Delivery / performance monitoring of the Housing Strategy and Homelessness Reduction Strategy

12. Monitoring our progress against the strategic objectives, priorities and actions detailed within each Strategy will be undertaken at a number of levels:

##### *Service monitoring:*

Each priority and action contained within the Housing Strategy is embedded within the Housing Services Business Unit Plan, whilst a bespoke Action Plan will be drafted for the Homelessness Reduction Strategy. All objectives and actions will be monitored quarterly through existing quarterly performance monitoring arrangements. Regular monitoring at this level will enable senior managers/the Director of Service to take any necessary remedial action.

##### *Housing, Neighbourhoods and Affordable Warmth Partnership*

A quarterly progress update will be reported to this group, this will allow opportunities for external scrutiny and to secure appropriate partner support as and when required.

##### *Council wide monitoring*

As noted previously a number of the key actions/priorities detailed within both Strategies are also referenced in both the Council Plan and the Economic Growth Plan. Updates/progress reports will therefore be feedback to Cabinet via this route.

#### Annual review of each Strategy

13. As members will note each Strategy is proposed to run for a 5-year period (2018 – 2023), to ensure each remains compliant with any changes in national legislation and continues to reflect local issues and circumstances it is proposed that an annual review is undertaken and that the first annual review be considered in the 2019/20 Scrutiny Work Programme.

14. Members will be aware of the emerging Local Plan which is due to go to public examination in June 2018. The outcome of the enquiry may result in the need to make changes to the Housing Strategy to ensure it continues to support the emerging plans and policies. These changes and further annual reviews would be undertaken by the service directorate and Cabinet are therefore asked to delegate authorisation to the Director of Economic Growth and Development in consultation with the Director of HR, Legal and Communications and Cabinet Member for Regeneration to make any necessary changes to either strategy.
15. Members are asked to note that should significant or whole scale change be required to either strategy a further report will be presented back to Cabinet.

### **COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

16. This report covers the Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and the Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018-2023. These documents set out the Councils overarching vision and priorities for housing (across all tenures) and homelessness prevention in the borough over the coming 5-year period, they do not include any policy changes and there are therefore no community impact implications as a direct result of this report.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

17. Within the Homelessness Reduction Strategy a number of pilot initiatives are proposed on a 'test and learn' basis, whilst these will come at an additional cost these will be fully funded through the Additional Burdens funding allocation made to the Council by DCLG.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

18. As detailed within the body of this report, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a requirement on all English local authorities to prepare and publish a bespoke homelessness strategy.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

19. As noted in the previous Homelessness Reduction Act cabinet report (Jan 2018) a detailed risk register has previously been drafted. It is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily route activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

### **COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES**

20. The Housing Strategy and Homelessness Reduction Strategy positively support the following Policy Principles in the Council Plan:
- Projecting the vulnerable and promoting equality of opportunity through targeted intervention
  - Developing strong and healthy communities and creating economic prosperity across the borough.

### **CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

21. Local authorities have duties and powers to assist young people who are leaving and have left local authority care. In Stockton protocols are in place between Children's and Housing Services to ensure that appropriate accommodation (both supported temporary and secure/permanent) is provided in a timely, safe and appropriate accommodation. Specific reference to care leavers and young people is made in the proposed Homelessness Reduction Strategy.

## CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

22. As detailed within the report consultation on the draft strategies has taken place between 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2018 – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2018. As part of this process a copy of the draft Housing Strategy and proposed Homelessness Reduction Strategy service objectives, priorities and actions were shared with all ward members and their comments actively sought.

**Richard McGuckin**  
**Director of Economic Growth and Development Services**

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Education related?

No.

Background Papers

January 2018 Cabinet Report 'Homelessness Reduction Act'.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

All wards.

Property

None.