

Place Select Committee
Review of Affordable Housing
Draft Outline Scope

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Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?

The topic directly supports the following key objectives of the Council plan:

- A Place where people are healthy, safe and protected from harm &
- Making the borough a place with a thriving economy where everyone has opportunities to succeed

How:

- By providing good quality, affordable housing.
- By supporting independent living.

It also supports the key priority to development of a business case to actively accelerate the provision of affordable and specialist housing provision within the borough.

What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?

Like many local authorities demand for affordable and social rented housing is increasing. As a 'non stock holding' local authority we rely on Nomination Agreements with Registered Housing providers to address housing need and on relationships both Registered Housing providers and private developers to increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough. Currently we are experiencing increasing demand for affordable housing from all needs groups (i.e. families / singles & couples / those with health needs / those seeking supported housing to enable independent living) at a time when the number of affordable housing units available (via Nomination Agreements) is reducing, as outlined below:

Number of applicants registered on Tees Valley HomeFinder (Housing Register):
Qu 2 2023/24 = 1331 / Qu 4 2023/24 = 2566

Number of applicants registered on Tees Valley HomeFinder (Housing Register) by band at the end of Qu 4:

Band 1 = 259

Band 2 = 512

Band 3 = 415

Band 4 = 1380

Average number of properties advertised on Tees Valley HomeFinder (per week within the borough):

2022/23 = 16 / Qu 1 and Qu 2 2023/24 = 12 / Qu 3 = 10, Qu 4 = 15

New build affordable homes (all tenures) – 20/21 = 48, 21/22 = 141, 22/23 = 72, 23/24 = 146

The aim of the review is to identify potential options for how the council can increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough and therefore address housing need.

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

- What is the journey when applying for affordable rented accommodation:
 - How long are people staying on the list for affordable housing?
 - Where are people living while waiting for affordable housing?
 - Are the people registered with the scheme already in housing, if not how many are homeless?

- What are the current housing requirements?
- What has been the delivery over the previous 3 years?
- What is the projected delivery?
- What are the challenges and barriers to delivery for the housing providers? E.g. land/financial
- How are other local authorities dealing with local need?
- What options are available for the Council to do more/what can we do to assist the market to increase supply?

Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?

Council, Cabinet, Housing Providers, private developers

Expected duration of review and key milestones:

10 months, reporting to Cabinet in April 2025

What information do we need?

Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.):

Housing Strategy <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/housing-strategy-introduction>

Common Allocation Policy for Tees Valley Lettings Partnership

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/common-allocation-policy-introduction>

Local Plan (page 65 – 68) https://www.stockton.gov.uk/media/2518/Local-Plan-2019/pdf/Local_Plan_2019.pdf?m=1645450086087

Local letting policies

<p>Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)</p>	<p>What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?</p>
<p>SBC Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current local plan and the challenges
<p>Housing providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are their consideration re commitment to supplying affordable housing in the borough
<p>Private Developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above
<p>Private landlord/letting agent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the private rental market
<p>Other local authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are they meeting the need of their residents?
<p>Lettings and Nominations Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Insight
<p>How will this information be gathered? (eg. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)</p>	
<p>Evidence at meetings, site visits, baseline data analysis</p>	
<p>Communities powering our futures: How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?</p>	
<p>Viewpoint – previous survey results Older people who have been through the extra care project – how has this improved their ability to live independently</p>	
<p>How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?</p>	
<p>The Equality Act 2010 protects everyone from discrimination on grounds of nine Protected Characteristics (including – but not limited to – age, gender, disability, ethnicity), and advance equality of opportunity for those with Protected Characteristics. This review will be mindful of these factors.</p>	
<p>How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?</p>	
<p><u>Stockton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA):</u> Housing - the review outcomes will support the JSNA strategic issue that there is a shortage of appropriate, good quality and affordable housing and a lack of available housing stock that meets the needs of the boroughs most vulnerable residents.</p>	
<p><u>Stockton-on-Tees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023:</u> All children and families get the best start in life All people in Stockton-on-Tees live well and live longer. All people in Stockton-on-Tees live in healthy places and sustainable communities.</p>	

Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and/or transformation:

The provision of good quality, affordable housing makes a direct (positive) impact on the health and well-being of the boroughs residents and also helps address inequality. The outcome of the review will assist in alleviating budget pressure in adult social care and homelessness services.

Project Plan

Key Task	Details/Activities	Date	Responsibility
Scoping of Review	Information gathering	April 2024	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	15.05.24	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Agree Project Plan	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	20.05.24	Select Committee
Publicity of Review	Determine whether Communications Plan needed		Link Officer, Scrutiny Officer
Obtaining Evidence	Local Plan RP's Private Landlord Private Developer NHC Options appraisal	10.06.24 15.07.24 09.09.24 14.10.24 13.01.25	Select Committee
Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	February 2025 TBC	Select Committee
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	TBC	Scrutiny Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations	TB	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Final Agreement of Report	Approval of final report by Committee	10.03.25	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Director

Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee	Consideration of report	20.05.25	Executive Scrutiny Committee
Report to Cabinet/Approving Body	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	17.04.25	Cabinet / Approving Body