

Report of the Cabinet Member for Next Generation Services

Council - 22 October 2015

LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2015 - 2020

Purpose:	To seek approval for the Local Housing Strategy for the period 2015 –2020.
Policy Framework:	None
Reason for Decision:	To establish the strategic framework for housing policy and strategy for the period 2015 - 2020
Consultation:	Legal, Finance, Access to Services, Communities Cabinet Advisory Committee, a range of external stakeholders.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The Local Housing Strategy be approved.
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Finance Officer:	Paul Cridland
Legal Officer:	Sandie Richards
Access to Services Officer:	Phil Couch

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Although the Welsh Government's requirement for Local Authorities to produce Local Housing Strategies was removed in 2007 as part of their Plan Rationalisation Programme, the Welsh Government still regard the production of these strategies as positive practice and encourage Authorities to develop them.
- 1.2 Local Housing Strategies perform an important role in helping Authorities achieve their statutory duty under the Housing Act 1995, to 'consider the needs of their area regarding the provision of housing'. The strategy document outlines the key housing challenges facing the Authority over the next 5 years across all tenures and sets out how the Authority will address these challenges.

2.0 Main Elements of the Strategy

- 2.1 The Housing and Public Protection Service Unit has prepared the strategy document in close liaison with other key Service areas. The strategy is divided into 6 chapters which are:-

Chapter 1 – Introduction, sets the corporate context of the strategy, its relationship to local and national strategies and the corporate aims and objectives.

Chapter 2 - The Housing Market Assessment, the chapter highlights the key findings of the assessment which was undertaken in 2013 and which form the basis for the strategy.

Chapter 3 - Land Use Planning Framework, details future housing planning priorities for the Authority and looks at the relationship between the Housing Strategy and the draft Local Development Plan.

Chapter 4 - Affordable Housing , looks at the level of affordable housing required as identified by the Market Assessment and how the Authority proposes to address this need in future years.

Chapter 5 – Making Best Use of the Housing Stock, focuses on the how the Authority manages and maintains Council Housing, issues in the Private Rented sector and energy efficiency measures.

Chapter 6 – Addressing the Needs of Specific Groups, looks at how the Authority intends to address the housing needs of older persons, the homeless, Black Minority Ethnic groups and gypsies and travellers.

3.0 Consultation

- 3.1 As well as consulting key corporate partners, the strategy was considered by the Communities, Cabinet Advisory Committee over a series 3 meetings. Changes and additions were made to the document as a result of Members comments.
- 3,2 External stakeholders were also consulted, these included local registered Social Landlords, Third Sector organisations and neighbouring Local Authorities.

4.0 Equality and Engagement Implications

- 4.1 Following an initial screening exercise a full Equality Impact Assessment has been drafted regarding the likely impact of the Local Housing Strategy. The EIA report is currently being quality assured, but to date no adverse impacts have been identified and the most current version is attached as a background paper.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The financial implications of the Local Housing Strategy have been incorporated into Council's budget for 2015/16 and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for 2015/16 and beyond.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Local Authorities have a statutory duty to understand local housing need and to plan for how this is met. The Local Housing Strategy will contribute to meeting this duty.

Background Papers: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendices: Local Housing Strategy 2015 - 2020