

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 27/04/2022

Subject of Report: North Somerset Housing Strategy 2022-27

Town or Parish: District-Wide

Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Mike Bell

Key Decision: Yes

Reason: This strategy applies to the community living and/or working in the whole of North Somerset.

Recommendations

1. That the Executive approves the Housing Strategy 2022-2027 as set out in Annexe A for publication and implementation.
2. That the Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing, is given delegated authority to make any required minor changes to the strategy prior to publication and to agree regular updates.

1. Summary of Report

This report presents the Housing Strategy 2022-2027, which set out the Council's vision, aims, ambitions and actions for meeting housing need in North Somerset over the next five years. The Housing Strategy needs to be formally adopted by the Council, ahead of publication and implementation.

The Housing Strategy provides national, regional and local context and a summary of the housing challenges our district faces. It sets out the councils housing ambitions under each of three strategic aims and includes an action plan and executive summary. The strategy and action plan are live, evolving documents and will be reviewed and updated throughout the lifetime of the strategy

2. Policy

The Housing Strategy sets out a clear vision and direction for the next 5 years. It has been compiled following extensive research and analysis, looking at the current picture within the area, and honest reflection of progress and changes within the last 5 years. This is a high-level document which sits below the Corporate plan and alongside four other strategy documents feeding directly in to five housing policy documents.

3. Details

The housing service will be working with a range of partners in all sectors to achieve the strategy's aims and implement its priorities to enable positive housing outcomes and a better quality of life for all residents of North Somerset, including those from different equality groups.

The strategy's overarching vision is to *deliver better, more sustainable, and affordable homes* in North Somerset by 2027.

The strategy has developed three key aims that will support the delivery of this vision, the council's Corporate Plan, and other related documents (such as the emerging Local Plan, and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy).

- **Deliver affordable homes in sustainable neighbourhoods**
 - We are determined to ensure that those living in North Somerset can access good quality homes at an affordable price, with infrastructure that can support and sustain the new neighbourhoods.
- **Improve and make the best use of existing homes**
 - We must find more efficient and creative solutions to ensure that the standard of existing homes is of good quality, fit for the future and can meet the demands of the climate emergency.
- **Provide solutions, support, and choice to those in housing need**
 - We must provide services which are flexible and meet the needs of all our residents, enabling those with less resources to secure a home.

Each of these aims will have a detailed action plan showing how and when specific projects will be delivered and monitored. Outcomes will be monitored and assessed. During the five years of this strategy, there will be new priorities emerging and the legal framework and funding regimes may change.

An action plan can be found on page 15 of the Housing Strategy.

4. Consultation

Extensive consultation has been carried out. A 9 week public consultation, 4 Stakeholder events, Landlord engagement events plus other bespoke and targeted meetings. The results, feedback and ideas have been incorporated into the strategy.

5. Financial Implications

This strategy does not commit the Council to any additional expenditure outside of the Council's existing budgets, whether that be revenue budgets, capital budgets or Government grants. Should any additional funding be required, this would be subject to the Council's usual policies and procedures, specifically the medium-term financial planning and budget setting processes.

Costs

n/a

Funding

n/a

6. Legal Powers and Implications

Housing Activities must comply with the Housing Act 2004, this Act is wide reaching covering housing enabling, housing standards, licensing, and tenancies. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is specifically aimed at homelessness and advice services. Housing Enabling is also covered by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

We are not required by law to have a Housing Strategy, but it is considered best practice. Having a strategy allows us to focus our efforts on agreed priorities, use our resources as effectively as possible, and coordinate with our partners to reach shared goals.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

This strategy is overarching and strategic, and climate implications will primarily be explored in the operational plans and strategies that will deliver its actions and projects. However, we have been careful to consider the council's climate aims in developing the Action Plan, to help achieve our 2030 net-zero targets.

In developing the strategy we have considered environmental and climate impacts and the stated aims of the NSC Climate emergency strategy 2019 at all stages. We have ensured that we have included actions to mitigate the environmental impact of increasing housing supply and also actions to deliver improvements in the energy efficiency of current housing stock.

8. Risk Management

There is a risk that the delivery of the strategy is compromised due to resource constraints.

If partner organisations are uncertain of the council's housing priorities, there is a risk they may not align their actions to it.

There is a risk that we have not been able to fully assess the emerging implications of the changes resulting from new legislation.

By regularly reviewing and updating our strategy we will seek to mitigate these risks.

9. Equality Implications

We have carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment of this Housing Strategy to ensure that all residents receive fair and equal treatment. All our supporting strategies and delivery plans will be rigorously tested to ensure that they meet the requirements of our equalities and diversity policies.

10. Corporate Implications

This strategy will inform and set the direction for a number of operational plans. It is a high-level and overarching document, which ties in with the council's overall ambitions for North Somerset. Housing is recognised as an essential part of the council's Corporate Plan to create a more **open, fair, and green** North Somerset. It contains a specific priority to deliver *a broad range of homes to meet our growing need, with an emphasis on quality and affordability*, which has informed our own vision for this strategy. The strategy is also

influenced by the vision of the council's Adult Social Care Directorate - *maximising independence and wellbeing for our residents.*

The strategy is closely linked to the council's Local Plan, which identifies the overall scale and pattern of future development. Likewise, it complements other key strategies, especially around health and wellbeing, our local economy, and the climate.

11. Options Considered

Not developing a new strategy. The council's previous Housing Strategy ran until March 2022, the context around housing has changed radically so a new strategy setting out revised priorities is needed. If we chose not to develop a new strategy, there is a high risk that we would not be able to make best use of our resources to try and meet housing need in the area

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Housing Strategy 2022-2027

Background Papers:

[Accessible Housing Needs Assessment Supplementary Planning Document \(adopted 2018\)](#)

[Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document \(adopted 2013\)](#)

[Affordable Housing Threshold and Vacant Building Credit Policy \(2016\)](#)

[Climate Emergency Strategy 2019](#)

[Core Strategy \(adopted 2017\)](#)

[Corporate Plan 2020-2024](#)

[Development Management Policies \(July 2016\)](#)

[Development Strategy \(adopted Feb 2021\)](#)

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

[Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-2023](#)

[Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy](#)

[Employment and Skills Strategy](#)

[Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)

[HomeChoice Lettings & Assessments Policy](#)

[Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#)

[Housing Enforcement Policy](#)

[Housing Renewal Assistance Policy](#)

[Housing Stock Survey \(conducted 2017\)](#)

[Housing with Support Strategy 2017-2027](#)

[Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024](#)

[Joint Housing Protocol, Guidance and Support Offer for Young People \(October 2021\)](#)

[Local Plan 2038: Challenges for the future \(2020\)](#)

[Local Plan 2038: Choices for the future \(2020\)](#)

[North Somerset's Offer for our Care Leavers](#)

[Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024](#)

[Site Allocations Plan 2006-2026 \(updated 2018\)](#)

[West of England Local Housing Needs Assessment \(September 2021\)](#)