

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 9 FEBRUARY 2016

Title of report	HOUSING STRATEGY 2016 - 2021
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To seek Cabinet approval for the proposed new district wide Housing Strategy for 2016 – 2021. (Appendix A)
Reason for Decision	To seek Member approval to progress and implement the priorities outlined in the 2016-21 Housing Strategy.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Costs to be met from within existing approved budgets
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	Risks will be managed through the corporate performance management framework as well as the North West Leicestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (the Partnership) who will monitor and review the strategy and related annual action plans on a biannual basis.
Equalities Impact Screening	The strategy is tenure blind and seeks to address the housing and housing support needs of all residents across the district, in particular vulnerable groups in greatest need. A health impact assessment has also been undertaken to ensure that resulting action plans will maximise positive health impacts and minimise negative ones.

Human Rights	No implications
Transformational Government	N/A
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	The Partnership, council staff from relevant departments, the Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum, District Councillors, Parish Liaison meeting, Policy Development Group, the general public via an online survey and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).
Background papers	Emerging Issues Affecting Affordable Housing Delivery Cabinet Report 22 September 2015
Recommendations	<p>IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CABINET:</p> <p>A) NOTES THE APPROACH AND CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN TO DEVELOP THE PROPOSED HOUSING PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS;</p> <p>B) APPROVES THE NEW HOUSING STRATEGY FOR 2016-2021</p> <p>C) DELEGATES, TO THE HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING, THE APPROVAL OF THE RELATED ACTION PLAN FOR 2016-17 AND FUTURE YEARS UP TO 2020/21</p>

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The current Housing Strategy 2011-2015 has come to an end and a new strategy for 2016-2021 has been developed by the council's Housing Choices Team and the NWL Strategic Housing Partnership, (the Partnership), in consultation with wider partners and the district residents.
- 1.2 As well as district councillors and relevant officers, membership of the Partnership includes several housing associations working in the area, the Homes and Community Agency (HCA), private developers, Job Centre Plus, Leicestershire and Rutland Probation services, Leicestershire County Council's Adult Social Care and Children and

Young people's services, public health services, Citizens' Advice, and other voluntary and community sector organisations.

- 1.3 The strategy aims to deliver the best housing outcomes for residents and sits under the umbrella of the NWL Local Plan, drawing together challenges identified through consultation processes regarding housing in NWL.

2.0 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Setting the priorities

The development process began in July 2015 with a workshop for the Partnership. Background information was issued prior to the event with a paper outlining the challenges facing the district to be considered when setting priorities for housing.

- 2.2 The challenges outlined in the paper included:

- Supply and demand
- Stock condition
- Extended Right to buy
- Welfare reform
- New build and affordable housing supply in a challenging financial environment
- Prevention – resource reductions
- Meeting the needs of an ageing population
- Regeneration of Coalville

- 2.3 As a result of this information and the discussions at the workshops, the partnership concluded that the new housing strategy should address 3 priority areas:

- Supply – provision of appropriate homes for all district residents
- Standards – improving the quality of homes across all sectors
- Support – residents are able to access appropriate support when needed

2.4 Consultation

Further consultation workshops have taken place with NWLDC staff from relevant departments, the Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum, District Councillors, Parish Liaison meeting, Policy and Development Group, and the general public via an online survey.

- 2.5 NWLDC also worked with representatives from Public Health at the County Council who undertook a Health Impact Assessment on the Housing Strategy proposals during October/November 2015. The aim was to identify potential health and well-being impacts and recommend where positive impacts could be maximised and negative ones minimised. These recommendations, where relevant and practical, will be incorporated into the strategy action plan that is still in development. (The assessment document is available from the Housing Choices Team).

- 2.6 A full public consultation was undertaken during November/December 2015. The survey was made available on line or via hard copy from reception and was advertised through the local press, tenant forum and parish councils.
- 2.7 There were 9 responses to the questionnaire, 2 of these were from Parish Councils. The consultation document and responses are attached at Appendix B. The responses did not require amendments to the strategy document.
- 2.8 The Autumn 2015 budget brought forth some additional challenges for housing which have been taken into consideration and referenced in section four of the strategy document e.g. the extended Right to Buy, Starter Homes, Pay to Stay - higher rents for higher income social tenants, and tackling rogue landlords to name but a few.
- 2.9 The Housing Strategy was considered by CLT members on 19 January 2016, who recommended it be referred to Cabinet for approval

3. SUMMARY

3.1 For each of the three priority themes, there are some key aspirations within the strategy that we would draw Members' attention to and for ease, these are set out below.

3.2 Supply -

- Maintain and increase the supply of affordable homes, in a challenging financial environment, including the construction and acquisition of new affordable homes by the council
- Work with developers to provide the best mix of housing types including new 'Starter Homes', identified as a government initiative in the autumn budget 2015
- Unlock the potential of vacant sites and empty homes by working with private and public landlords and owners to bring these assets back into productive use
- Updating the affordable housing supplementary planning document to allow a more flexible application of affordable housing obligations through planning to facilitate a broader range of measures to maintain delivery

3.3 Standards –

- We will commission a stock condition survey of private rented sector and owner occupied homes to establish up to date information about these sectors to inform what, and where, action is needed.
- Promote high quality internal and external design for new affordable homes, including Building for Life Standards where appropriate
- Continue the council's 'Green and Decent Homes' energy efficiency projects in supporting the council's Green Footprints priority

3.4 **Support –**

- Work with our ageing population to ascertain the type and location of housing they require
- Identify and support those affected by welfare, health and social care reforms, encouraging and assisting them to adapt positively to the changes

3.5 This housing strategy will also contribute to the **Coalville Project** - a key corporate objective for the council which aims to design and build a better Coalville where people want to live, work and socialise by having access to all the recreational activities, retail, public services, heritage, affordable housing and opportunities our community deserves.

3.6 It is envisaged that the housing strategy's 'supply' priority, in particular, will support the delivery of the Coalville Project through the future provision of affordable housing.

4 ACTION PLAN

4.1 An annual action plan to address the three priority areas will be developed and monitored by the Partnership. The initial action plan for the financial year 2016/17 is currently being developed and will be signed off by the Partnership before 31 March 2016 for implementation from April 2016. It will be monitored by the Partnership on a quarterly basis, and updates will be provided on an annual basis to Cabinet as part of the performance reporting process.