

**Wiltshire Council**

**Environment Select Committee**

**12 December 2016**

---

**Subject: Wiltshire Councils final Housing Strategy 2017 - 2022**

**Cabinet member: Cllr Jonathon Seed - Housing**

**Key Decision: No**

---

**Executive Summary**

To provide Environment Select Committee with a copy of the final Housing Strategy in preparation for it going to formal consultation. The strategy has been developed in partnership with our key stakeholders including Housing Associations, landlords, developers and tenants, as well as our elected members and has been approved by Cabinet Liaison to commence formal consultation.

It sets out a joint vision for Wiltshire whereby everyone in Wiltshire should be able to live in a decent and safe home they can afford.

**Proposal(s)**

For Environment Select Committee to review and comment upon the final Housing Strategy.

**Reason for Proposal**

To provide the Environmental Health Committee the opportunity to review and comment upon the 5 year Housing Strategy that sets the priorities and strategic direction for Housing for the next 5 years

**Name of Director**

Mr James Cawley

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Environment Select Committee**

**12 December 2016**

---

**Subject: Wiltshire Councils draft Housing Strategy 2017 - 2022**

**Cabinet member: Cllr Jonathon Seed**

**Housing**

**Key Decision: No**

---

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Environment Select Committee with a copy of the final Housing Strategy in preparation for it going to formal consultation. The strategy has been developed in partnership with our key stakeholders including Housing Associations, landlords, developers and tenants, as well as our elected members and has been approved by Cabinet Liaison to commence formal consultation.

It sets out a joint vision for Wiltshire whereby everyone in Wiltshire should be able to live in a decent and safe home they can afford.

### **Relevance to the Council's Business Plan**

2. The priorities in the Housing Strategy will help to deliver the Councils vision to create stronger and more resilient communities and make Wiltshire an even better place to live, work and visit. It will also help to deliver one of the 12 key actions which is to Invest and refurbish our council housing and encourage the development of new affordable homes, including supported living in rural areas

### **Main Considerations for the Council**

Wiltshire Council has never had an adopted Housing Strategy and therefore to assist in providing clear direction and priorities a new strategy for 2017-2022 has been developed by the council's Housing Team and Wiltshire's Housing Partnership, in consultation with wider partners.

The Strategy articulates the priorities for tackling the challenges we have identified in the years ahead and demonstrates our collective approach to housing across the county with Wiltshire Council as the lead, working in partnership with registered providers, developers, private landlords or residents.

This Strategy sets out our vision for housing, which is:

**"Everyone should be able to live in a decent and safe home they can afford".**

To achieve this vision all housing partners and providers are required to work together, across the county to deliver four key priorities:

1. Increase the supply of and access to affordable housing
2. Support people being able to access appropriate, efficient and effective services to meet present and future housing need
3. Make best use of our existing accommodation in Wiltshire
4. Improved communication and partnership working

Successful delivery of the vision and strategic priorities will require partnership working across registered providers, developers, private landlords and the Council. This will involve making best use of our existing housing stock and creating new housing that meets the needs of the people of Wiltshire. We have undertaken consultation with a wide range of stakeholders to inform the priorities in this strategy.

### **Priority 1 - Supporting and delivering the affordable housing need**

There is a requirement for 40% of the housing need to be affordable. The delivery of social housing will be difficult as there is very little subsidy available for the Council or Registered providers to build more social housing.

Wiltshire has a population which has a very small number of unemployed people but a larger number of lower paid workers. Therefore we need to deliver housing, including forms of affordable housing other than social housing to meet these needs. This will include low cost rental housing to help those residents struggling to obtain suitable housing on the open market. This can only be achieved by all housing partners working together.

This work will be linked to a review of affordable housing need on a county wide basis down to town and parish level. This will form the basis of future affordable housing need in the county. The Council and Registered Providers need to create innovative solutions to meet the housing needs of the Wiltshire population in partnership with our communities.

### **Priority 2 - Ensuring the County makes best use of its affordable housing stock**

Effective utilisation of affordable stock will only be achieved by collaborative working of all housing partners. We need to ensure the most vulnerable sectors of our community are properly provided for in the housing market, this needs to include social housing provision as well as developing strategies for the provision of specialist housing for those with specialist needs.

We will need to improve and tighten the management of our reducing social housing stock and this will include reviews of tenancies and the introduction of short term occupancy tenancy agreements.

In addition we will work towards solving our county homelessness and rough sleeping problems.

### **Priority 3 - Meeting the present and future accommodation needs of Wiltshire**

The Wiltshire Core Strategy projects an indicative need for 42,000 new homes to be built by 2026 to address population growth and change and a previous shortfall in supply. Open market sales and rental housing will meet 60% of this need. The planning process will need to ensure that these houses provide homes for those that can best access this form of housing and include a range of properties to meet these needs.

Private rented housing forms a part of the general housing need for Wiltshire. We need to work with landlords to encourage them to accept more tenants in receipt of housing benefit and to ensure that they provide a good standard of housing.

### **Priority 4 - Wiltshire Council taking a partnership and delivery role in housing provision**

Wiltshire Council is the lead partner in the provision of housing needs for the County of Wiltshire and will work closely with all partners to ensure housing delivery.

Wiltshire Council is already in the process of building over 200 homes to satisfy established need in specific areas and is considering what role it can take in the delivery of all forms of housing.

We are delivering this strategy in a changing environment. The Wiltshire Core Strategy projects an indicative need for 42000 new homes to be built between 2006 and 2026, by 2016 19,912 homes had been built - to address population growth and change and a previous shortfall in supply. Welfare reform is likely to result in more households being less able to rent or buy in the private sector and increase demand for affordable housing. Changes in the private rented sector make this market less attractive to landlords. An uncertain economic environment may hinder investment in new housing.

Set against this, more needs to be done to raise standards in the private rented sector and get the best use of our existing housing stock. Our growing and ageing population, together with challenges such as 4000 troops and their families moving to Wiltshire in the coming years, mean we have to get the right mix of housing to meet a diversity of needs.

### **Safeguarding Implications**

6. The Housing Strategy would have no safeguarding implications if it was to be adopted.

## **Public Health Implications**

7. The Housing Strategy has no public health implications

## **Procurement Implications**

8 Any procurement issues resulting from any of the strategic housing priorities would be addressed as required but the housing strategy itself has no procurement implications

## **Equalities Impact of the Proposal** (detailing conclusions identified from Equality Analysis, sections 4 and 5)

9. An equalities impact assessment has been produced during the development of this strategy and will be presented to Cabinet with the proposed strategy Equality assessments will also be carried out for specific projects in the achievement of the strategic priorities

## **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

10. The Housing Strategy has no environmental and climate change considerations

## **Risk Assessment**

11. All housing risks associated with any housing project are managed through the housing management team and are raised corporately if the risk needs to be escalated

## **\*Proposal**

12. For Environment Select Committee to review and comment upon the final Housing Strategy.

## **Mr James Cawley**

---

James Cawley  
Associate Director

4<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Appendix 1

Draft Housing Strategy