



Purpose: For Information

# Committee report

Committee	<b>CABINET</b>
Date	<b>11 FEBRUARY 2021</b>
Title	<b>PROGRESS AGAINST THE HOUSING STRATEGY 2020-2025 ACTION PLAN</b>
Report of	<b>DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION</b>

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the significant progress the council and its partners have achieved against the housing strategy action plan since the adoption of the housing strategy in October 2020.
2. This report sets out early successes in advance of its scheduled first annual review in November 2021 and is for information and noting as it does not propose any amendments at this time.
3. The Cabinet is responsible for monitoring delivery of the action plan annually; it is due to review the housing strategy action plan in November 2021.

## BACKGROUND

4. The council adopted its current Housing Strategy 2020-2025 which incorporated a detailed action plan which covers the five-year period.
5. The strategy was produced, and an agreed action plan agreed with all partners over the previous 12 months. It was a significant achievement given that all service priorities were and continue to be dominated by the need to respond to impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.
6. The pandemic itself has significantly increased housing pressures and service disruption throughout the sector which serve to emphasise the urgency of delivery of the housing objectives outlined in the Housing Strategy 2020-2025.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

7. The Housing Strategy 'vision' is "***To enable everyone living on the Island to have a place they call home***" Six strategic priorities underpin this vision which in turn

shape the desired outcomes in the action plan to prioritise key actions and expected outcomes:

- **Strategic priority 1: New housing supply** – Ensuring the right supply and mix of new homes and increasing affordable housing delivery through the efficient use of land and capital resources including those the council owns or has control of.
- **Strategic priority 2: Housing affordability** – Defining “affordability” on the Island through detailed and on-going research of both incomes and housing costs to inform both planning and housing policy going forward.
- **Strategic priority 3: Private sector housing** – Ensuring that the private housing sector provides enough good quality market housing through support for developers and landlords and, where necessary, robust quality control and regulation.
- **Strategic priority 4: Partnerships** – Enabling housing associations and our other partners to build more new affordable homes for Island residents while maintaining their current homes to a high standard.
- **Strategic priority 5: Homelessness and housing need** – Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping through effective prevention work and building a new homeless pathway through property solutions and wrap-around services.
- **Strategic priority 6: Special housing needs and vulnerable people** – Ensuring that specialist accommodation is available for vulnerable people including primarily extra-care housing for older people and people with disabilities.

8. The other strategic plans that relate specifically to the agreed actions within the report include, but are not limited to:

- a regeneration strategy ‘Inspiration Island’ 2019–30;
- the Homeless and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2019-24;
- the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the Isle of Wight 2018-21;
- the Extra Care Housing Strategy ‘Independent Island’ 2017-32;
- the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-20;
- Community Safety Partnership Strategic Plan 2018-20.

9. The housing strategy action plan commits the council and its partners to delivering the desired outcomes of the housing strategy together via agreed high-level strategic actions and contributions. There are milestones for each action to monitor the success and impact of the housing strategy. A key commitment as outlined is to review the action plan annually to take account of changing policy and circumstances.

10. An updated action plan showing the progress made to date is set out in **Appendix 1** to this report.

11. Of the 48 existing actions for year 1 (20/21):

- 40 are achieved.

- 7 are not fully achieved to date.
  - One has not been achieved in project timescale, but delivery is due by the annual review date.
12. References in the action plan to year i.e. 2020/21 covers the period from the date of adoption of the housing strategy at the end of October to the beginning of November the following year; a number of these milestones are repeated each year representing those interventions that are required on an ongoing basis.
13. As identified, other milestones are due in subsequent years over the lifetime of the strategy.

#### SERVICE DECISION - REGENERATION/HOUSING DELIVERY

14. The delivery of new homes on the Island has been placed in broader context of regeneration, both strategically and operationally, as it relates specifically to new housing units added to the Island's housing stock or bringing older and run-down housing stock back into use to meet the substantial and increasing need for 'affordable' homes and to address homelessness.
15. At the same time the economic benefits that new development brings in both the private and social markets is linked to our regeneration objectives generating new jobs, growth and income to sustain council services including building enough homes to ensure for example that the numbers of local families in temporary accommodation is reduced.

#### CONSULTATION

16. The strategy itself throughout its production and adoption was widely consulted upon with stakeholders, members and the public. There are no recommended changes to the action plan itself and this report does not commit the council to further consultation as it serves only as an early progress update to an already adopted strategy and action plan as requested by Cabinet.

#### FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

17. The housing strategy and action plan refers to matters which are already reflected in approved budgets, and where additional resources are required to deliver the housing priorities set out in the strategy. The financial implications of these will be evaluated and reported once plans have been developed. Any further action requiring additional council funding will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet.

#### CARBON EMISSIONS

18. As stated in previous housing strategy reports the council has declared a climate emergency and aim for the Island to become carbon neutral by 2030. The strategy promotes the use of new construction technologies to create high quality, net-zero carbon and environmentally resilient homes to offset carbon emissions in the longer term to meet the council's 2030 zero carbon target and the government's 2050 legal requirement.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. There is no legal requirement to have a housing strategy as the Deregulation Act 2025 abolished the statutory requirement for English authorities to produce a housing strategy as previously required by section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003. It does, however, serve as an essential policy document setting out the council's approach to housing and allows councillors to scrutinise delivery through an annual review of its action plan.

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

20. The equality impact assessment for the housing strategy states that the strategy has either a neutral or positive impact in respect of all the equality strands and is unaffected by this update report against the housing strategy action plan.

## PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

21. The strategic asset management and property implications of this strategy and its action plan are mainly around the use and sale of the council's own land and property to deliver or facilitate the delivery of new homes as part of the regeneration programme.
22. This is currently under a governance system which includes the prioritisation of wider regeneration loan funding, with a full business case being required by the council on each individual project basis before commencement. Each one will be progressed with full input from Legal, Finance, and sign-off by the section 151 officer and Cabinet at the relevant stages.

## SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

23. The Local Development Framework provides the local policy context within which decisions on planning applications are made and their crime and disorder implications considered by our Planning Department.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

24. The following table considers the significant risks arising from this report:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk level
That the actions required by the strategy action plan are not carried out.	There are detailed action plans covering outputs which will need to be achieved to meet the outcomes required by the strategy.	Monitoring of progress against the action plan will be carried out regularly through the Housing Partnership Board and annually by a report to Cabinet.	Medium
The on-going Covid-19 crisis prevents the council and its partners effectively responding to	That the sector is unable to step-up to the housing challenges and goes into decline, further economically disadvantaging the Island in the regional context in regard to bidding for	There are a number of plans for recovery at a government, regional and council level and new national funding to build new homes at all levels and tackle long-	High

the recovery in terms of housing.	infrastructure funding to unlock new homes delivery.	standing infrastructure constraints. The actions from these will be monitored through the Housing Partnership Board.	
That agencies do not work in a coordinated fashion to achieve the aims of the strategy and action plan.	Actions detailed to fulfil the aims of the strategy will need the on-going input of statutory and voluntary partners.	Officers will ensure that governance meetings are timetabled to progress strategic objectives.	Medium
That the document does not remain current and up to date.	That changes occur within the life of the document which significantly impact the accuracy of the strategy.	As part of the continual monitoring process, the strategy will be reviewed in light of additional information e.g. changes in the demographics of Island residents and emergent housing needs.	Medium

## EVALUATION

25. The Isle of Wight has recently adopted a housing strategy and associated action plan to bring together the full range of strategic thinking and possible housing interventions to give confidence to both local residents, and the wider economy including investors and the UK government to deliver more and better housing on the Island.
26. There has been some excellent early progress across the majority of deliverables ahead of timescale in year one as identified in **Appendix 1** including a step-change in delivering some long - standing housing objectives for the Island and key milestones achieved in a relatively short time including:
- Over 100 new 'affordable' homes have already been delivered in 2020-21 for the first time since 2012.
  - Over 300 new 'affordable' homes are on track for delivery within the first three years of this strategy.
  - A pipeline of up to 600 new 'affordable' homes over the next five years has been agreed with Island based housing associations.
  - The Island has qualified for social housing grant for the first time after a long campaign to allow our housing associations to claim sufficient grant to provide homes at 60 per cent of market rent.
  - The first extra-care scheme on the Island has been built and is offering new accommodation and services for our older vulnerable residents.

RECOMMENDATION

27. That Cabinet notes the update report and progress made as at Appendix 1.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 – Housing Strategy Action Plan.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Isle of Wight Housing Strategy 2020-2025.

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