



Cabinet report

Date **13 OCTOBER 2022**

Title **HOUSING STRATEGY 2020-2025
ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT 2022**

Report of **CABINET MEMBER FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION,
HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of progress the council and its partners have made against the Housing Strategy action plan since adoption in October 2020.
2. The Cabinet is responsible for monitoring delivery of the action plan annually; this is the second annual review, but progress reports have been provided during this period.

RECOMMENDATION

3. That Cabinet notes the Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Action Plan Progress Report 2022 contained at Appendix 1 of this report.

BACKGROUND

4. The council adopted its current Housing Strategy 2020-2025 in October 2020 and this incorporated a detailed action plan which covers the five-year period.
5. The Covid-19 pandemic significantly increased housing pressures and service disruption throughout the sector, which serves to emphasise the urgency of delivery of the housing objectives outlined in the Housing Strategy 2020-2025

CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Provision of affordable housing for Island Residents

6. 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.

7. The housing strategy action plan commits the council and its partners to delivering the outcomes of the Housing Strategy together via agreed high-level strategic actions and contributions.
8. Details of progress made against the Housing Strategy action plan is set out in Appendix 1 to this report. This also includes details of future milestones for delivery of those tasks not completed.
9. Responding to climate change and enhancing the biosphere

The council has set a target to achieve net zero emissions:

 - in its business and delivery of services by 2030;
 - across the school estate by 2035; and
 - as an island by 2040.
10. The housing 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.
11. Following a successful bid to the LGA a report was produced in partnership with a Registered Provider setting out how Net Zero Carbon Homes could be delivered on the Isle of Wight.

Economic Recovery and Reducing Poverty

12. The economic landscape has changed significantly due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and it has never been more important for housing provision to meet local need and the council support its delivery.
13. The provision of housing is a key contributor to regeneration and economic recovery, supporting a large range of contractors on the Island, many of whom support skills development and apprenticeships for younger people.

Impact on Young People and Future Generations

14. The decisions the Council makes now not only affect current residents, but may have long term impacts, both positive and negative, on young people and future generations. These impacts may not immediately be apparent or may not emerge for a number of years or decades. Impacts will be interrelated across the various domains of young people's lives from housing, employment or training, health and the environment.
15. Housing has a significant impact on the life chances of individuals and so by providing adequate, affordable and good quality housing the strategy supports young people and future generations be the best they can be.

Corporate Aims

16. The Alliance set out their aspirations in the Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025 and this is based around a need to ensure that housing created is fit for purpose. They have prioritised truly affordable housing for Island residents, meaning housing that is not just affordable to rent or buy but affordable to live in and maintain.
17. The Corporate Plan includes the following key housing related activities, which are also included the Housing Strategy:
 - Work with partners, including town and parish councils to deliver innovative solutions to secure the provision of affordable housing for Island residents
 - Where necessary make use of the council's housing company to address market failure in meeting needs
 - Where possible use available powers including compulsory purchase
 - Introduce temporary housing schemes to meet local needs by September 2023
 - Increase the number of affordable housing units available by December 2023

PROGRESS & OUTCOMES

18. The Council has 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.
19. There has been good progress across the majority of deliverables as set out in Appendix 1 including a step-change in delivering some long-standing housing objectives for the Island.

20. New Housing Supply:
- 231 new 'affordable' homes have been delivered by housing associations in 2020/21 and 2021/22 and this is the first time since 2012. A pipeline of up to c300 new 'affordable' homes over the next three years.
 - Two extra-care schemes providing 150 homes have been built on the Island and these offer high quality affordable housing for older people.
 - The Council has a range of projects underway to support the delivery of affordable housing.
 - A bid to the Brownfield Land Release Fund was successful and this has provided £950k to enable three council owned sites to be disposed of for affordable housing.
21. Housing Affordability:
- A housing affordability tool has been created that provides evidence to support the need and incomes levels for affordable homes on the Island.
 - The Island now re-qualifies for Social Housing Grant which enables housing associations to claim grant to provide affordable homes for rent and purchase. This was reimplemented following a campaign with partners.
22. Private Sector Housing:
- Disabled Facilities Grants delivered to improve accessibility for homeowners.
 - Work is underway to investigate current empty properties number.
 - Improvements made to housing standards through the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and Civil Penalty Policy.
23. Homelessness and Housing Need:
- The Homeless Strategy has been reviewed and an action plan is in place to ensure outcomes are delivered, minimising the number of families who need to go into B&B.
 - Grant funding to purchase five flats for homeless people was secured and four of these are occupied.
24. Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable People
- The Allocation Policy has been reviewed and HomeFinder updated to include extra care.
 - A new Pathways contract was tendered and awarded to alleviate the pressure on temporary accommodation and B&B provision.
25. Organisational changes have been made to pull together the housing functions and a part time Strategic Manager Housing Enabling & Delivery was appointed in July 2022.

CONSULTATION

26. The strategy and agreed action plan were produced following a detailed consultation exercise with all key partners and the public.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27. A report detailing the actions that have been taken with regards to the delivery of affordable homes on the Island, actions proposed, and a clear outline of the

problems being encountered in the delivery of the Housing Strategy was reported to Corporate Scrutiny Committee in July 2022.

28. The Committee questions were raised around the following:
- The Councils plans to purchase up to 25 properties by Spring 2023
 - The timeframe for commissioning legal work to set up a Housing Company and create a business strategy plan.
 - Organisational changes required to deliver a centralised housing department.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

29. 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.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

30. There are no direct implications arising from the Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Action Plan Progress Report 2022.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

31. The council as a public body is required to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
32. There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from the Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Action Plan Progress Report 2022. However the equality impact assessment for the Housing Strategy stated that it had either a neutral or positive impact in respect of all the equality strands and is unaffected by this update report.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

33. There are no direct implications arising from the Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Action Plan Progress Report 2022. However the strategic asset management and property implications of the Housing Strategy 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.

SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

34. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by Police and Justice Act 2006) provides that: ‘...it shall be the duty of each authority ... to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent, crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour adversely affecting the environment, and substance misuse in its area’.
35. 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.

OPTIONS

36. Option 1: That Cabinet notes the Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Action Plan Progress Report 2022 contained at Appendix 1 of this report.
37. Option 2: Not to note the Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Action Plan Progress Report 2022 contained at Appendix 1 and carry out a further update of the action plan.

RISK MANAGEMENT

38. Without the production of the annual update on progress there would be no overall view available on delivery against the Housing Strategy Action Plan.
39. A risk assessment is carried out for all relevant projects within the Housing Strategy and delivery is monitored through the housing governance framework.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 – Housing Strategy Action Plan Progress Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Isle of Wight Housing Strategy 2020-2025.

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