

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Draft Housing Strategy 2019-2030

**REPORT OF:** Anneliese Hutchinson, Service Director, Development,  
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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To bring forward a draft Housing Strategy for consideration, with a view to carrying out formal public consultation.

### **Background**

2. The Housing Strategy 2013-18 was approved by Cabinet in April 2013 and is due for review.
3. The review is being led by the Spatial Planning and Housing Strategy Team, within Development, Transport and Public Protection, Communities & Environment (C&E). It is being carried out in collaboration with relevant services across the Council, with The Gateshead Housing Company, and in consultation with Councillors.

### **Purpose of the Housing Strategy**

4. The overarching purpose of the Strategy is to support the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives of sustainable housing and economic growth, as set out in the Local Plan ("Planning for the Future Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne 2010-2030), and the wider objectives of improved health and wellbeing, equality, and sustainable neighbourhoods, within the Making Gateshead Thrive pledges.
5. The aim of the Strategy is to identify clear housing objectives and priorities, put forward a vision for the housing offer in Gateshead, and set a framework for how the Council will deliver services and interventions, and work in partnership with others, that will help achieve those objectives; using increasingly scarce resources proportionately and effectively.
6. The Strategy also sets a framework for how the Council will fulfil its housing-related, statutory functions and duties, including:
  - i. assessing and planning for local housing need (Housing Act 1985; Care Act 2014);
  - ii. considering housing conditions in its area (Housing Act 2004)
  - iii. enforcing housing standards (Housing Act 2004)
7. It is intended that the Strategy will also satisfy the Council's statutory requirement (the Homelessness Act 2002) to publish a Homelessness Strategy (now to be known as a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy, following the publication of the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018).

## Proposal

8. The proposal is an overarching Strategy, extending to 2030.
9. The Draft Strategy is structured around three areas of focus that are integrally linked and cross-cutting, requiring integrated and collaborative working:
  - i. **Supply** - *Delivering the homes we need*. To ensure the supply of new housing, and use of existing stock, best meets current and future needs and aspirations, and creates thriving mixed communities.
  - ii. **Standards** - *Ensuring our homes sustain health and wellbeing*. To improve the quality, condition and management of housing so that all residents benefit from safe, healthy and well-managed homes;
  - iii. **Support** - *Supporting our residents to thrive*. To help residents access, and sustain, a home which promotes their wellbeing;
10. The Draft Strategy is summarised in tabular form within the document; setting out:
  - Objectives
  - What we want to achieve
  - How we will do this
11. It is intended that the following documents will be linked to the Strategy:
  - The Gateshead Strategic Tenancy Policy (under review)
  - Financial Assistance Policy 2014-19 (This mirrors the NE Policy, which will be reviewed through the NE Home Loan Partnership)
  - The Council's Stock Asset Management Strategy (in development)
  - Gateshead Council's Enforcement Policies

## Recommendations

12. It is recommended that:
  - (i) The Draft Strategy should form the basis for public consultation, for a period of six weeks, the period to run as soon as possible.
  - (ii) The principle methods of consultation will be the Council's Consultation Portal and use of Council News.
  - (iii) Further consultation with Councillors will be held through a seminar and Corporate Advisory Group briefings as required.
  - (iv) A final draft is brought back for consideration by Cabinet following the consultation.

For the following reasons:

To ensure appropriate and wide consultation on the draft strategy is held and to allow Cabinet to consider possible revisions to the draft strategy in the light of feedback from the consultation.

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### Policy Context

1. The Draft Housing Strategy is set within a wide strategic context including:
  - Central Government policy and guidance
  - Making Gateshead Thrive
  - The Local Plan for Gateshead
  - The NE LEP's Strategic Economic Plan

### Background

2. The draft Strategy sets out three overarching strategic objectives:
  - Sustainable housing and economic growth
  - Sustainable neighbourhoods
  - Improved health & wellbeing
3. In addition to these overarching objectives there are a number of other key themes embedded within the draft Strategy:
  - The integration of strategic planning for Housing and Health.
  - Prevention - so minimising demand for Council services, reducing wider, social care and health costs, and improving health & wellbeing;
  - Supporting the long-term sustainability of the Council's housing stock, and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
4. The draft Strategy reflects the Council's dual role as Local Housing Authority, and housing provider and developer.
5. The intention is that the Strategy links to the Council's emerging approach to tackling poverty, and Health & Wellbeing Strategy review.
6. The draft Strategy, and the proposed actions and interventions identified within it, are evidence based, drawing from many sources of data and intelligence, including:
  - Gateshead & Newcastle Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2017/18 (SHMA)
  - Local Housing Assessment 2017/18
  - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
  - Local Index of Need
  - Dwelling level stock condition modelling 2018
  - Social Care Demand Analysis:
    - *Learning Disabilities; Older people; Young people and children; Vulnerable adults*
  - Council stock demand and sustainability analysis
  - Gateshead Homelessness and Multiple and Complex Needs Health Needs Assessment (HHNA)
  - Gateshead Director of Public Health Annual Report 2017

7. The breadth of intelligence is also key to the detailed development and planning of future service activity and intervention, and ongoing monitoring of performance against the objectives set out in the draft Strategy. Action Plans will be produced to achieve this.
8. The draft Strategy aims to address some fundamental issues:
  - The need to accelerate housing delivery, and overcome the constraints of viability and low development values
  - To achieve a balanced and sustainable housing market, and mixed, thriving neighbourhoods and communities.
  - The need to respond to a growing, ageing population
  - To address inequalities:
    - Vulnerable households on low income occupying poor housing
    - Fuel poverty – Excess winter mortality
    - People living in inappropriate accommodation
    - Homelessness
  - How to sustain the Borough's working age population
  - The need to prioritise and target activity, reflecting reduced resources for service delivery
  - The need to drive the integration of strategic planning for Housing and Health, in the context of increasing revenue costs of care support
  - Recognition of the need for ongoing renewal and strategic area regeneration; not all stock is, or will remain, fit for the future.
9. With specific regard to the Council's homelessness duties, the Housing Strategy will be supported by the interventions, and action planning, around the recommendations of the 2017 Homelessness and Complex Needs Health Needs Assessment (HHNA), and the Council's Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 Implementation Plan, which together should satisfy the Government's current Homelessness Code of Guidance on Homelessness Strategies. At this point in time, it is considered that draft Strategy does align with the principles contained within the Government's August 2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy, however, much of the detail will need to be addressed through detailed delivery, action planning.

## **Consultation**

10. The Cabinet Members for Housing, Economy and Health & Wellbeing have been consulted and the draft Strategy was the subject of a Members Seminar held on 12<sup>th</sup> September.
11. The draft Strategy was the topic of discussion at the Gateshead Residential Development Network, Business Breakfast on 12<sup>th</sup> September (the Network comprises market housing developers and social housing providers).

## Alternative Options

12. The Council has no duty to produce a Housing Strategy, however, it is required to:
- prepare a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy;
  - to keep the condition of housing in its area under review; and
  - ensure the housing needs of the Borough are met.

An overarching Housing Strategy provides a framework which helps to ensure the coordination, joining-up, and prioritisation of activity and resource allocation, around these statutory housing functions, as well as other strategic housing functions and service activity.

## Implications of Recommended Option

13. **Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that the costs associated with consultation will be met from existing resources. Any financial implications arising from consultation will be subject to a future report.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resource implications arising from this report.
- c) **Property Implications** - There are no direct property implications arising from this report.

14. **Risk Management Implication** - An overarching Housing Strategy provides a framework which helps to ensure the coordination, joining-up, and prioritisation of activity and resource allocation, and the implementation of statutory housing functions, as well as other strategic housing functions and service activity. The risk of not progressing and consulting on the Housing Strategy is that resources will be used less efficiently and that housing activity across this and other services is less effective and/or coordinated.

15. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - An Equalities Impact Assessment, Initial Screening has been undertaken which identifies predominantly neutral impact on Protected Characteristics, however, a general positive impact is identified for older people and people with disabilities.

16. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

17. **Health Implications** – The intention is that the draft Strategy would have positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the Borough and its residents.

18. **Sustainability Implications** - The overarching purpose of the Strategy is to support the delivery of sustainable housing – including the supply of new housing, and use of existing stock, which best meets current and future needs and aspirations, and creates thriving mixed communities.

19. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from this report. The Council has a Statement of Community Involvement in place which will be complied with in consulting and engaging with the local community.
20. **Area and Ward Implications** - The draft Strategy considers the Borough as a whole, and would therefore have implications for all Wards

## **Background Information**