

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO:	BDC Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: BCa/18/30
FROM:	Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing	DATE OF MEETING: 13 September 2018
OFFICER:	Gavin Fisk Assistant Director - Housing	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB34

JOINT HOUSING STRATEGY 2018-2023

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To support the process of developing a Joint Housing Strategy 2018-2023, this report is to inform Cabinet of the proposed timetable for consulting stakeholders on a draft version of the Housing Strategy.
- 1.2 This report requests that Cabinet Members be consulted on the final draft version of the Housing Strategy, prior to the consultation process beginning, and that the Assistant Director for Housing be given delegated authority to finalise the draft version of the strategy, once Cabinet members have been consulted.

2 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council has agreed to publish a Joint five-year Housing Strategy to support the delivery of Housing and to inform future decision making on the Councils aims to deliver Housing services.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the consultation timetable for the Joint Housing Strategy be agreed.
- 3.2 That the Assistant Director for Housing be given delegated authority to finalise the draft Joint Housing Strategy, having consulted with all members of the Cabinet prior to the Strategy going out for consultation

REASON FOR DECISION

- 3.3 To ensure that Babergh District Council meets its expectations and desires to publish a Joint Housing Strategy for the next five years (2018-2023).
- 3.4 To ensure that Babergh and Mid Suffolk together through the Housing Strategy:
 - Systematically review housing related issues in both districts
 - Set out key housing challenges to stimulate the housing market

- Establish priorities for action both by Babergh and Mid Suffolk alone and together with other services providers and stakeholders
- Consider the views of parish and town councils as well as technical stakeholders through a 30-day period of consultation
- Having a published, stakeholder agreed Joint Housing Strategy based on evidence of housing and health needs will enable Babergh and Mid Suffolk to be ready to access any additional funding streams to enhance the local housing market, in turn to support inclusive growth to the benefit of all residents.

4 KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 The significance of having a ready supply of affordable homes, which are well designed inside and out, makes a huge difference to the health, wellbeing and quality of life our residents can expect.
- 4.2 The Housing Strategy will set out our current housing challenges and how we will tackle them over the short term through to 2023 and set the direction of travel through to 2036. The strategy and action plans will be reviewed annually and the way we work will be flexible enough to incorporate changes as central Government housing, planning, and social care policy around us changes. We are anticipating many such changes in the next 12 months.
- 4.3 There is a current housing shortage that needs to be addressed and the Councils have a key role to play. Existing housing stock and new homes delivery is under strain from several factors, including a growing population and increasing life expectancy. The refreshed Joint Strategic Plan 2016-2020 prioritises delivery of 'more of the right type of homes, of the right tenure in the right place' which forms the focus for this Strategy.
- 4.4 Both Councils support the Suffolk inclusive growth ambition, whereby everyone should feel the social and economic benefits brought to their local area by new homes, new people and enhanced facilities. Getting the housing element of inclusive growth right is fundamental to this, which is why Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councillors are creating these long term strategic housing plans. New homes are important not only in meeting housing need, but also raising housing standards and ensuring communities can thrive, supporting local facilities.
- 4.5 Both Babergh's and Mid Suffolk's vision for housing, is for our residents to live in districts where people have access to affordable and high-quality homes that enable them to build settled, safe and healthy lives, within sustainable and thriving communities.
- 4.6 The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Housing Strategy will contribute to the outcomes and impacts of the wider portfolio of strategies which together support the strategic priorities. These include; *B&MSDC Open for Business Strategy*; *B&MSDC Infrastructure Strategy*; and *B&MSDC Communities Strategy*.

- 4.7 Furthermore, the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Housing Strategy will relate to many Suffolk-wide strategies, policies, evidence and procedures, such as those from Public Health, Adult Services, Children Services, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Community Safety, the Local Enterprise Partnership, and the Greenest County Partnership. Together these focus on creating an enhanced quality of life for individuals, families, the communities in which they live and work and the wider geographical areas of Babergh and Mid Suffolk.
- 4.8 Inclusive growth is being shaped and informed by the development of the new Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan through to 2036. By developing the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Housing Strategy and action plans with partners, their expertise will be incorporated from the start to ensure housing makes a key contribution to the delivery of inclusive growth, whilst protecting and enhancing quality of place.
- 4.9 The Joint Local Plan consultation document (August 2017) sets out a housing requirement for the two districts. This is based upon evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (May 2017). This housing requirement will be revisited once the publication of a standard methodology for calculating housing need is issued by the Government (expected in September 2018).
- 4.10 To achieve the Babergh and Mid Suffolk housing vision, work will be undertaken to improve the quality, choice, and supply of homes for current and future households. With a projected population increase of 16,600 over the period 2018 to 2036 based on Government projections, many of whom will be over 65 years old, housing of the right type and in the right place is an important part of supporting inclusive growth.
- 4.11 The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Housing Strategy outcomes are about more than simply increasing the supply of new homes to meet identified housing need, maintaining and regenerating our existing social housing stock, or ensuring decent homes are available to all.
- 4.12 Housing plays a significant role in supporting quality of life, health and well-being, access to work, training or education, and much needed leisure time. The quality of housing, its availability, cost, and location are of primary importance to enable everyone to settle and fully participate in their community to enhance quality of place and quality of well-being.
- 4.13 Therefore, we will emphasise the leadership role of each Local Housing Authority, separately and jointly with others, as well as promoting and fostering successful new working partnerships with all parts of the housing market. We will further develop existing working partnerships, for example with other registered providers of social housing, specialist providers of market homes for older households, estate agents and businesses.
- 4.14 Most recently a report 'Development of the Joint Housing Strategy 2018-2036' went to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 July 2018 to seek recommendations and comments about the background and Joint Housing Strategy development process. Issues raised have been incorporated in to the process and commentary within the documents.

5 LINKS TO JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN

- 5.1 The Councils have re-iterated and highlighted priorities, grouped under five strategic themes, in the Babergh and Mid Suffolk 'Annual Report Summary 2017/18' which supports the delivery of the refreshed Joint Strategic Plan 2016-2020. They are part of the vision for the Councils, centred around Economy and Environment, Housing Delivery and Strong and Healthy Communities.
- 5.2 'Housing' is a vital aspect of the Councils sustainable inclusive growth ambition. It will make a significant contribution to achieving the aims and objectives of the Joint Strategic Plan as outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 5.3 A specific outcome 'Housing Strategy to be complete winter 2018-19' forms part of the 'Housing Delivery Priorities' found on page 8 of the Annual Report Summary 2017/18, underlining the continued commitment to better housing outcomes.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1

Revenue/Capital/ Expenditure/Income Item	Total	2018/19
Cost of developing the strategy including the associated consultation will cost no more than £5,000 in total	£5,000	BDC Contribution 50% £2,500

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal implications to this report

8 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Corporate / Significant Business Risk No. Key risks are set out below:
- 8.2 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Corporate / Significant Business Risk No. 1c and 1e – Housing Delivery. 3a – Community Capacity Building and Engagement. 4b – Assets and Investments. 5g – An Enabled and Efficient Organisation.

Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Without the adoption of a comprehensive Babergh and Mid Suffolk Housing Strategy, it is less likely the	Highly unlikely (1)	Bad (3)	Joint Housing Strategy project plan and officer working group in place to create a comprehensive Housing Strategy,

Councils will achieve their vision for housing.			Homelessness Reduction Strategy and action plans.
Without systematic collaboration, it is unlikely the Councils will work most effectively with other housing market stakeholders, and we may not address the identified housing market challenges in a timely manner.	Unlikely (2)	Noticeable (2)	A Communications and Stakeholder Involvement Plan, including a timetable for specific stakeholder engagement activity has been created. A workshop was held in April with housing market stakeholders to invite them to shape and inform the housing strategy and action plans from the outset.
Without effective use of Babergh and Mid Suffolk and public estate assets it is unlikely the Councils will reduce costs to the public purse, and significant opportunities to co-create new and imaginative ways to inform and influence successful housing outcomes may be missed.	Unlikely (2)	Bad (3)	Numerous new opportunities exploited to inform and work with relevant partners in Babergh and Mid Suffolk areas. E.g. Contributed to the 'Housing & Health' 2017 evidence base, being used by the Suffolk Health & Well-Being Board to deliver its Key Priorities.
Without an effective plan for increasing new homes delivery the Councils may increase the risk of a loss of planning control and a potential loss of New Homes Bonus for local authorities in accordance with the new 'Housing Delivery Test' introduced by a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2018.	Probable (3)	Bad (3)	<p>Within the new Housing Strategy increasing the delivery of new homes is given highest priority. This means new and additional resources are already on track to support this work as well as preparation of a Housing Delivery Test – Action Plan. E.g. additional staff resources have been allocated within Strategic Planning and Housing Solutions.</p> <p>The Joint Local Plan will allocate sites for housing delivery over the period to 2036 that will be supported by evidence to their delivery.</p>

Without an effective plan to address the changing housing needs of an ageing population, the Councils may see a significant proportion of residents being inadequately housed. Inadequately housed may mean people are: unsafe; insecure; at high risk of premature death.	Probable (3)	Bad (3)	The Councils are actively working with Suffolk County Council colleagues to develop shared understanding and action plans to address the highest priority housing needs of older residents. Also exploring all and every new funding stream to bring in the necessary resources to support this ambition.
Without continuing to ensure current housing stock (approximately 80,000 homes) is fit for 21 st century living, it is unlikely the Councils will make best use of public and private assets and investments.	Probable (3)	Bad (3)	Detailed action plans to support private sector landlords fulfil their duties form part of the Housing Strategy, to include Licensing of relevant Houses of Multiple Occupation. Warm Homes funding bid opportunities constantly monitored to bring in additional funding for to support those households in fuel poverty. Empty Homes project revitalised to bring even more empty homes back in to use. The Housing Revenue Account business plan used to maximum to support Babergh and Mid Suffolk social landlord function, new build work and estate regeneration.

9 CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 April 2018: Housing market stakeholder event to determine areas of strategic focus and begin work on action plans.
- 9.2 June 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councillors workshop event to comment on and refine work so far.
- 9.3 June 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Town and Parish Councils alerted in advance of the consultation period during September / October.

- 9.4 July 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee: to comment on the process and endorse the approach.
- 9.5 September 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Cabinets to agree the draft Strategy and actions and authorise a 30-day consultation beginning on the 5 October until 2 November 2018. During the consultation period copies of the draft strategy will be sent to all key stakeholders including; Parish Councils, Local Borough and District Councils, Third Sector organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureaux. With a request to complete a survey and capture views.
- 9.6 October 2018: An event is to be held in Endeavour House Atrium whereby stakeholders can speak to officers regarding the content of the consultation.
- 9.7 November 2018: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councillors workshop to consider consultation feedback and offer final amendments to the strategy and associated action plans.
- 9.8 December 2018: Strategy and action plans to Full Council to request adoption.

10 EQUALITY ANALYSIS

- 10.1 See screening Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix B) for the Housing Strategy and the revised Homelessness Reduction Strategy. No further action required at this time.

11 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no environmental implications as a result of the Joint Housing Strategy 2018 - 2023

12 APPENDICES

None.

13 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.