



# Annual update of the Joint Homes & Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Reduction & Rough Sleeping Strategy

Joint Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee

24<sup>th</sup> October 2022

# Updated Homes & Housing Strategy 2022



The current Joint Homes and Housing Strategy was adopted in March 2019



The world has changed significantly since then



The Strategy has been **refreshed** to ensure it is supported by the most current data and documents



The Delivery Plan has been **refocused** to ensure it captures all the new and emerging policy priorities

ORIGINAL DELIVERY PLAN	JUNE 2020	JUNE 2021	SEPTEMBER 2022
ACTIONS COMPLETED	1	12	52
ACTIONS IN PROGRESS	52	69	35 (TRANSFERRED)
ACTIONS IN PROGRESS WITH MINOR DELAYS	15	0	2 (TRANSFERRED)
ACTIONS YET TO COMMENCE	25	12	4 (TRANSFERRED)
TOTAL ACTIONS	93	93	93

# Updated Homes & Housing Strategy 2022

## What's changed?

- ▶ Kept the Vision the same

*“Our residents live in affordable and high-quality homes that enable them to build settled, safe and healthy lives, within sustainable and thriving communities.”*

- ▶ Kept the Nine Strategic Aims the same

- ▶ Removed the timeframe and replaced with a date published
- ▶ Updated and replaced outdated references and superseded information
- ▶ Updated supporting Data
- ▶ Included what has been achieved, what is being worked on and what will be targeted next

### **REFOCUSED the Delivery Plan to:**

- Include the new and emerging themes
- Tighten timescales (Less vague more targeted)
  - Added what success will look like
  - Dovetail with Outcomes Framework
- Streamline the document

**Aim 1 - The housing market functions effectively, providing homes, which are as affordable as possible; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy**

## **ACHIEVED**

- Published robust viability testing of the Joint Local Plan
- Improved our approach to discharging planning conditions
- Encouraged and supported self-build and custom-build developers by setting out positive policies in the Joint Local Plan

## **NEW**

- Using the Council's Growth Companies as a delivery vehicle, build/acquire 65 new homes in each district per year for each of the next 6 years. Ensuring that all new-build homes are in accordance with the Council's new Design Guide Specification and the new Parking Strategy

## **WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE**

- 65 homes built/acquired in each district for each of the next 6 years
- Increase in housing in the districts to contribute to meeting housing needs

## Aim 2 – There is a wide and varied choice of good quality, sustainable homes of different sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of a wide range of different households

### ACHIEVED

- Provided advice and encouragement to community-led housing schemes on the formation of Community Land Trusts, with the objective of delivering new affordable housing
- Published a framework for making investment decisions to increase the overall supply of affordable housing, making use of the Housing Revenue Account and working collaboratively with housing associations.

### NEW

- Ensure efficient use of the Council's housing stock by creation of a new policy to encourage tenants to downsize

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- New Policy approved and published
- Best Use made of Housing Stock and a reduction in under-occupation

## Aim 3 – Homelessness is prevented and our services provide positive and planned interventions

### ACHIEVED

- Developed and implemented a comprehensive online advice service for clients to access housing options advice
- Developed a process for offering short term support and ongoing contact to monitor the progress of clients and reduce the risk of repeated homelessness from temporary accommodation.
  - Created an informal multi-agency panel to manage, monitor and find housing solutions for the hardest to house clients
  - Rebranded the Rent Deposit Scheme and expanded the Central Suffolk Lettings provision

### NEW

- Review the current Joint Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy and produce new Joint Strategy and Delivery Plan ready for adoption and publication in 2024.
- Support the objectives of the Cost of Living Crisis Action Plan, as the plan evolves and more detail is known.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- New Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy approved and published
  - Proactively assisting residents, where possible, with the cost of living crisis, with the over-arching aim of preventing homelessness

## Aim 4 – Babergh and Mid Suffolk is an effective social landlord known for delivering quality services

### ACHIEVED

- Put in place measures to ensure we learn from every complaint
- Put in a place a new approach to managing complaints of anti-social behaviour
- Reviewed our approach to managing void/redundant stock & identified measures to make better use
- Reviewed our housing stock profile and commenced a programme to dispose of properties that are expensive and/or low demand.

### NEW

- Co-create, develop and launch a Tenant Engagement Strategy
- Refresh the Councils' Income Strategy
  - Work with our tenants to constantly improve the ways we communicate with them
- Building Services to undergo a full diagnostic assessment leading to transformation of the service

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- Tenant Engagement Strategy adopted enabling tenants to hold BMSDC to account
- BMSDC is a compliant landlord and tenants are able to see how we are performing against the standards.
- Established governance model in place to deliver the transformation work so that the progress and success of the project is monitored effectively

## Aim 5 – Homes are in high quality sustainable environments, served by jobs and community facilities, appropriate green space, effective transport links and other necessary infrastructure

### ACHIEVED

- Ensured our Homes and Housing Strategy is aligned to our Economic and Communities Strategies and complements our commitment to stimulate housing led growth and economic prosperity
- Reviewed the Community Infrastructure (CIL) Expenditure Framework
- Developed an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and reviewed it in 2020,
  - Delivered two separate Infrastructure Funding Statements for both Councils (2019/20 and 2020/21)

### NEW

- Prepare for 'Biodiversity offsetting' when Biodiversity net gain becomes compulsory in 2023; by identifying sites and pursuing opportunities for securing net gains, in areas that maximise the benefits provided

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- Sites Identified to contribute to an increase in Biodiversity in the Districts
- Public Realm and Planning working together to deliver environmental priorities



## Aim 6 – Best use is made of private sector land and private accommodation across the districts

### ACHIEVED

- Worked with Suffolk authorities to develop and implement a new approach to delivering DFGs.
- Developed and implemented a project to increase awareness of the availability of support for private tenants in respect of housing conditions and energy efficiency standards
  - Increased the number of empty homes which the council supports back in to use

### NEW

- Promote and support energy efficiency in homes by targeting all F & G energy performance rated properties in the private rented sector.
- Assess potential demand to support the various Refugee and Asylum Seeker accommodation needs.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- Decrease in F & G properties in private rented sector in BMSDC; contributing to the aims of the Cost of Living Crisis Action Plan – reducing energy costs for residents.
- Clarity on way forward to meet increased housing needs; working in partnership with Suffolk County Council

## Aim 7 – People live in vibrant and well-connected communities; and homes and communities continue to meet the changing needs of residents

### ACHIEVED

- Developed a Communities Strategy which encourages greater participation and involvement
- Ensured the Joint Local Plan includes policies to increase the supply of specialist and accessible housing, in line with the Local Plan preparation timescales.

### NEW

- Commission an Older People's Homes Development Strategy.
- Carry out a health check on our current lettings and allocation policy to ensure that the current arrangements continue to meet the needs of the council's and our residents.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- Strategy and delivery plan published; working with partners to ensure choice within older peoples housing
- Health check completed and recommendations implemented

## Aim 8 – Everyone has a suitable home, and residents are able to live as healthily, safely, independently as possible within sustainable communities

### ACHIEVED

- Identified strategic objectives for carbon reduction from our housing stock, to contribute to corporate and countywide climate emergency objectives.
- Prepared a broad specification for new build council stock, to include consideration of passive technologies and measures to increase accessibility.

### NEW

- Take forward measures to improve the environmental performance of our housing stock, in order to reduce carbon emissions, meet national targets for all social homes to be EPC rating of C or above by 2030 and to contribute to corporate and countywide climate emergency objectives.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- Investment plan created to ensure we're on track to meet the EPC target and relevant contracts secured;
- Linked to the Cost of Living Crisis Action Plan; reducing residents energy costs

Aim 9 – Both Councils have strong relationships with residents, developers and other partners that enable us to deliver housing, infrastructure and services effectively, and to innovate where appropriate

## ACHIEVED

- Continue to maintain our strong relationship with Homes England in order to optimise the funding streams for which we are eligible
- Continue to work collectively as local authorities, within Suffolk, to support the effective delivery of services in relation to Housing through means of the Suffolk Housing Board
- Continue to provide support to neighbourhood planning groups to create and 'make' effective plans

## NEW

- Develop a neighbourhood strategy and policy setting out how we will work with our tenants to improve the areas they live. Including reviewing our approach to the management of garages.
- Suffolk Housing Board to identify and take forward projects which address housing inequalities, exacerbated by the Covid-19 Pandemic, which meet the criteria for funding allocated by Suffolk Public Sector Leaders.

## WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

- Strategy and Policy adopted, and targets set for improvement in satisfaction and a set of service standards with a linked set of Key Performance Indicators
- Projects identified and taken forward; maximising access to this funding stream

# Links to Corporate Plan - Housing

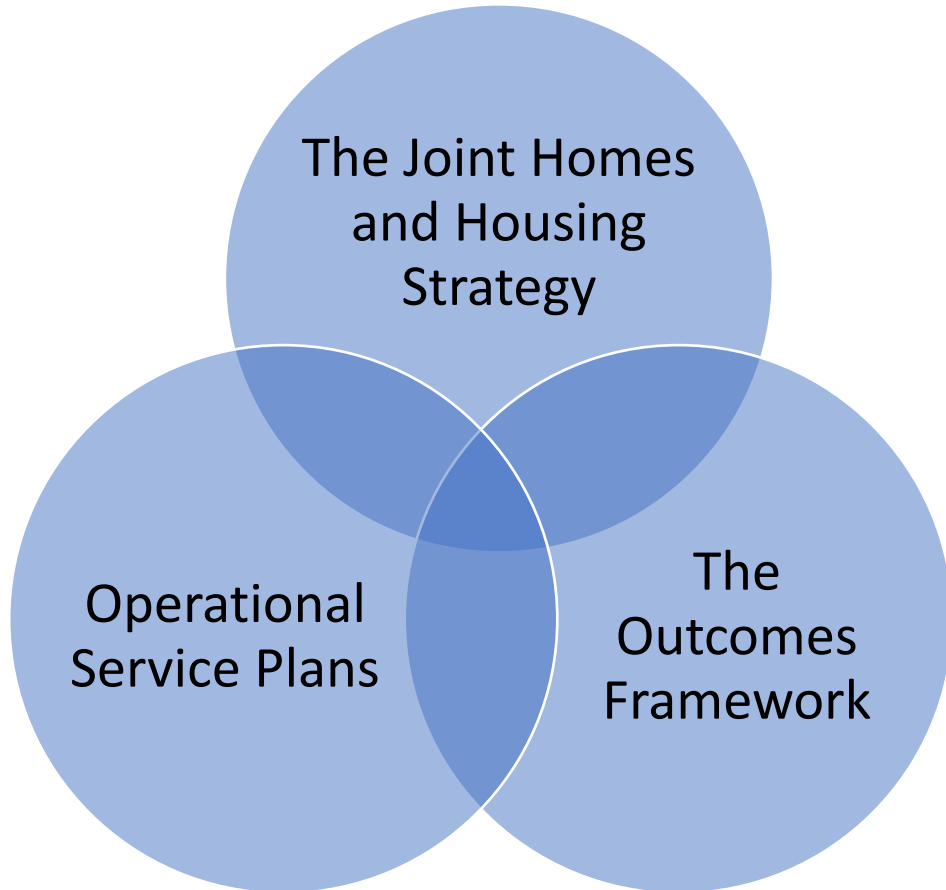


The strategic aims of the Homes and Housing Strategy seek to support and compliment other strategies in the Corporate Plan (each underpinned by their own action plans).

The Joint Homes and Housing Strategy Delivery Plan is monitored on a quarterly basis; with updates from action leads.

There is also an established Housing Programme Board to oversee and manage major projects.

# The Outcomes Framework



- Every action within the Homes and Housing Strategy Delivery Plan has been mapped against the 56 outcomes in the Outcomes Framework.
- Used software to dovetail the two documents whilst retaining the sovereignty of each
- System devised to aid synergy but avoid duplication
- To ensure that the Homes and Housing Strategy is contributing to the achievement of corporate priorities



Any Questions?