

**Report to Communities Select
Committee**
Date of meeting: 20th June 2017



Portfolio: Housing – Cllr S. Stavrou



Subject: Pre-scrutiny of Draft Housing Strategy 2017-2022

Responsible Officer: Alan Hall – Director of Communities (01992 564004)

Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246)

Recommendations:

- (1) That the Select Committee considers the Draft Housing Strategy 2017-2022 (attached as an Appendix) and provides any comments that it may have on the Draft Housing Strategy to the Housing Portfolio Holder for consideration, prior to consideration and adoption by the Cabinet; and**
- (2) That the Select Committee continues to review future Annual Key Action Plans for the Housing Strategy prior to approval each year, and reviews progress with Key Action Plans every 6 months, in accordance with its previous practice.**

1. In 2009, the Cabinet adopted the Council's current Housing Strategy. Although there is no longer any legal or policy requirement, it is accepted good housing and local government practice for a local authority to have an up to date Housing Strategy. A new Draft Housing Strategy has therefore been produced by officers, which covers the period 2017-2022 and is attached as an Appendix.

2. The update to the Housing Strategy has been delayed from when it was originally due, since the former Housing Portfolio Holder had previously agreed that it should not be updated until the Draft Local Plan had been published, because much of the Housing Strategy relates to the provisions within the Local Plan. However, it was also agreed that, in the meantime, an annual Housing Strategy Key Action Plan should continue to be produced, with progress monitored by the Communities Select Committee every 6 months until the new Housing Strategy is formulated and adopted, which the Select Committee (and predecessor bodies) has done.

3. However, now that: the Draft Local Plan has been published; the outcome of Stage 1 of the Council's HRA Financial Options Review has been determined by the Cabinet; and the contents of the last Government's Housing White Paper are known; the Council is now in a good position to update its Housing Strategy.

4. The purpose of the Housing Strategy is to assess the District's current and future housing needs, and to set out the Council's approach to meeting those needs. The Strategy sets out a suggested overall Vision for housing in the District (based on the District's former Community Strategy), together with the Council's key housing objectives and the aims and objectives relating to individual housing issues. It also provides a Key Action Plan for the first year of the Strategy, which will be updated on an annual basis. It is proposed that the Select Committee continues to review future Annual Key Action Plans prior to approval each year, and reviews progress with Key Action Plans every 6 months, in accordance with its previous practice.

5. It should be noted that the Housing Strategy does not cover the aims, objectives and

actions of the Council as landlord, except for those aspects that contribute to the Strategy (e.g. Council housebuilding).

6. The Housing Strategy has been produced with contributions from a number of senior officers in the Housing Service and the Planning Policy Team, which the Director of Communities has collated and edited to ensure a consistent approach, format and language throughout the document.

7. The Housing Portfolio Holder has invited the Select Committee to consider, pre-scrutinise and provide her with any comments on the Draft Housing Strategy for her to consider, before it is presented to the Cabinet for consideration and adoption. Any suggestions that the Housing Portfolio Holder feels unable to include in the final version of the Strategy will be included in the covering report to the Cabinet, so that it is aware of the Select Committee's views.