

Committee(s): Environment, Enforcement and Housing	Date: 16 March 2021
Subject: Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2021-2025	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Tracey Lilley (Corporate Director – Housing and Community Safety)	Public
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Summary

Whilst local authorities are not required to have a formal housing strategy, Brentwood Borough Council expects to adopt a strategic approach to housing in local areas and deliver a thriving housing market to address local needs.

To set out the aims of the Council for housing in the borough and the services provided directly by the Council, an updated Housing Strategy is needed. Attached as Appendix A is the new Housing Strategy for the period 2021 to 2025, along with the performance measures and delivery plan attached as Appendix B.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

R1. To approve the draft Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2021-2025 as attached at Appendix A and B.

R2. That delegated authority is given to the Corporate Director (Housing and Community Safety) in consultation with the Chair of the Environment, Enforcement and Housing and Committee to make any final minor or legislative amendments to the strategy and delivery plan.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. The Council's Housing Strategy sets out the strategic direction for housing activity in the borough, dealing with housing need, supply and our approach to

quality and management of existing and new housing stock. It sets the strategic framework to promote growth and provides guidance relevant to all development partners in this borough.

2. The Council's Corporate Plan for 2020-2025, 'Where everyone matters', describes the council's overall priorities and programme of work. The plan identifies housing as one of its priorities, "Improving housing - access to a range of decent homes that meet local needs". The role of the housing strategy is to expand out the Corporate Plan's high level aims and to show more clearly what success looks like, to say what the council will do itself and what it expects others to do; and to demonstrate clearly how housing can play a role in meeting the broader Council's corporate objectives. The housing strategy aligns with the other priorities of the Corporate Plan and provides a framework for integrated delivery of housing priorities by the council and its partners.
3. The Council's emerging Local Development Plan (Local Plan) sets out the borough's housing need and how this will be met according to development allocations and planning policies. Growth proposed in the Local Plan is set to meet a step-change in the amount of new homes delivered according to increasing needs. It also sets a framework for the mix and types of new homes needed, such as affordable housing provision in a borough with high house prices.
4. Both the Corporate Plan and the Local Plan provide a framework for housing delivery. The Housing Strategy develops this into a clear agenda for growth with specific strategic objectives, priorities and commitments.
5. Brentwood's Housing Strategy underpins proposed Local Plan growth ambitions, sets the direction of travel for housing policy related to supply, demand and housing management, and is or will be, supported by a set of measures and delivery plans.

Brentwood's Housing Strategy

6. The vision for the Housing Strategy is for residents to live in affordable decent homes that meet their needs and enable them to build settled and healthy lives, within sustainable and thriving communities.
7. This vision is supported by three strategic corporate aims included in the Council's corporate strategy, which are:
 - a) Provide decent, safe and affordable homes for local people.
 - b) Support our tenants through a high quality, well managed service.
 - c) Support responsible development in the borough.

8. The Housing Strategy sets out how these aims will be achieved. The main objectives of the strategy are:
 - a) Increase the supply of affordable housing.
 - b) Make best use of the existing stock.
 - c) Deliver good quality sustainable homes.
 - d) Deliver good quality services to residents.
 - e) Deliver good quality services to tenants and leaseholders.
 - f) Ensure resident safety.
9. The strategy is split into themes with associated performance measures and a delivery plan. An annual update on progress will be provided on the delivery of the plan and the measures that have identified to gauge the strategy's success.
10. The strategy and action plan will continue to evolve and be amended as needed to respond to issues as they emerge and action needs to be taken.

Reasons for Recommendation

11. To ensure that the Council and the Housing Department in particular has a strategy that oversees the work on enabling housing to be provided and the management of housing directly by the Council.

References to Corporate Plan

12. The Housing Strategy helps to deliver of "Improving Housing" within the corporate plan.

Consultation

13. Consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders and is set out within the strategy.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Phoebe Barnes, Corporate Finance Manager (Deputy S151)

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Approving the Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan provides financial certainty towards the required finances over the next 5 years.

For 2021-22 the requirement of delivering the strategy and plan will be met from existing budgets. Through the Council's budget monitoring and budget setting process, budgets will be aligned if needed to ensure the budgets and HRA Business Plan support the delivery of this Strategy.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) & Monitoring Officer

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The Deregulation Act 2015 removed the power (in section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003) on the Secretary of State to require local housing authorities in England to produce a housing strategy. This does not prevent an authority from having such a strategy.

The Council's Constitution, Section 3 – the Environment, Enforcement and Housing Committee can set the Housing Strategy for the Council.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director of Planning and Economy

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It is important that the Council has a Housing Strategy that provides further detail to the Corporate Strategy and Local Plan. A strategy will assist delivery of new homes that meet local needs in terms of overall numbers and appropriate mix/tenures. Housing delivery plays a vital role in the local economy, both in terms of short-term construction related benefits (on-site jobs and supply chains) and ensuring that the borough remains an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices to this report

Appendix A: The Housing Strategy for 2021-2025.

Appendix B: Housing Strategy Delivery Plan 2021-2025.