

**TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2020**

**REPORT OF THE Executive Director, Communities**

**CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY**

**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

**PURPOSE**

To share the Draft Housing Strategy and provide an opportunity for inclusion of the Scrutiny Committees views and comments prior to submission to the Council's Cabinet for final approval.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. The contents and proposed actions contained within the draft Housing Strategy are endorsed and can go onto become the final strategy.
2. That it is approved that we are able to take the completed Housing Strategy to Cabinet for approval.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

There is no longer a statutory duty upon Local Authorities to produce a Housing Strategy. ( unlike the duty to produce homelessness and rough sleeping one) However producing one is vital for number of reasons. These reasons include informing our role in increasing housing supply, place shaping, promoting the role of housing in the creation of safe, thriving and sustainable communities and supporting economic growth.

It is an opportunity to assess the current housing situation across all tenures in the local area, both in terms of quantity and quality, looks at and forecasts future need and thinks about how we may meet these needs.

It interprets national policy priorities into a local context, sitting alongside and complementing other crucial strategies and policies. These include but are not limited to, The Local Plan, The Homelessness strategy and Community safety plans. It will give us a direction to work towards and goals to monitor progress against.

The last Housing and Health Strategy covered the period 2010- 2015. HQN were procured to assist with this new Housing Strategy which will guide what we do between 2020- 2025. The production of it has been somewhat delayed, not least due

to Covid19, but we feel there is sufficient flexibility within it to accommodate impacts of Covid19.

It contains an achievable range of priorities and actions. The key headlines are detailed below:

- Development of 250 new homes per year to meet the needs of the existing population and those attracted to the area for work, either locally or in easy commuting distance
- Providing a range of new homes to reflect need and aspiration, particularly affordable homes
- Ensuring all new homes are built to a standard which reflects the move towards zero carbon and future proofs them against the climate crisis
- Ensure new housing is incorporated into the regeneration of the town centre
- Improving conditions in the private sector
- Improving tenancy sustainment rates
- Providing a wider range of options for older people and for younger people.

Many of these headline priorities are already being delivered to a certain extent through current work being undertaken. This strategy enables us to build this work on and develop more positive outcomes for the people of Tamworth.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

Although there is no statutory requirement to publish a Housing Strategy currently, not doing so could mean that we fail to address / focus on other issues which could leave us open to challenge; legally, financially and reputational. E.g. As an Authority we can be held accountable to for not building sufficient numbers of housing. We need to be able to demonstrate we are willing to play our part in achieving goals set by national legislation e.g. achieving zero carbon emissions by 2050. We need to ensure we continue to deliver and improve on those areas of work where there are statutory duties upon us e.g. dealing with poor conditions in the private rental sector, HMO Licencing.

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The Strategy will encompass and benefit all sectors of the local community. It will bring positive outcomes around health and wellbeing to the more vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the Community.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The strategy has significant positive implications for sustainability locally. By providing sufficient good quality housing it will contribute to stable resilient communities. Communities where people do not wish to keep moving from or have to because of there being no suitable affordable accommodation. Homes built to better and more energy efficient standards, or even retrofitted, will stand the test of time. It will encourage healthy and sustainable positive economic outcomes.

**REPORT AUTHOR : Rob Barnes**

## **APPENDICES**

- A) Evidence base
- B) Draft Strategy

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