

COUNCIL
13 October 2021
CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation to Council made at the Cabinet meeting held on 23 September 2021

Horsham District Council Housing and Homeless Strategy 2021 - 2026

The previous Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2013-15 had been adopted in 2013 and reviewed in 2017. There have been significant changes in housing and homelessness issues faced by the district's residents since the previous strategy was adopted, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic are still not fully known.

A new strategy is therefore required, and a multi-stage approach is proposed:

- The first stage, over 18 months, will be an information-gathering period, where key areas of the service are reviewed as well as some initial actions being taken.
- The second stage will set out next steps, based on the findings of the first stage, to address the overall objectives of the service. This will involve producing an interim review in 2022.
- The final stage will see the service carry out the work to deliver on these goals in the remaining three years.

The report to Cabinet sets out details of this phased approach, including the actions and reviews that will be undertaken. It will be a person-focused and data-led approach designed to strengthen the Housing and Homelessness Service during these unprecedented times.

RESOLVED

- i) To approve the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2021-2026.
- ii) To delegate authority to the Relevant Cabinet Member to monitor performance against the Delivery Plan with periodic updates being presented to Cabinet following the Strategy's adoption.
- iii) To note that this Strategy is the first step in a multi-stage approach, as set out in section 3 of this report.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- iv) That the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2021-2026 be adopted.

REASON

- i) To ensure the Council fulfils its statutory responsibility of having a current Housing and Homelessness Strategy.
- ii) To give the Housing and Homelessness Service clear direction and objectives that will guide decision-making, projects and priorities over the next five years.

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Local Enforcement Plan and CIL Enforcement Policy

The proposed Local Enforcement Plan takes into account the review of the Council's Planning Compliance Service, which was undertaken in 2019, as well as current legislation. The Plan sets out how the Council monitors the implementation of planning permissions, investigates alleged cases of unauthorised development and takes action where appropriate.

At the Cabinet meeting, the following two amendments to the Local Enforcement Plan relating to Paragraph 4: 'What is not a Breach of Planning Control', were proposed:

- 'Boundary disputes' should include advice on hedges and high hedge disputes, as detailed in the 1997 Hedge Regulations, given the number of disputes that involve hedges; and
- Advice that deeds of covenants may restrict what can be done with a site should be included.

The Cabinet Member agreed to look into making these amendments, and subsequently these have been incorporated into the Local Enforcement Plan (revised Plan attached).

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge on development used to help fund infrastructure needed to support development in the district. The Council's CIL schedule was adopted in October 2017, with charges calculated on a £ per square metre of development basis. The [CIL Enforcement Policy](#) sets out how the Council will ensure the collection of funds runs smoothly. It publicises the penalties for non-payment of CIL charges so that it is clear to those liable to pay the levy what the likely consequences for non-payment or late payment would be.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- i) That the Local Enforcement Plan be adopted.
- ii) That the CIL Enforcement Policy be adopted.

REASON

- i) Local Enforcement Plan

It is necessary to update the adopted March 2016 Local Enforcement Plan to take account of current legislation and the review of the Planning Compliance service which was undertaken by the Planning Advisory Service in 2019.

- ii) CIL Enforcement Policy

In order to publicise the penalties for non-payment of the CIL charges and to ensure that the Council does not lose out financially by non-payment and having to carry out additional tasks as a result of non-payment.

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Recommendation to Council made at the Cabinet meeting held 7 October 2021

Drill Hall

Cabinet had considered the future of the Drill Hall in January 2020 because the building was under-utilised. Issues reviewed included a proposal for alternative use, the condition of the building, its poor thermal performance and running costs. Cabinet decided to consider any viable bids from organisations or community groups to run the building; should no suitable bid come forward the property would be made available for affordable housing.

The Horsham Branch of the Royal British Legion put forward a proposal to create a home for Horsham's various military and service organisations. The proposal also included upgrading and improving the building (including thermal performance) and making it available for hire to the broader community.

Details of the proposal, including financial implications, environmental improvements, existing users and new and future users, as set out in the Cabinet report, are to be considered by Cabinet on 7 October.

Cabinet is recommended to:

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- i) That the Drill Hall is leased to the Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion from 1 April 2022 for a period of up to 30 years.
- ii) To delegate authority to the Director of Place in consultation with Head of Legal & Democratic to finalise the legal documentation and enter into a lease, subject to applicable consents, with the Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion for the Drill Hall.
- iii) To delegate authority to the Director of Place to agree and finalise a schedule of works with the Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion to improve the Drill Hall.

REASON

The Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion (RBL) have expressed an interest in running the Drill Hall. This will have the following benefits:

- i) The Drill Hall will continue to be available for community activities and events. The RBL have also expressed an ambition to grow and develop the role of the Drill Hall for the community.
- ii) The fabric of the Drill Hall will be improved and become more energy efficient.
- iii) The Council will make an annual revenue saving.
- iv) It will provide a focal point for the Armed Forces in the District.