

Report to Cabinet

25th May 2017

By the Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Protection

INFORMATION REPORT



**Horsham
District
Council**

Not Exempt

Horsham District Housing Strategy Position Statement - Annual Review 2016/17

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the progress in meeting the objectives set out in the Housing Strategy 2013-2015. It further advises of options that officers will be considering going forward to support the objective to deliver accommodation solutions to households in housing need.

This Housing Strategy Position Statement and annual review details the reasons for the progress and outlines options for the future. Options being considered are at various stages of progress and full reports will be brought to Cabinet as required.

Changes detailed within the Governments White Paper “Fixing Our Broken Housing Market” surrounding definitions of Affordable Housing, Housing Company restrictions and a fairer private rented sector need to be fully explored and linked into the options going forward. A number of the options previously considered are being revisited in light of restrictions added within the White Paper.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i. Note the contents of the Housing Strategy Position Statement Annual Report 2016/17 (Appendix 1) and options to be considered in the future to meet local housing need.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Housing Strategy Position Statement Annual Review 2016/17 (Appendix 1) is an update of progress within the last financial year and is for information only.

The options detailed within the “looking ahead” section advises Cabinet of the options officers are currently exploring to deliver more housing to meet local need in the future.

Background Papers: Housing Strategy 2013-15

Wards affected: All wards

Contact: Rob Jarvis – Head of Housing Services 01403 215449

Background Information

1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 We published our Housing Strategy 2013-15 in April 2013. The Strategy outlined how we intended to provide housing and housing-related services for all residents in the District, making the best use of all the resources we have at our disposal and delivering the objective identified in the Horsham District Plan. This Housing Strategy Position Statement and annual review 2016/17 presents how we continue to meet the objectives set out within the strategy.
- 1.2 Since 2015 Housing authorities have been waiting for the Housing White Paper - "Fixing Our Broken Housing Market" which after an 18 month delay was published in February 2017. This year will see a General Election being held, progress on the United Kingdom's plans to leave the European Union and the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act. Like many Local Authorities these changes and anticipated Housing White Paper guidance have delayed us in reviewing our Strategic Housing Policies.
- 1.3 The headlines that we can report are:
 - The continued high delivery of affordable homes,
 - An increase in demand for temporary accommodation to support homeless households to remain in the Horsham District
 - An increase in demand to support those most vulnerable and those in greatest housing need.

2 Relevant Council policy

- 2.1 This report accords with the objectives of the Corporate Plan, as it supports the delivery of housing to meet local need and to prevent homelessness throughout the Horsham District.

3 Details

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy Position Statement (Appendix 1) contains a review of what has been achieved during 2016/17 and how these achievements support the objectives set out in the Housing Strategy 2013-2015.
- 3.2 The Housing Strategy Position Statement addresses progress in respect of the following objectives:
 - Increasing the supply of homes that people in need can afford
 - Effective support for homeless households
 - Appropriate housing provision for vulnerable people
 - Thriving rural communities

3.3 The Housing Strategy Position Statement (Appendix 1) identifies further options currently being explored which will continue to aid the objectives listed above. These options include:

- The creation of a Housing or Property Company
- Options to increase the delivery of smaller unit schemes (numbers delivered, not size)
- Increasing the use of S106 Commuted Sum funding to support on site delivery of affordable housing
- Undertaking a review of the Housing Register and Nominations Policy
- Creation of a new Housing Strategy
- Identify options to support hidden households to secure appropriate housing

4 Next Steps

4.1 Cabinet to note the contents of report and specifically be aware of the “looking ahead” options currently being explored for further consideration. Individual options will be consulted upon and reports brought to Cabinet for consideration as appropriate.

5 Views of the Policy Development Advisory Group and Outcome of Consultations

5.1 The Housing and Public Protection PDAG considered and supported the draft Housing Strategy Position Statement (Appendix 1) at their meeting on 15th May 2017.

5.2 Legal and financial implications in the looking ahead options will be sought as options are progressed. Members will be advised in due course as options are explored. Required decisions will be brought to Cabinet as appropriate. These will have full consideration of legal and financial implications.

6 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected

6.1 This report is for information only and provides an indication of the options officers will be investigating further. If an option is progressed a report will be brought to relevant PDAG(s) for comment and Cabinet for approval.

7 Resource Consequences

7.1 No financial consequences.

7.2 The financial consequences of any individual options that may be progressed will be reported to Cabinet.

8 Legal Consequences

8.1 No legal consequences.

8.2 The legal consequences of any individual options that may be progressed will be reported to Cabinet.

9 Risk Assessment

9.1 There are no direct risks associated with this report.

10 Other Considerations

10.1 There are no consequences in respect of Crime & Disorder; Human Rights; Equality & Diversity and Sustainability.

APPENDICES TO REPORT

Housing Strategy Position Statement – Annual Review 2016/17