



# Scrutiny

11 February 2021

**Report of:** Councillor Leigh Higgins - Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity (and Deputy Leader)

## Draft Housing Strategy

<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton
<b>Relevant Ward Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt Information:</b>	No

### 1 Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks an initial steer and input from the Scrutiny Committee in preparation of the Housing Strategy for Melton.
- 1.2 The Draft Housing Strategy Document outlines key priorities for strategic approaches in managing housing need, supply and delivery in Melton. The views from Scrutiny Committee are sought at this very early stage prior to finalising the draft for public consultation.
- 1.3 The aim of the draft strategy is for the Council to play a proactive role by direct and indirect intervention and influencing partners to facilitate and deliver housing in Melton so that people of all stages of life can find, and live in a quality home they can afford.

### 2 Recommendation(s)

**That Scrutiny Committee:**

- 1. Note the Draft Housing Strategy;**
- 2. Provides comments and a steer on the priorities and proposed actions.**

### 3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 To develop and publish a housing strategy is no longer a statutory duty for the Council. However, local authorities are encouraged to create a document that clearly states its housing ambitions and goals for the future. It is considered imperative for the Councils to

provide a clear and strategic direction for planning and delivering for housing provision in the area.

3.2 Having a Housing Strategy will help achieve two of the key priorities of the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-24:

- Providing high quality council homes and landlord services
- Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton

## **4 Background**

4.1 The Housing Strategy is a key strategic document that sets out the Council's strategic priorities for housing in the Melton Borough over a five-year period.

4.2 A Housing Strategy helps to identify local housing issues and ensures that they are considered at a strategic level so that housing related services and plans are delivered efficiently and effectively in a joined up way.

4.3 Whilst a housing strategy is not a legal requirement, it is a best practice approach and it has been drafted with regard to a range of relevant statutory requirements, guidance and national policy initiatives.

4.4 The Housing Strategy sets out the over-arching objectives for the next five years, rather than a set of specific detailed actions. It will be delivered by embedding its objectives within other key policies and plans including the Melton Local Plan; the Homelessness Strategy; the Tenancy Strategy and the Allocations Policy.

4.5 A briefing on housing and the development of a housing strategy was held as part of the Member Strategic Briefing Session on the 12th October 2020. A two week member consultation period was then undertaken with feedback used to help develop the draft housing strategy which is now being presented to members for comment and feedback.

## **5 Main Considerations**

5.1 The draft Housing Strategy is based on;

- The objectives and priorities of the Corporate Strategy (2020-24)
- The Council's strategic housing responsibilities
- National guidance and government policy initiatives
- Housing evidence base, data analysis and research.

5.2 The draft housing strategy proposes four objectives;

- Delivering Growth: Delivering sustainable and inclusive housing growth that meets the needs of current and future residents of Melton
- Better Homes: Ensure that as many homes as possible, in all tenures, are of good quality and support health and wellbeing
- Supporting People: Support people to access and sustain housing appropriate for their needs
- Climate Emergency: Ensure climate change implications are considered at all stages of planning, delivery and occupations of homes.

- 5.3 This Housing Strategy Document is a working draft and is not ready for public consultation just yet. It is being presented to the Scrutiny Committee for an early steer and to ensure that the comments provided are considered and accommodated within the document as appropriate prior to producing a final consultation draft.
- 5.4 Subject to member feedback, the draft Housing Strategy will be released for a four-week public consultation period in April 2021. A finalised housing strategy will then be brought back to Cabinet for approval in Summer 2021.
- 5.5 Whilst the Housing Strategy is produced by the Council, it is something that can only be successfully delivered in partnership. There are various stakeholders who are instrumental in influencing the success of the housing strategy; these include developers; Registered Providers; supported housing providers and Leicestershire County Council alongside a range of other statutory and voluntary sector partners.

## **6 Options Considered**

- 6.1 Do nothing is not considered an option as having an overarching strategy to guide actions for the Council as well as a range of partners will help achieving key priorities for the Council.
- 6.2 Not to consult with the Scrutiny Committee is not considered an option as early engagement from members will help shape the priorities and inform the draft document for public consultation.

## **7 Consultation**

- 7.1 A range of partners and stakeholders along with the residents, tenants and developers will be consulted as part of the public consultation exercise.

## **8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication**

- 8.1 Next steps are:
- Receive comments from Scrutiny Committee- February 2021
  - Revise the document in discussion with the Portfolio Holder and Cabinet members- March 2021
  - Public consultation- April 2021 (4 week period)
  - Revise the final draft- June 2021
  - Cabinet approval- July 2021

## **9 Financial Implications**

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of the report.

**Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services**

## **10 Legal and Governance Implications**

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the strategy. Specific initiatives which relate to the acquisition or disposal of Council property will be subject to separate governance as required.

**Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer**

## 11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared alongside the draft Housing Strategy to ensure that equality impacts have been fully taken into consideration

## 12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no community safety implications.

## 13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 13.1 Climate emergency is a key theme in the draft housing strategy.

## 14 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Negative response from residents and stakeholders to the consultation	Very Low	Critical	Medium Risk
2	Delay to the timescales due to COVID-19 or other unforeseen circumstances	Very Low	Marginal	Low Risk

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High				
	4 Significant				
	3 Low				
	2 Very Low		2	1	
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	The draft strategy is based on current strategies and policies prepared by the Council and partners. Any comments will be considered, discussed and used to amend the document prior to cabinet approval.
2	The current timescales are agreed with consideration of delays. Any further changes will be discussed and agreed with the portfolio holder.

## 15 Background Papers

15.1 None

## 16 Appendices

16.1 Appendix A: Draft Housing Strategy for consultation (February 2021)

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