

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

15th November 2022

Report Title	West Northants Housing Strategy
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List of Appendices

Appendix A – West Northants Housing Strategy

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To present the West Northants Housing Strategy 2022-2025 to the board and how the strategy aligns with the Live your best life ambitions and outcomes framework.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The West Northants Housing Strategy was adopted by Cabinet on the 23 September 2022. The Strategy is a key high level strategic document that sets out the local authority's strategic priorities and vision for housing in their area. Whilst a housing strategy is not a statutory duty for the Council, it is a best practice approach and local authorities are encouraged to create a strategic document that states their housing ambition.
- 2.2 The Housing strategy will cover the period 2022-2025, which is considered to be a suitable duration to reflect the transitions and change that West Northants Council is still progressing through.
- 2.3 The Housing Strategy sets out four themes:
- Deliver homes people need and can afford
 - Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services
 - Support residents to live healthy, safe, independent and active lives

- Support thriving and sustainable communities

2.3 These themes are supported by 14 strategic priorities. Each of the strategic priorities identify a number of actions required to deliver the priority.

2.4 The Housing Strategy was developed through evidence gathering and consultation with members, internal council teams, the local community, our partners and wider stakeholders via validation workshops, stakeholder events and public consultation.

2.5 The formal public consultation on the draft themes and priorities for the Housing Strategy took place from 14 April – 24 May 2022. Feedback from the consultation was generally positive and there was a good level of support for the strategy's four proposed themes and their associated priorities.

3. Recommendations

3.1 To note the contents of the West Northants Housing Strategy and how it aligns with the Live your best life and the outcomes framework

4. Report Background

4.1 The Housing Strategy has been developed based on research and analysis of our evidence bases, the key issues identified have been summarised below:

- A need for more housing to meet the needs of our growing aging population
- Rising house prices and cost of living increases are adding to affordability pressures
- A need for more affordable housing, in particular a need for social rent
- Increasing housing needs on the Council's housing registers/waiting lists
- High number of households living in temporary accommodation
- A need to better understand the longer term need and demand for supported housing, housing care and support and other specialist housing options

4.2 The Housing Strategy sets out four themes:

- Deliver homes people need and can afford
- Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services
- Support residents to live healthy, safe, independent and active lives
- Support thriving and sustainable communities

4.3 We need to have ambitious plan to create homes people need alongside a thriving economy to ensure we meet the housing needs and demands of existing and future residents and achieve the best outcomes for our area.

4.3 Housing is a crucial component of wellbeing. Good quality housing provides a sound platform to build a good quality of life. Poor quality or inadequate housing tends to be associated with poorer outcomes for people.

4.4 As a key council document, the housing strategy has a significant impact with regard to place-shaping for our area. The strategy cuts across a significant part of many of the other services that the council provides, including adult social care commissioned services, children’s services and community needs, and impacts on a number of issues including housing need, affordability, economic growth, vulnerable people and social care provision. The effective delivery of the housing strategy is focussed on delivering positive housing outcomes for the area and its residents.

4.5 There are three key principles underlying the strategy:

- Partnership working – this is a critical thread as many of the priorities can only be achieved by partnership, collaboration and integration.
- Fairness and consistency
- Financial resilience

4.6 The tables below illustrate how the Housing Strategy and the four themes and associated priorities, align with live your best life and the outcomes framework.

Theme 1 – Deliver homes people need and can afford

Key considerations:

The supply of new homes is central to the economic and social prosperity of the area. The development and quality of homes have direct relationships with the health and wellbeing of individuals, hence the importance that we ensure the delivery of a range of housing options at the right price and in the right locations to cater to different needs both now and in the future.

The provision of delivering genuine affordable housing is a key concern, as high housing and living costs has the most direct impact on poverty and material deprivation. Affordability is a substantial driver of poor health and wellbeing.

New development of housing also needs to be supported with the right infrastructure.

To enable these things to happen we need to understand our local housing market and our housing need to help deliver what is appropriate and affordable, by catering for specific needs and different incomes and standards to increase choice and value.

Theme 1: Deliver homes people need and can afford	
Priorities	Live you best life / framework outcomes alignment
Develop an evidence base of the full range of housing need across West Northants and identify gaps with the current housing supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best start in life • Access to the best available education and learning • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friends • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Access to health and social care when they need it • Valued for who they are
<p>Increase the supply of social and affordable housing, including the delivery of council homes, and working in partnership with a range of providers and making the best use of the Council's land assets and resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best start in life • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Housing that is affordable, safe ad sustainable in places which are clean and green, • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friend • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Valued for who they are
<p>Support the delivery of a range of housing to meet local needs, including private rent, housing for older people, low cost home ownership, intermediate rent and outright sale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing that is affordable, safe ad sustainable in places which are clean and green • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friend • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong •

Theme 2: Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services

Key considerations:

Health outcomes are strongly linked to the condition of homes so it is vital that we maintain and invest in the housing stock and drive up standards to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents.

The Social Housing White Paper (2020) focussed on rebalancing the relationship between tenants and landlords to ensure that tenants have good quality homes and neighbourhoods that they feel safe in. The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) have a set of regulatory standards that contain specific expectations that registered providers of social housing must comply with and the outcomes that providers are expected to achieve.

People in the private sector should also expect good standard and access to the private renting should be available to anyone who needs it. A strong private rented sector made up of good quality homes benefits the who community. West Northants, and particularly Northampton is very reliant on the private rented sector for helping with housing needs and homelessness. Security of tenure and the perceived risk of eviction contribute to feelings of anxiety, stress and not feeling settled and at home affects wellbeing.

Theme 2: Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services	
Priorities	Live you best life / framework outcomes alignment
Deliver high quality services and standards to residents in social housing, and ensure residents are empowered to have a voice to help shape their local environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to be fit, well and independent.• Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty• Good housing in place that are clean and green• To feel safe in their homes and when out and about• Connected to their families and friend• The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong• Access to health and social care when they need it• Valued for who they are
Influence the private sector to improve standards and access to ensure safe homes for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to be fit, well and independent.• Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty• Good housing in place that are clean and green

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong
Have a consistent approach to the letting of social housing across West Northants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent. • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friend • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong

Theme 3: Supporting residents to live safe, healthy, independent and active lives

Key considerations:

The cornerstone of delivering quality communities and neighbourhoods is understanding different needs across the area, enabling joint working and identifying opportunities to come together to solve challenging issues. This aligns with the Northamptonshire Integrated Care partnership which brings together health and social care partners to deliver quality care at the right time and in the right place.

The creation of 9 local area partnerships across West Northants will be the catalyst for this, to bring together geographically based partnerships to plan, co-ordinate and commission services. To do this effectively our plans need to be underpinned by an evidence base which clearly maps the different needs at a local level, which can be used to tailor accessible services at a local level to meet individual needs in a person-centred way. This work is beginning in the LAP N4 covering key wards in Northampton, with parts of this area having levels of deprivation. In terms of housing there is a mix of council estates, managed by Northampton Partnership Homes and areas where there are significant levels of HMOs. The LAP will be key in driving forward an integrated approach with support and interventions from housing, health, adult social care etc.

One of the key outcomes of this strategy is how we engage and reflect the voices of people with lived experiences and provide opportunities for engagement in decision that affect them. This will help reduce health inequality, improve health and wellbeing and reduce duplication and inefficiency at the point of delivery.

Theme 3: Supporting residents to live safe, healthy, independent and active lives	
Priorities	Live you best life / framework outcomes alignment
The effective integration of housing, health, adult social care and the Children's Trust to deliver enhanced person-centred outcomes for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best start in life • Access to the best available education and learning • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friends • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Access to health and social care when they need it • Valued for who they are
Ensure that residents who require specialist housing provision have access to homes and support services that allow them to live independently in an area that is right for them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best start in life • Access to the best available education and learning • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friends • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Access to health and social care when they need it • Valued for who they are
Develop services around the needs of residents by involving them in the process of shaping and commissioning housing options, services and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Access to health and social care when they need it • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Connected to their families and friends

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valued for who they are
<p>Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in a way that delivers positive long-term outcomes for each individual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best start in life • Access to the best available education and learning • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friends • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Access to health and social care when they need it • Valued for who they are

Theme 4: Support thriving and sustainable communities

Key considerations:

The Council seeks to bring together a sustainability programme that covers social, economic and environmental issues and these factors should form the basis of our decision making. In addition, housing sits at the heart of all three of these areas and forms a strong link that binds them together.

The council has a new sustainability team who are mapping the activities and measures of the council against the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals and are planning to establish baseline data in these areas, and then align our actions. As can be seen by the diagram below, the sustainability goals have strong links the role of housing and also the Live your best life ambitions.



This theme supports some of the other themes within the strategy, and as part of the implementation and delivery of the strategy an integral part will be identifying specific sustainability targets.

Theme 4:	
Priorities	Live you best life / framework outcomes alignment
<p>Contribute to achieving the pledges as set out in the Council’s sustainability strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best start in life • Access to the best available education and learning • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about • Connected to their families and friends • The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong • Access to health and social care when they need it

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valued for who they are
Improve the energy performance of homes within the social housing sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about
Have a positive impact on the energy performance of privately owned homes and homes in the private rented sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about
Support thriving local economies and communities by linking local employment with suitable housing opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to be fit, well and independent • Employment that keeps people and families out of poverty • Good housing in place that are clean and green • Connected to their families and friends • To feel safe in their homes and when out and about

5. Issues and Choices

n/a

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

6.1.1 The approval of the Housing Strategy does not in itself incur any new revenue or capital liabilities for either the Housing Revenue Account or the general fund.

6.1.2 The implementation of and delivery of the Housing Strategy requires significant investment of time and resource by existing council staff and its partners. The delivery action plan will need to be fully costed to set out the expected financial impact on the council. If the financial impacts cannot be covered within existing resources a further report will be brought back to Cabinet to determine if additional resources will be released and how they will be funded.

6.1.3 The delivery plan will be an ever-evolving document and if additional resources are required in the future they may be considered as part of the normal budget setting process.

6.1.4 Throughout the lifetime of the strategy there will be some specific projects and developments where decisions will need to be made and the full revenue and capital implications will be made clear at the time. None of the projects or development will be able to proceed until the appropriate funding is agreed and in place.

6.2 **Legal**

6.2.1 It is not a statutory requirement for the Council to adopt a housing strategy. However, it sets out objectives and targets and policies on how the Council intends to manage and deliver its strategic housing role and provides an overarching framework against which the Council considers and formulates other policies on more specific housing offices which relate to the delivery of the Council's housing functions.

6.3 **Risk**

6.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

6.4 **Consultation**

6.4.1 The Housing Strategy has been developed through consultation with members, the local community, partners and wider stakeholders through the following channels:

- Evidence gathering – We collected a wide range of evidence across all areas which impact on Housing to understand the situation including trends and future predictions.
- Validation workshops – We held a number of workshops with different departments in the council and external organisations who will be involved with the delivery of the strategy to understand the context and delivery challenges they face.
- Stakeholder events – We brought together a wide range of people with an interest including local voluntary groups, members, officers and other organisations to get their feedback and input into the recommendations.
- Member involvement – We attended a number of committees with elected members to share the strategy as it was developed and to get their input into it. This included an all-member workshop in May 2022.
- Formal public consultation – We did a full public consultation to understand people's concerns and priorities so that we could ensure the strategy had the right focus and included actions which would address their concerns.

6.4.2 The formal consultation on the emerging themes and priorities ran from 14th April – 24th May 2022. We had nearly 600 responses analysed, with 257 completing the whole questionnaire and over 280 comments in total from a variety of groups and individuals including residents, registered providers, voluntary and charitable organisations, statutory bodies and parish/town councils. There was overwhelming support for each of the themes and the priorities to be progressed.

6.5 **Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

6.5.1 During the validation period of developing the strategy, a presentation was given to People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees, this provided an overview of the evidence base gathered and the draft themes and priorities to be consulted on. During the formal consultation period all members were invited to a Housing Strategy workshop. In August a pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Housing Strategy took place. The workshop was led by the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee but was open to members of the Corporate and Place Overview and Scrutiny committee to attend.

6.6 **Climate Impact**

6.6.1 Supporting thriving and sustainable communities is one of the four themes of the Housing Strategy. It sets out that the provision and management of housing plays a role in helping to deliver the overall sustainability goals the Council are seeking to achieve through its Corporate Plan and the recently adopted Sustainability Strategy.

6.6.2 The strategy recognises the need to achieve zero carbon will be a significant challenge

6.7 **Community Impact**

6.7.1 The Housing Strategy will have a positive direct and indirect on housing, health and wellbeing across multiple areas. It promotes the provision of healthy housing, good quality supported housing, aim to reduce homelessness, supports economic prosperity and provide support for those who need it. It also supports good quality environments and public spaces that also benefit are our mental health and wellbeing.

7.7.2 An Equality Impact Screening Assessment (EIA) was undertaken to inform the development of the draft Housing Strategy. The results of this screening process did not highlight any areas of concerns as the strategy document doesn't seek to introduce any policy change directly and any actions from the strategy that do introduce new policy or approach will be accompanied by their own EIA screening.

7. **Background Papers**

7.1 None