

CABINET



Report subject	BCP Housing Strategy – approval to consult
Meeting date	9 October 2019
Status	Public
Executive summary	To inform Cabinet of the proposed approach and timetable to develop a new BCP Housing Strategy which will detail the current and anticipated future housing issues, setting out the strategic priorities and action plan to address local issues.
Recommendations	To support the proposed approach and timetable for developing a new BCP Housing Strategy
Reason for recommendations	To set out to Cabinet the proposed approach to developing a new Housing Strategy, including the proposed timetable and the intended consultation process that will take place.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Kieron Wilson, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Corporate Director	Kate Ryan, Corporate Director of Environment and Community
Contributors	Lorraine Mealings, Director of Housing Kerry Ruff, Strategic & Private Sector Housing Manager
Wards	All
Classification	For Decision

Background

Strategy context and purpose

1. Councils are expected to have a Housing Strategy in place and now that we are a new Council across a larger area there is a recognised need for us to have one Housing Strategy that reflects the needs and vision for the whole Council area. As a new organisation, the ambitions for shaping BCP need to be suitably reflected in the shaping of a new and ambitious Housing Strategy for the area.
2. The Housing Strategy is a key policy document for the Council and its partners. It needs to be cross cutting in nature in recognition that Housing has a significant impact on many other Council services, partners and our residents. The Strategy is a key document at the heart of many other local strategies, to be delivered in partnership with many, both internal and external to BCP Council.
3. The Housing Strategy is key to place-shaping for an area. The impact of delivering an effective Housing Strategy is ultimately focused on delivering positive housing outcomes for the area and its residents. Housing impacts on multiple issues including community safety, economic growth, vulnerable people, social care provision and much more. As such, effective consultation on developing the new Housing Strategy is key.
4. Housing is a crucial component of wellbeing. Good quality housing, which meets an individual's or family's needs, provides a sound platform to build a good quality of life. Poor quality or inadequate housing often brings detrimental outcomes for people. e.g. damp conditions impacting on health, overcrowding impacting on children's school attainment.
5. Meeting the housing demands for our area, now and in the future, is important to residents. There is a specific need to provide services which help address health and socio-economic inequalities, and support people who are likely to have fewer chances in life and be vulnerable to poverty.
6. The economic climate has a major effect on the housing market. Also, significant demographic changes to the age structure of the population impact on the local housing demands.

7. At present, the Bournemouth and Poole areas have refreshed housing strategies that will expire in 2020. Christchurch's Housing Strategy has already expired.

Content and format

8. Housing Strategies help local authorities to provide context, background and evidence around local issues and look to set out priorities for funding and delivery. Providing evidence of housing needs and demands and setting out the Council's strategic approach will inform how services need to move forward in the future and help present opportunities to attract funding to support that work.
9. The issues which will be addressed within a Housing Strategy are broad; ranging from homelessness to new housing supply, from energy efficiency to the management of Council homes, from private sector housing standards to specialist care and support provision to enable independent living.
10. It is proposed that a 3-year Strategy will be developed which is considered to be a suitable medium-term duration to reflect the period of transition as we move through the early stages of BCP Council as a new organisation.
11. The proposed layout will include a summary on national context and policies as key drivers. The Strategy will provide information on the local housing context and issues to inform what the key strategic priorities might be.
12. The Strategy will look at specific policy areas, considering priorities such as housing supply, homelessness prevention, specialist housing, older persons housing and private sector housing. The Strategy will set out how we intend to address these through defining the key strategic priorities together with a high level action plan which will evolve and be reviewed and refreshed over time.
13. The Strategy will set out how it is intended to monitor the priorities. It will set out the governance arrangements which are needed to ensure an effective implementation of the Strategy. It is clear that the Housing Strategy will need to be developed with multiple partners both across the Council and with external agencies and stake-holders.

Consultation process

14. An 'issues and options' discussion document will be compiled with input from our communications team to help encourage residents and agencies to engage in the debates. This will form the basis of a 12-week public consultation period during which time we will provide high profile communications across different channels to encourage people to input.
15. We will set up a multi-disciplinary steering group which will manage the preparation of the Strategy, the consultation process and help articulate the final Strategy document.
16. We will run several targeted and interactive stakeholder consultation and engagement workshops which will be widely advertised to encourage broad participation across all sectors and stakeholders. Discussion will also be tabled at various formal groups such as the Overview & Scrutiny Panel, Health and Wellbeing Board, Corporate Parenting Panel and the Community Safety Partnership.

17. We will hold an all Councillor consultation session and will encourage resident engagement using appropriate social media channels guided by the communication team, to ensure we use all appropriate options for consultation.
18. Links will be made during the consultation process with our key national partners such as Homes England and central government departments. Good practice will also be sought nationally from other areas to help shape the local Strategy.
19. After the 12-week consultation period we will produce a final Housing Strategy and return to Cabinet for consideration of its endorsement and adoption.

Timetable

20. The following sets out the proposed timescales for the development of the Housing Strategy.

Dates	Action
Oct 19	Approval from Cabinet on the principles for developing the Strategy
Oct 19 – Mar 20	Develop an issues & options document to encourage discussion and engagement
Mar 20	Public consultation period (12 weeks)
July 20	End of consultation period
Sept / Oct 20	Draft BCP Housing Strategy presented to Cabinet for consideration of endorsement and adoption

Summary of financial implications

20. The new Housing Strategy will set out how we intend to commit to achieving housing priorities which will inform future budget requirements. The development of the document will take place within existing staffing resources.

Summary of legal implications

21. There are no specific legal implications emerging from this report.

Summary of human resources implications

22. The development and ongoing monitoring of the new Strategy will require dedicated staff time and will take place within existing staffing resources.

Summary of environmental impact

23. There are no specific environmental implications emerging from this report. However, it is clear that the provision of new housing and the energy efficiency of existing housing stock across BCP requires consideration in terms of sustainability and energy efficiency issues, and these will be considered as part of the Strategy itself.

Summary of public health implications

24. There are no specific public health implications emerging from this report. However, through developing the new Strategy it is likely that the Council will consider what elements of Housing should be targeted for improvement to help address the public health agenda.

Summary of equality implications

25. A full equality impact assessment will be compiled when developing the Strategy.

Summary of risk assessment

26. There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report. However, the Strategy itself will include an assessment of risks in the appropriate sections.

Background papers

Bournemouth Housing Strategy 2017-2020 –

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Housing/homelessness/homelessness-strategies-policies-and-performance.aspx>

Poole Housing Strategy 2018-2020 - <https://www.poole.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/strategies-plans-and-policies/housing-strategy-refresh-2018-2020/>