

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Housing Strategy 2024-2029**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public
<b>Report By</b>	Victoria Dawson, Assistant Director – Housing Management Sarah Kay, Assistant Director – Planning and Planning Policy
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Joanne Wilson, Housing Strategy and Development Officer Chris McKinney, Senior Devolution Lead for Planning Policy, Strategic Growth and Housing Neil Oxby, Principal Planning Policy Officer

**PURPOSE / SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- To inform Scrutiny of the outcome of the consultation on the proposed Housing Strategy 2024-2029.
- To receive Member oversight of the final draft prior to submission to Executive and Council.

**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council’s current Housing Strategy 2021-24 is due to expire in 2024 and as such a revised strategy is required. Officers propose to run the incoming strategy from 2024-2029 to ensure that it covers the Council Plan 2024-28 but also takes the Council beyond this point, allowing the incoming Council in 2027 to formulate their new Council Plan. Furthermore, having a plan that covers a longer period will allow us to align with existing district and countywide strategies.
- 1.2 The Strategy forms a plan on how the Council will work with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to enable housing growth across all sectors, and the quality and range of housing to meet the resident’s needs of the district, including housing and support for the most vulnerable.

1.3 The strategy will also have a key role in helping to secure potential external funding for housing related projects across the district.

1.4 For the purposes of this report and Strategy the Housing Strategy Team constitutes the following officers:

- Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement
- Assistant Director of Planning and Planning Policy
- Housing Strategy and Development Officer
- Housing Services Manager
- Housing Options Manager
- Senior Devolution Lead for Planning Policy, Strategic Growth and Housing
- Principal Planning Policy Officer

## **2. Details of Proposal or Information**

2.1 The Council's outgoing Housing Strategy 2021-2024 identifies the following key strategic housing priorities to address the challenges highlighted by national and local policy and data:

- Key Priority 1 – Providing Good Quality Housing
- Key Priority 2 – Enabling Housing Growth
- Key Priority 3 – Supporting Vulnerable and Disadvantaged People.

2.2 Following the last report in July 2024, the teams have been working on the proposed content based on the existing wider policy framework, gathering district profile data and have commissioned the Local Housing Needs Assessment jointly with Chesterfield Borough Council. The Assessment will consider the overall need for housing, the need for different types of homes and the need for different groups within the local community including affordable housing.

2.3 Attached at Appendix 1 is the proposed Housing Strategy 2024-2029.

2.4 Within the new Strategy 2024-2029 we will carry forward the corporate priorities relating to the Housing aim as set out in the Council's new corporate plan – Bolsover District The Future:

- Enabling housing growth by increasing the supply, quality, and range of housing to meet the needs of the growing population.
- Building more, good quality, affordable housing, and being a decent landlord.
- Preventing and responding to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions.
- Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all.
- Maximising our influence and opportunities within the East Midlands Combined County Authority to create affordable, good quality housing options and to retrofit existing homes to be more environmentally sustainable.

2.5 These will be addressed within the new strategy as follows:

- Priority 1 – Providing Good Quality Housing

This will cover building more council housing and being a decent landlord.

- Priority 2 – Enabling Housing Growth

This will cover all strategic housing growth and working with the East Midlands Combined County Authority in this area.

- Priority 3 – Supporting Vulnerable and Disadvantaged People

This will cover all aspects related to homelessness, supported housing and partnership working to deliver solutions to the district's vulnerable residents. This also supports delivery of one of our 'Customer' priorities – Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and supporting and involving vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

- Priority 4 – Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all

This will cover all aspects related to the private sector (rented and owner occupier) and partnership working with our colleagues in environmental health and public health, and any work with the East Midlands Combined County Authority in this area.

2.6 The Strategy will deliver the 10 Housing initiatives in the Corporate Plan and officers have agreed 11 broad outcomes for the Strategy, all of which are discussed in more detail in the document attached at Appendix 1.

2.7 During the live window for the public consultation, the survey was circulated to the following stakeholders and featured as a main link on the Council website:

- Circulation to tenant email addresses, where held
- Circulation to Parishes – including a poster with QR code
- Poster with QR code in contact centres and hard copy for viewing
- Poster with QR code in the following libraries and hard copy for viewing:
  - Bolsover
  - Clowne
  - Creswell
  - Pinxton
  - Shirebrook
  - South Normanton
  - Whitwell
- Circulation to Communications email lists
- Circulation to Private Registered Providers with properties within the district
- Circulation to private landlords contact list
- Circulation to neighbouring councils
- Circulation to Derbyshire County Council/NHS partners.

2.8 When looking at the results of the public consultation, respondents were mostly in favour of the suggested priorities and outcomes.

There were 56 respondents in total with 50% of respondents owner occupiers, 20% council tenants, and 14 % private tenants. A limited response was received from parish councils. Responses were not received from all of the District's wards.

Attached at Appendix 2 is the full set of results including questions asked and the full range of responses.

There was agreement with the four priorities (calculated by adding together strongly agree + agree results), although 'Enabling Housing Growth' was lower than the others:

Priority 1 – Providing Good Quality Housing	89%
Priority 2 – Enabling Housing Growth	61%
Priority 3 – Supporting Vulnerable and Disadvantaged People	80%
Priority 4 – Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all	94%

There was strong agreement with the 11 outcomes proposed ranging from 'Increased housing supply to meet local housing needs' (77%) to 'Residents living independently for longer' (94%).

Respondents were also asked to rank areas for action across the four priorities. Ranking questions calculate the average ranking for each answer choice so you can determine which answer choice was most preferred overall. The answer choice with the largest average ranking is the most preferred choice.

The average ranking is calculated as follows, where:

- w = weight of ranked position
- x = response count for answer choice
- $x_1w_1 + x_2w_2 + x_3w_3 \dots \dots x_nw_n$  / Total response count

Delivery under each of the four priorities has been ranked as follows:

Priority 1:

- Providing homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Bolsover Homes Programme – building new council housing
- Ensuring we meet the Regulator's revised Consumer Standards
- Increasing council stock through private developers
- Tenant Engagement
- Carbon reduction within council housing stock

Priority 2:

- The need for homes
- Contributing towards affordable housing needs

- Supporting infrastructure for new homes
- Long-term empty homes
- Needs of specific groups

Priority 3:

- Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping
- Allocating housing to those most vulnerable
- Support to Care Leavers
- Support to Armed Forces personnel
- Bolsover Lifeline Services
- Working in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and health partners
- Supported Housing Innovation Programme (SHIP)

Priority 4:

- Disabled facilities grants and adaptations
- Private rented sector
- Private Sector stock condition
- Private sector - Owner Occupiers

When analysing the additional comments submitted in the free text question, the following themes appear most often:

- Consideration of infrastructure required for new developments
- Ensuring a balance between the availability of council housing across the District – perceived there is more in the north
- Greater options available for those over 50 and under 60 where an applicant would not qualify for a bungalow/older persons housing
- More provision of bungalows – both council and private
- Set of local target for all new estates to meet EPC level B as a minimum
- Concerns over potential development suggested by the Creswell Growth Plan and whether the settlement can cope with more development.
- For tenants - more options for solar power and 'green' heating
- Ability to access the housing register

2.9 Outstanding actions from the Housing Strategy 2021-24, have been taken into consideration as part of the development process for the replacement strategy.

2.10 The Government has undertaken a consultation, which closed on 24th September, on potential changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This included amendments to the calculation of the local housing need conducted using the standard method, which is the starting point for establishing a housing requirement for an area. As part of the consultation, draft local housing need figures for all local planning authorities were produced utilising the proposed changes to the standard method. For Bolsover District, a draft local housing need of 404 dwellings per annum was identified. This is significantly more than the current Local Plan requirement of 272 dwellings per annum. If the proposed changes to the standard method are implemented, there will be implications for the local housing need requirement set out in the proposed Housing Strategy.

2.11 The Local Housing Needs Assessment has been extended to reflect the implications arising from the proposed changes to the standard method set out in the NPPF consultation. The initial evidence from the Assessment is that there remains a high level of need for affordable housing with an emphasis rented affordable housing rather than affordable home ownership.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 The Housing Strategy forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework and is considered a key strategic driver for the future of the district.

3.2 Scrutiny on the development of the revised strategy for 2024-2029 forms a core role of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee.

### **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 The alternative option is to not have a Housing Strategy; however this was rejected as the Strategy sets out a clear housing plan, which will be a key driver for housing growth in the district.

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## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. That the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee review the proposed strategy attached and the outcome of the public consultation and provide comment/suggested amendments prior to submission to Executive and Council.

Approved by Portfolio Holder for Housing – Cllr. Peake

### **IMPLICATIONS:**

**Finance and Risk:** Yes  No

**Details:** None from this specific report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):** Yes  No

**Details:** None from this report. The Strategy once complete and approved forms part of the Budget & Policy Framework. The Strategy will have due regard to local and national policy and be compliant with legislation, including data protection laws.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:** Yes  No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal / report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

**Details:** It is proposed that the Housing Strategy 2024-2029 will support achievement of the Councils carbon reduction target through improvements to council stock; build quality of new homes and improvements to the property standards in the private sector.

**Staffing:** Yes  No

**Details:** Existing employees will develop and implement the Strategy, therefore there are no Human Resources implications.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

## DECISION INFORMATION

<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:  <b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
<b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

<b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b>	All indirectly
<b>Consultation:</b> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Details:</b> Ward Members consulted on original strategy.

## Links to Council Aims: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing.

The Strategy links to all the corporate aims:

- Our Customers by providing excellent and accessible services
- Our Economy by driving growth, promoting the District and being business and visitor friendly
- Our Environment by protecting the quality of life for residents and businesses, meeting environmental challenges and enhancing biodiversity
- Our Housing by delivering social and private sector housing growth

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No.	Title
1.	Proposed Housing Strategy 2024-2029
2.	Public consultation results

**Background Papers**

*(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).*