

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 21 January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## **Draft Housing Service Plan 2021-2022**

### **Report summary:**

This report presents the draft Service Plan for the Housing Service covering the period 2021-2022.

The Service Plan is a document produced annually and sets out the key achievements over the past year and the forthcoming issues to be faced by the Service. This year the Plan reflects some of the service interruptions due to the pandemic and the move of the Private Sector Housing team to the Environmental Health & Car Parks Service.

A range of service improvements are identified through a number of SMART objectives.

The Plan also considers service challenges and pressures over the next three years, including climate change implications, tenant safety measures, the implications of the Social Housing White Paper, and the ambitions to increase the supply of social housing.

The Service Plan is presented in draft form for the Housing Review Board's consideration.

### **Recommendation:**

**To consider, comment on and approve the Housing Service Plan for 2021-2022.**

### **Reason for recommendation:**

To enable the Housing Review Board to influence the production of the Service Plan prior to it being finalised.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets

- Finance
- Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

### **Financial implications:**

At the same time as preparing the draft service plans, draft budgets have been prepared for member consideration. Service plans and budgets are aligned and link back to the Council Plan and reflect where possible the recently adopted Statement of Intent.

### **Legal implications:**

There are no legal implications on which to comment in the report

### **Equalities impact Medium Impact**

Choose an impact level

There is an equalities section in the Service Plan, and our housing policies and practices have regard to equality and protected characteristics to ensure equality of access and service quality to all service users.

### **Climate change High Impact**

The Service Plan contains a section on climate change and a number of proposals for reducing the climate impact of our housing stock.

**Risk:** Choose a risk level; Low Risk

### **Links to background information**

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

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## **Report in full**

### **Housing Service Plan 2021/2022**

- 1.1 For some time now all the Council's services have organised an annual service planning exercise and produced a service plan, which sets out details of what the service does, achievements and future challenges and targets.
- 1.2 The Service Plan is produced using a corporate template and it shows how the service improvements link with the Council Plan/Statement of Intent. The Plan identifies the key service objectives, challenges ahead and outlines areas of performance that we should measure. It also considers efficiencies, key risks, training needs, equalities, opportunities to do things differently, and workforce planning.
- 1.3 The Service Plan links closely with our Housing Strategy and is designed to complement a number of other housing plans and policies as part of how we manage our own housing stock and the services we deliver. There is also a strong link with the Councils Public Health Strategic Plan to ensure we help more people be and stay healthy, enhance self-

care and community resilience and integrate and improve support for people in their own homes.

- 1.4 The Service Plan is intended as a working document and the service managers will cascade the contents of the plan at their team meetings and reflect priorities in staff objectives. It is a good discipline to complete an annual statement of what the Service expects to achieve, set out in a structured way using a template and involving staff, service users and members in the process.
- 1.5 The Plan presented contains some ambitious objectives that are reflective of challenges faced through current service delivery. The objectives are split between the three areas of the Housing Service (landlord services, property and asset, housing needs and strategy) however, a number of the objectives sit across teams, an example being the creation of a mental health strategy for housing, an area that is currently impacting on all of our services.
- 1.6 The headlines for the Service Plan include:
  - A focus on delivering our housing purpose(s).
  - A commitment to tackle homelessness.
  - Recognition of poverty as a significant factor in people's lives.
  - Revision of the HRA Business plan with updated stock condition data.
  - A focus on new development opportunities with the need to review the current acquisition programme.
  - Emphasis on the importance of compliance and keeping tenants safe in their homes.
  - A focus on mental health and how we are addressing the challenges this is presenting us as a landlord.
  - Embedding the Integrated Asset Management Contract.
  - Mapping the future of Home Safeguard with a realistic view of risks ahead including digital switchover, refresh of the marketing strategy, relocating the service, review of the staffing rota.
  - An emphasis on evidencing value for money with the need to scrutinise some areas to satisfy ourselves that we are achieving what matters most to the customer, in line with our systems thinking purpose.
  - Acting on the climate change agenda and building towards a carbon neutral council.
- 1.7 The Housing Leadership team have enjoyed being able to refresh the Service Plan as a way of setting out how we plan to get through what looks to be another challenging year ahead with a number of uncertainties in relation to national housing policy as well as competing demands impacting on our financial position.
- 1.8 The Service Planning Day, that was a virtual event this year, involved input from our senior managers, the Portfolio Holder and Chair of the Board on the day to day challenges of the job, ideas for service improvement, and the needs of our customers.
- 1.9 The draft Service Plan (**Annex 1**) will be presented to the tenant groups over the next few months and cascaded to Housing staff through team meetings and Service briefings.
- 1.10 I welcome the Housing Review Board's input into the Service Plan before it is finalised and reported to Cabinet.