

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet

5 December 2018

**LEAD OFFICER:** Interim Housing & Environmental Health Director

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## **Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy**

### **Purpose**

1. To seek agreement for the draft Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy to go out for consultation.
2. This is not a key decision because it is brought before Cabinet as part of the consultation process and will be presented back to Cabinet for final approval once all comments have been considered and fed into the Strategy where appropriate.

### **Recommendations**

3. Cabinet is asked to agree the draft Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy (Appendix A) to go out to wider public consultation.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. This will enable the draft Strategy to go out for wider public consultation.

### **Background**

5. Following the publication of an interim Housing Strategy Statement on 15 March 2017, a joined up Strategy with Cambridge City Council has been developed. The rationale for a joined up 'Greater Cambridge' Housing Strategy was due to the closer working relationships with Cambridge City, such as the commitment for a joint Local Plan, and the key challenges and opportunities that both Councils face, specifically in terms of housing affordability and economic growth.

### **Considerations**

6. In developing the draft Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy, a series of workshops have been held with staff and tenant & leaseholder reps, as well as a SCDC Cabinet briefing held on 30 August 2018 and a subsequent SCDC Members' workshop held on 22 October 2018. This has helped to shape the draft Strategy, with the main points outlined below:
  - In terms of affordable housing, having more choice, especially for the squeezed middle income households.
  - Increasing the number of council new homes we are building, as well as delivering more exception sites that provide a range of homes.
  - Focus on affordable living, acknowledging the impacts of other housing costs as well as the cost of rents/mortgages.
  - Supporting the economy, working with businesses to help meet the housing needs of their workforce.

- Supporting the development of homes for people as they age
  - Good design and future proofing of homes, supporting new technologies and raising building standards.
7. Taking into account feedback from the Cabinet briefing and Members' workshop, a complete rewrite of the draft Strategy has been undertaken.
  8. The Strategy is a high level evidenced based document, setting out a strategic overview of the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing the area, with a specific focus on housing affordability and supply. The document brings together the different strands of housing, such as older people's accommodation, 'essential local worker' housing, existing homes, homelessness and links to health and wellbeing.
  9. A detailed Action Plan will be developed as part of the consultation process.
  10. The expectation is that the draft Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy will go out to consultation week commencing 10 December 2018 for seven weeks. As part of the consultation process, feedback sessions will be held with developers and housing associations, as well as a separate session with South Cambridgeshire District Council's Scrutiny Members.
  11. Following consideration of all feedback, it is anticipated that the Strategy will be approved by Cabinet by the end of March 2019.

### **Options**

12. Cabinet is asked to agree the draft Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy (Appendix A) to go out to wider public consultation.
13. If it is considered that the draft Strategy is not ready to go out to consultation on 10 December, it is likely to delay approval of the Strategy until at least Summer 2019, due to the need to align with Cambridge City's approval process and taking into account their purdah period. This may also impact on the delivery of the Housing SPD.

### **Implications**

14. There are no significant implications.

### **Consultation responses**

15. Initial consultation has been carried out with staff and tenant & leaseholder reps from both councils, as well as wider consultation with South Cambridgeshire District Council Members and Cabinet.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

16. The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy is important for all four of the Council's main strategic aims:
  - (A) Living Well
  - (B) Homes for our Future
  - (C) Connected Communities
  - (D) An Innovative and Dynamic Organisation

## **Background Papers**

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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