

## Report of the Strategic Director Place to the meeting of Regeneration & Environment Overview & Scrutiny to be held on 19 September 2019

**M**

---

**Subject: Update on the review of the Housing Strategy and the  
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy**

**Summary statement:**

The current Housing & Homelessness Strategy, A Place to Call Home, 2014-2019, is undergoing review with a shift towards producing two separate strategies. This report provides an update on progress and sets out consultation outcomes.

---

Steve Hartley, Strategic Director, Place

Shelagh O'Neill, Assistant Director,  
Economy & Development

Report Contact: Yusuf Karolia x4362 &  
Sarah Holmes, x2591

E-mail: [Yusuf.karolia@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Yusuf.karolia@bradford.gov.uk)  
[sarah.holmes@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.holmes@bradford.gov.uk)

**Portfolio:**

Regeneration, Planning and Transport

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

Regeneration & Environment

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The current Housing & Homelessness Strategy, *A Place to Call Home, 2014-2019* is undergoing review with a shift towards producing two separate strategies. This report provides an update on progress and sets out consultation outcomes.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 'A Place to Call Home: Housing & Homelessness Strategy for Bradford District 2014-2019' was endorsed by the Council Executive on 11 March 2014 and agreed by full Council at its meeting on 25 March 2014.
- 2.2 The strategy is partnership-led and jointly owned by the Council and the Housing Partnership reflecting the reality of delivery of the objectives which requires a range of partners and stakeholders to implement successfully.
- 2.3 The current housing and homelessness strategy has the following vision and objectives:

***'Everyone in the District should have a place to call home which is suitable for their needs and in which they can thrive'***

***More Homes:*** new homes; better use of existing stock/empty homes; and appropriate infrastructure to support growth

***Safe & Healthy Homes:*** housing which is free of hazards; support people to stay healthy; adaptations to stat independent; work with landlords and lettings agents; tackle blight of empty homes

***Affordable Homes:*** Adequate supply of affordable homes to buy or rent in realtion to incomes; affordable warmth and energy efficient

***Support independence and prevent homelessness:*** support for people to live independently and prevent homelessness; raising aspirations and removing barriers to employment to sustain housing independence

- 2.4 Since the strategy's adoption regular progress reports have been considered by the O&S committee with the last report tabled at the meeting of the Regeneration & Environment Committee on 18 September 2018.

## 3. REPORT ISSUES

- 3.1 A review of the strategy began in early 2019 with a decision to separate the strategy into a housing strategy and a separate homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. This decision took into account the local context as well as recent government requirement to focus increased attention on homelessness & rough sleeping.
- 3.2 There were several strands to the review including analysing the evidence base and engaging stakeholders and partners.
- 3.3 A range of evidence was used to inform the review process including but not limited to:
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2019 by arc4
  - Upgrading the demographic evidence 2019 by Edge Analytics
  - Stock Condition Modelling and Health Impact assessment 2016 by BRE

- Understanding Housing Markets: Bradford 2019, Local Government Association
- Review of the homelessness evidence base 2019 by Campbell Tickell

With the exception of the LGA report, these were all commissioned by the Council.

3.4 A series of engagement events to inform the housing strategy together with a set of partnership co-production events to review and develop the homelessness strategy were held. Meetings were also held with a sub group which was set up by the R&E Committee.

### 3.5 Outcomes from the Housing Strategy engagement events:

#### Event 1: Healthy Places to Live

- Attended by 57 representatives from across housing and health services.
- Participants expressed a view that the existing vision is still relevant.
- In considering the causes and effects of unhealthy housing and unhealthy places to live, a total of 115 distinct causes and 108 effects were identified, demonstrating the central nature of housing to people’s health and lives, and the complexity of the underlying causes

The causes and effects identified are summarised in the tables below.

Causes	Effects
Specific issues relating to the condition of the property, such as the age of the housing stock, damp, poor insulation, and poor construction	The property deteriorating further. Higher turnover and even abandonment.
Old age, physical and mental health issues – people are unable to maintain their homes because they are physically or mentally unable to.	A wide range of health issues, from infection, trips and falls, to anxiety, depression and loneliness.
Neighbourhood issues, such as anti-social behaviour, crime and lack of community ownership.	People leave the area, anti-social behaviour becoming a magnet for further anti-social behaviour. Increased crime. A lack of social interaction between neighbours.
Financial issues, such as unemployment and Universal Credit, or low rents not covering maintenance costs.	Costs can spiral out of control. Debt increases. People may divert their money away from heating to pay for other fundamentals.
Low skills and education. People lack the skills to gain employment, but also the skills to maintain their properties. They may also be unaware of what help is available. Some young people may lack the skills and knowledge required to manage a home.	Poor educational outcomes. Children may not have the space to learn, or they may be missing school because of health issues brought on by poor housing.

Landlords not taking responsibility, ranging from a lack of confidence/awareness to exploitative landlords.	There is not enough cash flow available for the landlord to invest in maintenance.
Tenants, ranging from those who might just have a lack of buy-in to their property and neighbourhood due to the short term nature of their tenancy (they may not see the point in reporting a dripping gutter), to those tenants that deliberately cause damage to property.	There is a reduction in demand for properties. Demand for property may only come from very low income households or households with little other choice because other people would not house them. Relationship breakup.
Legislation, which may be well-meaning but resource intensive or difficult to enforce in a climate of austerity.	Homelessness, hoarding, food poverty, infant mortality, safeguarding issues and exploitation.
Environmental issues, such as flooding or poor air quality.	Pressure on health services
	Young people feeling a sense of worthlessness, turning to crime and substance misuse

The following priorities were identified by participants:

*Breaking down barriers*

*Education*

*Home improvements*

*Better new build housing*

*Enforcement*

*Better neighbourhoods*

#### Event 2: Housing for household growth and regeneration

- The event was attended by 52 people from across the private and public sector.
- Participants agreed that the current vision was still relevant.
- Participants were asked to discuss the question 'what should we do differently over the next 5 years' around their tables and make a list of the key things discussed.

During the table discussions, participants were asked to select the statements that were most important to them and their organisation. These were then themed and a poll was undertaken whereby all individuals had three votes for what they felt were the most important statements. The results are presented below:

<b>What should we do differently over the next 5 years?</b>	<b>Score</b>
Promote Bradford as a great place to live, diverse assets (access to countryside, culture, heritage) and success stories	44%
Focus on quality, not just supply, e.g. flexible for future needs of household, carbon neutral	38%
Acknowledge that people want to live in green belt	31%
Work with small developers and communities on small sites	23%

Review listed building rules, restrictions and orders	21%
Focus on retaining younger population so they stay and work in Bradford	18%
Focus on regeneration of existing poor quality stock	18%
Control low quality speculative development that will cause blight in the future	18%
Subsidise housing development in low value areas	18%
Variety of housing solutions, tenures, for different needs; older people, disabled, people with care and support needs	18%
Focus on education, skills and jobs	13%
Live/work units in the city centre - integrate commercial and residential. Focus on business start-ups	13%
Focus on a longer timeline	8%
More imaginative funding vehicles	5%
No more student accommodation	3%

Participants also identified opportunities and barriers:

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Barriers</b>
Getting a clear evidence base, narrative and Local Plan completed	Complexity of evidence base. Timeline for adoption of the Local Plan.
Infrastructure investments	Listed buildings
Young population – getting youth of Bradford to engage – possibly through schools	Pollution and air quality
Place marketing – the District has a lot going for it	Attracting new providers to Bradford
Affordable housing	Land values and viability
Brexit	Brexit
Economic growth potential	Engaging with hard to reach communities
	Balance between housing and employment land use
	Government focus on numbers rather than quality

### Event 3: Housing for people with specific needs

- The event was attended by 71 people from across the council, housing and VCS.
- Participants agreed the current vision was still relevant.

Participants identified a list of client groups who could potentially have specific housing needs.

History of mental health problems	Physical ill health and disability
At risk of / has experienced domestic abuse	Offending history
History of repeat homelessness	History of rough sleeping
Drug dependency needs	Young people

Alcohol dependency needs	Learning disability
At risk of / has experienced non-domestic abuse	At risk of / has experienced sexual abuse / exploitation
Old age	Care leaver
Former asylum seeker	No recourse to public funds
Served in HM Forces	Multiple disabilities
Gypsy & Travellers	Autism
People requiring rehabilitation / re-ablement eg after stroke or accident	People with dementia or early onset dementia
People with unmanageable debt	Teenage parents
Sex workers	People who struggle to manage their money/benefits
People with degenerative health conditions	People banned from specific locations
People who are unable to speak English	LGBT+

Participants selected scenarios for client groups and completed an 'empathy map' template to look at the circumstance from the client's perspective; including what their goal would be and what barriers they may face. There were commonalities across all the scenarios regarding what goals people wanted and what barriers 'knocked them back' from achieving their goals.

<b>Shared goals</b>	<b>Shared barriers</b>
A suitable and stable home	Staff not having the time to help, not listening and not valuing people.
Being independent	Rejection from services
Access to their own social and support networks	Being treated unfairly
Managed debt	Not knowing where to go to get advice
Having the right medical support	Waiting times for assessment and access to services
Having the right mental health support	Inability to manage finances
Having the right income / opportunity to gain skills and have a job	Lack of homemaking skills, cooking, cleaning, paying bills etc
	Universal Credit
	Mental health
	Substance misuse
	Lack of suitable housing
	Being away from personal support networks or no suitable personal support networks
	Undiagnosed conditions
	No recourse to public funds

In summary, the learning points from the above covered:

- The complexity of the situation, but most client groups shared the same / similar goals.
- How do people find out about what support is available?
- Time pressures on staff can act as a barrier to working alongside a client

- Early intervention is good
- Austerity is making issues more visible
- The need for flexibility
- Managing people's expectations
- Some people don't want to engage

Participants identified the following to do differently over the next 5 years:

*Working better together and sharing intelligence*

*The right supply of the right kind of properties in the right locations*

*Easy access to early intervention*

*Asset based approach*

*Flexibility to re-access services*

### **Emerging Housing Strategy Vision and Objectives:**

*'Everyone in Bradford District should have a place to call home which meets their needs and in which they can thrive'*

#### **MORE HOMES**

To provide high quality housing and place-making to support communities to thrive and to meet the needs of a growing population

#### **QUALITY**

To improve the quality and energy efficiency of our existing housing stock, particularly in the private sector, and effectively manage the neighbourhood environment including open space

#### **INDEPENDENCE**

To ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are supported to live independently; preventing and tackling homelessness, providing adaptations and new adapted homes, tackling fuel poverty, providing housing suitable for older people etc

### **3.7 Outcomes from the homelessness & rough sleeping engagement events:**

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy has been developed by a multi-agency project group. Partners on this group agreed to represent their respective sub-sectors and to consult within their networks and services as the project evolved. Three in-depth strategy development sessions have been held, with around twenty different participants at each session from relevant partner agencies including Council departments (Health & Wellbeing, Place), Police, Probation, housing providers, support providers, domestic abuse agencies, NHS.

A call for evidence was issued to partners on the project group, and we received over 25 submissions of data and analysis from partner organisations which have been added to the Council's own data to produce a comprehensive Homelessness Review. This will form the detailed evidence base for the Strategy itself, and meets the Government's requirements for preparing a homelessness review document to underpin the strategy.

Some of the key conclusions / findings of the homelessness review evidence base are:-

- There is an ongoing upward trend in the number of people presenting at Housing Options as homeless or in housing need
- The number of people sleeping rough in the district has increased over the last year; most rough sleepers have very complex needs
- The main causes of homelessness are notices to quit from private rented housing and relationship breakdown.
- There are many people with mental health or substance misuse issues, or both (dual diagnosis) who are homeless and often difficult to find accommodation for
- Certain groups are particularly at risk of homelessness in the district, including young people, those in transition e.g. leaving hospital, leaving prison, leaving NASS accommodation
- There is continued pressure on temporary accommodation, with recent upward trends in use of bed and breakfast temporary accommodation
- It is difficult to place homeless households in social housing if they have un-met support needs and/or significant former tenant arrears or history of anti-social behaviour, this is reflected by the reality of budget cuts to support packages

Utilising the key findings from the evidence gathering exercise, the project group worked up a draft vision for the strategy and key themes, which will form the framework for the strategy. The draft vision and themes were then shared widely across the homelessness partnership network, and the result was a refined version which is detailed below.

***Bradford Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025  
Draft Vision***

***Across our partnerships we will strive towards ending homelessness and rough sleeping once and for all. Homelessness is everyone’s business.***

Under each indicative theme, partners have identified a range of actions which need to be prioritised in order to work towards achieving the vision. The strategy document will highlight a number of these actions however more work will be done once the strategy is adopted, to add detail and responsibilities to those actions which specific leads formally commit to. The Bradford Housing Partnership People Group – will oversee the production and monitoring of the more detailed action plan. Draft themes and key actions are summarised below.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Example actions</b>
<b><i>1. Deliver effective early intervention and prevention of homelessness</i></b>	Targeted homeless prevention for specific groups e.g. young people, offenders; assessments to empower people to contribute to finding solutions; redesign Housing Options to focus on early intervention; education programmes; review pathways for prison leavers and hospital discharge; work with housing associations to prevent evictions
<b><i>2. Deliver support in the right way at the right time to people who are</i></b>	Recommission supported housing services to meet identified needs/gaps; encourage increase in non-commissioned supported housing; review assessment

<b>homeless</b>	and pathway into supported housing; remodel floating support services; encourage support services to provide Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE); deliver responsive physical and mental health support to homeless people; develop a Youth Homelessness Delivery Plan; minimise the use of B&B as temporary accommodation
<b>3. Tackle rough sleeping</b>	Deliver coordinated street outreach services and crisis support for rough sleepers; deliver a Housing First model of support to rough sleepers with complex and multiple needs; enhance partnership working between health and housing services for rough sleepers; deliver day and night shelter services for rough sleepers; deliver additional Cold Weather Provision during winter months; support destitute rough sleepers
<b>4. Improve access to social housing and private rented housing for people who are homeless</b>	Improve partnerships between housing associations and the Council to enhance access to social housing for homeless people; review and implement revised Social Housing Allocations Policy; expand private rented sector access scheme; support tenants and landlords to prevent loss of tenancies in private rented housing; pilot furnished tenancies to remove barriers to accessing housing; increase provision of affordable homes in areas of high demand; improve tenancy readiness of homeless young people
<b>5. Work better together</b>	Develop a Homelessness Charter for stakeholders and the public to commit to; facilitate co-production of services and improvements with involvement of service users / those with lived experience; encourage use of 'Duty to Refer' obligations; improve joint working with health / substance misuse services for people who are homeless; improve online systems for sharing information on available services / bedspaces; consider pathway coordinator to reduce need for multiple assessments

### 3.8 Ongoing Housing Challenges

Despite significant efforts by the Council and partners, a number of key challenges remain. These are summarised below:

- The Council's Housing Standards team has seen a steady increase in demand over the last 5 years with service requests increasing by 35% since 2013/14
- At the same time the Housing Standards team has been given responsibility for the implementation of a range of new statutory duties and powers without additional staffing resources. New duties include the extension of licensing to additional Houses In multiple Occupation, responsibility for the enforcement of the removal of cladding from high rise residential buildings, introducing and applying new powers to issue Civil Penalty Notices for

housing offences and the introduction of a national register of rogue landlords and banning orders. The team is also working with other authorities to review how its approach to enforce new legislation relating to the energy efficiency of privately rented accommodation which makes it illegal to rent property with an EPC rating below Band E

- Despite sizeable reductions in empty homes, the District still has relatively high levels compared to regional and national averages
- Whilst the government's new standard has reduced the housing requirement for the District from 2,476 to 1,703 per annum, we still need to provide housing for a growing population
- Correspondingly the affordable housing target was reduced from 587 to 411 per annum, which remains challenging given funding constraints faced by Social Housing Providers and the Council
- Homelessness has been rising nationally and locally. The Homelessness Reduction Act came into force in April 2018 to deal with the issue. However, the new legislation has placed considerable pressure on the staffing capacity but government support to implement the requirements is limited to funding for 3 years which ends in April 2020. Whilst the aim of government is to reduce homelessness, the approach being taken is a concerted effort by the local authority necessitating a requirement to improve staffing capacity
- Welfare Reform measures continues to place pressures on homelessness and the roll out of Universal Credit will compound housing affordability issues
- There is continued demand for adapted properties and homes which are suitable for people with Learning Disability and other complex issues. With the growth in the older population the pressures will continue
- Housing conditions and the quality of some of the private housing stock, both in the private rented sector and in older housing stock occupied by vulnerable homeowners continue to affect the quality of life for households who live in those properties. Fuel poverty and energy efficiency remain major issues within these homes. With Category 1 hazards in the private stock (owner occupied and rented) estimated to cost a total of £71m to rectify, and those in the private rented stock amounting to £22.8m, the problem will not be easily solved in the near future
- The use of Temporary Accommodation including inappropriate and costly B&B has been increasing despite active efforts to manage these down. New ways to reduce the use of B&B are being tried including a tender opportunity currently underway which seeks to attract Registered Providers to offer and use their own stock for people facing crisis situations

### 3.9 Next Steps

On-going consultations with the sector

Deadline for report to Executive first week of November 2019

Meeting of the Executive 3 December 2019

## 4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

The strategy review and development process was carried out using existing staffing resources. However much of the evidence gathering and analysis was commissioned due to the need for specialist skills not available within the council or due to capacity constraints.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

No significant risk management issues arising from this report

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

No significant legal issues arising from this report

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

The strategies will set out an explicit commitment to reducing inequalities and recognises that housing has a big part to play in promoting equality of access and support, and in tackling inequalities.

### **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The strategy seeks to support sustainability of the district and its communities through prioritising the provision of suitable, affordable housing to meet the needs of our growing population and by retrofitting existing dwelling stock to improve its long term viability. The recent Homes and Neighbourhood Guide and other policy and good practice documents will be used to inform the development of the strategy.

### **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

Environmental sustainability and energy efficiency will be key features within the developing strategy. The strategy seeks to improve energy efficiency within the districts stock and to promote the adoption of low and zero carbon technologies in new homes.

### **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

The strategy seeks to support the creation of safe, healthy, welcoming and cohesive communities.

### **7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

The HRA dimension of housing is recognised in the United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which includes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family, including adequate housing. The UK is legally bound by this treaty. The Council also has regard to good practice in housing particularly those that adhere to guidance contained in: 'Deciding Rights – Applying the Human Rights Act to Good Practice in LA decision making'.

### **7.6 TRADE UNION**

No issues identified

### **7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

No specific ward implications as both the housing and the homelessness and rough sleeping strategy will apply on a District wide basis. However in the planning of new supply of housing there will be specific targets for specific areas of the District in line with the Local Plan.

### **7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING**

One of the objectives in the developing housing strategy is likely to be supporting independence which will apply to care leavers and the homelessness strategy will

also set out our approach to care leavers.

**7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

No specific issues arising from this report

**8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

N/A

**9. OPTIONS**

There are no options being presented in this report

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Member views are taken into account in the drafting of the 2 strategies.

**11. APPENDICES**

None

**12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

'A Place to Call Home: Housing & Homelessness Strategy, 2014-2019'

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/1855/housingandhomelessnessstrategy.pdf>