

Report of the Strategic Director, Place, to the meeting of Executive to be held on 2 January 2020

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Subject:

'A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive, Housing Strategy for Bradford District, 2020-2030'

Summary statement:

This report presents the revised housing strategy, 'A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive, Housing Strategy for Bradford District, 2020-2030'. The strategy sets out the vision, priorities, challenges and approach for meeting the housing needs of the residents of the district. The strategy is a high-level strategic document for the Council and its partners to follow when developing and delivering housing policies, plans, and delivery programmes.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Regeneration & Environment

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the revised housing strategy, 'A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive, Housing Strategy for Bradford District, 2020-2030'. The strategy sets out the vision, priorities, challenges and approach for meeting the housing needs of the residents of the district. The strategy is a high-level strategic document for the Council and its partners to follow when developing and delivering housing policies, plans, and delivery programmes.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current strategy 'A Place to Call Home: Housing & Homelessness Strategy for Bradford District 2014-2019' replaced two separate previous strategies, combining housing and homelessness into one document. This strategy was reviewed recently and it was agreed to produce two separate strategies again in line with former practice, the housing strategy and the homelessness & rough sleeping strategy. The latter strategy is being considered as a separate item by the Council Executive.
- 2.2 The housing strategy is partnership-led and jointly owned by the Council and the Multi-agency Housing Partnership reflecting the reality of delivery of the objectives which requires a range of partners and stakeholders to implement successfully.
- 2.3 The review process included:
- Analysis of the evidence base
 - Series of public engagement events
 - Regeneration & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Sub Group sessions
 - Two meetings with Regeneration & Environment Overview & Scrutiny
 - Housing Partnership meetings
 - Session at the Health & Well Being Board Development Day
 - 4 week online public consultation, targeted at key groups, stakeholders and partnerships
 - Regular project delivery meetings with a joint Council and Housing Partnership Project Team.
- 2.4 There were three key Engagement events held which were well attended from across the housing and related sector including by developers, social landlords, voluntary sector, health bodies, support providers, and Council Departments such as Planning, Childrens, and Health and Wellbeing. The topics of the events were: Healthy Places to Live; Housing for Household Growth and Regeneration; and Housing for People with Specific needs.
- 2.5 The evidence base used to inform the review of the strategy included but was not limited to:
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2019 by arc4 on behalf of CBMDC
 - Upgrading the demographic evidence 2019 by Edge Analytics on behalf of CBMDC
 - Stock Condition Modelling and Health Impact Assessment 2015/2016 by BRE on behalf of CBMDC
 - Understanding Housing Markets: Bradford, 2019, Local Government Association

- Land Registry Data
- Review of the Homelessness Evidence Base, 2019, by Campbell Tickell, on behalf of CBMDC

2.6 Online public consultation comments.

Many of the comments received through the public consultation were around formatting and structure including reducing the positive description of the District in the introductory pages, making the final four sections more concise, removing references to overly technical information, and removing the section on Government Asks.

Inclusion of additional case studies and highlighting the good work going on through these case studies was suggested.

More specific comments were:

- Emphasise the size of the BAME population and their housing need including the issue of residential segregation
- Reference to the Homelessness Reduction Act and its impact on Housing Options team capacity
- Explore opportunities to regenerate areas like Manningham
- Impact of local planning and licensing decisions on the quality of the lived environment
- Suggestion that the planning and licensing system should be directed towards ensuring that families have safe, quiet, and litter-free environments, comment was made that a lack of effective planning and licensing controls destabilises communities and acts against social cohesion
- A Developer Forum did not agree with the proposed new homes target in the Partial Review and suggested that it is made clear in the housing strategy that the reduced target is a proposal only and not yet adopted
- There was a suggestion to include a theme that relates to building and adapting houses with a view to them being accessible to everyone from day one and future proofed for people as they age
- Reference to working with Adult Social Care to develop appropriate housing to support people to live in the community
- Highlight the positive role played by our social landlord partners in the District
- Refer to City of Sanctuary

2.7 Regeneration & Environment Sub Group comments.

- Members were generally supportive of the structure and content of the report particularly the case study examples.
- Members stated that the introductory place marketing text promoting Bradford as a place to live was good and disagreed with officer proposal to remove it. It was agreed to cut it down to a paragraph.
- Members agreed with the title of the document and the Vision
- Members were happy with the 3 key objectives and the 4 underpinning themes
- Members supported the officer proposed change to the titles of the Objectives from:
 - More Homes, Quality, Independence to:

- More Homes, Quality Homes & Neighbourhoods and Homes for All.
- Members did not support the suggestion to replace the word “Quality” in the second objective with the word “Better”.
- Members supported the bold commitment to be inclusive.
- Members agreed with new proposed formatting which would improve the layout etc.
- There was support to remove the 4 themed sections which were overly wordy and technical but some concern that valuable information is not lost. Members were reassured that some of the information would be included elsewhere in the strategy and some of the technical information will be moved into the evidence base document.
- Members agreed with the proposed targets and were happy to remove the problematic target on Disabled Facilities Grants as DFG’s are allocated based on the funding pot from government and Council.
- Members agreed that the “Government Asks” section should be removed but should be used to lobby government for policy changes.
- Members spoke about how to deal with empty homes, reducing Bed & Breakfast use, meeting the cultural needs of South Asian households, how we could build more affordable homes and more adapted homes, and the role of the Council in delivering housing which the market cannot provide e.g. larger family homes, adapted homes, zero carbon homes etc. Members were also interested in the issue of affordability and economics and its impact on housing. It was agreed that these are potential items for discussion at Scrutiny meetings rather than an explicit request to cover them in this strategy
- It was suggested that a one page leaflet is produced which summarises the strategy for the public

2.8 The Draft Strategy

Vision

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

Objectives

More Homes

Increase the supply of homes of the right type and quality in the right locations to meet the needs and aspirations of our diverse and growing population

Quality Homes & Neighbourhoods

Homes and neighbourhoods which are sensitive to future environmental, demographic and technological change. High quality homes in neighbourhoods where people want to live and thrive. High quality design and build standards in new homes and existing homes which are energy efficient and adaptable

Homes for All

Everyone should have a place to call home and that vulnerable residents in our communities are supported to live independently

Key Targets

New Housing Completions (net), 1,703 per annum minimum

Affordable Housing, 411 per annum minimum

Close the gap between the number of long term empty homes in the District and the West Yorkshire Average

Increase in the number of private sector homes where housing conditions have been improved through intervention measures

Increase in the rates of successful homelessness preventions

Reduce length of stay in Bed & Breakfast to no more than 7 nights (average)

Underpinning Themes

Improve Affordability

Support Healthy Living

Sustainable Housing in Sustainable Neighbourhoods

Effective Place-making

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 In line with the Council's Constitution this strategy will be submitted to full Council for adoption following agreement by the Executive.

3.2 The Multi-agency Housing Partnership will oversee implementation of the strategy and periodically review the success measures. As the strategy is by design a high level framework, its success will depend on actions and interventions planned and delivered by a wide range of delivery partners. The business plans of key partners will therefore be the key tools for implementing the vision and objectives in the strategy.

3.3 As the overarching high-level strategy for housing across the District, this strategy will set the context and key principles for future reviews of housing specific policies e.g. the Tenancy Strategy, the Empty Homes Action Plan, the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan, and the Social Housing Allocations Policy. These and several other housing policies, programmes and plans (existing and to be developed) sit underneath the strategy. When these are developed or reviewed they will be agreed in line with appropriate procedures.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, the strategy sets out a number of potential delivery approaches and actions, some of which may utilise the resources of the Council. All Council-led implementation measures which contribute towards this strategy will be subject to approval via the Council's annual budget process and additional resource requests will be submitted to the Executive.

4.2 The strategy places an emphasis on taking a flexible approach to how resources are sourced and used, and highlights the importance of working in partnership to deliver programmes of activity. The strategy will be used as an influencing document, to seek to secure maximum value from internal and external support to deliver measures and actions which contribute to the strategy's vision and objectives.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 A reputational risk would arise if the Council failed to monitor and report progress on the measures set out in the strategy. It is important therefore to have robust partnership governance structures in place and ensure that the Housing Partnership is supported to carry out its task effectively. Risks associated with Council led projects and programmes relating to this strategy will be managed through the Corporate Risk Management process.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 There is no statutory requirement on Local Authorities in England to prepare a housing strategy. The Council as a housing authority has a general duty to consider housing conditions and the need for provision of further housing.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The Council is required to comply with the public sector equality duty under S149 Equality Act 2010 which requires that the Council, in the exercise of its functions, has due regard to the need to—

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

Officers have prepared an equality impact assessment to assist elected members in having regard to this duty.

The strategy sets out an explicit commitment to be inclusive and to support those sections of the population that require intervention to lead better quality of life. A Key Objective in the strategy, Objective 3, Homes for All, is devoted to support those sections that need a higher level of support. The delivery approaches outlined in the strategy aim to take people's differing needs into account including those who experience discrimination or exclusion, and those who are most vulnerable and have greatest need. There is also a focus on improving neighbourhoods through effective place-making, and promoting sustainable

housing and cohesive neighbourhoods which foster good community relations.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The strategy seeks to support the delivery of sustainable homes and neighbourhoods and promotes the Council's and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's commitment to achieving a net zero carbon by 2038. It contains a number of references to sustainability including the underpinning theme, 'Sustainable housing in sustainable neighbourhoods', as well as several case studies such as on clean air and Modern Methods of Construction to promote sustainable housing standards. The strategy explicitly recognises the role that housing can play in creating safe, healthy, green, distinct and sustainable neighbourhoods and promotes the 'Homes & Neighbourhoods, a guide to designing in Bradford' which has sustainable design at the heart of the guidance directed at architects and developers.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Environmental sustainability and energy efficiency are key features within the strategy. The strategy highlights the Council's climate emergency declaration and aims to improve energy efficiency within the District's housing stock, and to promote the adoption of low and zero carbon technologies. Through these and other measures set out in the document, the strategy aims to have a positive impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

The strategy seeks to support the creation of safe, welcoming, cohesive neighbourhoods as part of the approach outlined in the two underpinning themes of Effective Place-making, and Sustainable housing and sustainable neighbourhoods. Indirectly, the third theme, supporting healthy living also contributes to community safety. The general approach in the strategy is to create homes and communities in which people can thrive and part of this approach is to provide housing in neighbourhoods which are safe and healthy to live in. The strategy contains several references to building safety including safety in high rise dwellings.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Implementation of the strategy will be conducive to the fulfilment of the Convention Rights and Freedoms under schedule 1 of the Human Rights Act 1998.

7.6 TRADE UNION

There are no trade union implications identified.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific ward implications identified as this is a District wide high level strategy. However there are references to delivering housing in the places where needed and reference is made to the Core Strategy and the Partial Review of the Core Strategy where more detail may be contained.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

N/A

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

There is reference to our Corporate parenting responsibilities in the strategy and about prioritising looked after children and Care Leavers.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no privacy impact issues arising from the production of the strategy or its implementation

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

Option 1 – to endorse the strategy, ‘A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive, Housing Strategy for Bradford District 2020-2030’.

The strategy provides a framework and principles and a partnership context in which to deliver District priorities. It updates the existing strategy which is now out of date and sets out joint District housing ambitions which are necessary to improve people’s lives. This is the preferred option.

Option 2 - Reject the strategy, ‘A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive, Housing Strategy for Bradford District, 2020-2030’.

The current housing strategy has an end date of 2019 and is deemed out of date. The option is therefore not recommended as there have been significant economic and political changes since the current strategy was produced in 2014.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the housing strategy, “A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive, Housing Strategy for the District, 2020-2030’ be endorsed and recommended to full Council for approval.
- 10.2 That the support provided by partners in developing the strategy, be noted and the significant contribution that will be provided by housing and other partners in implementing the strategy be acknowledged.
- 10.3 That the importance of a strong and effective Housing Partnership which will play a vital role in monitoring, reviewing and reporting on measures contained within the strategy be noted.
- 10.4 That the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, is delegated authority to undertake monitoring and implementation of this strategy.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: “A Place to Call Home, A Place to Thrive, Housing Strategy for Bradford District, 2020-2030”

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

'A Place to Call Home – Housing and Homelessness Strategy for Bradford District 2014 – 2019' see <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/housing/policies-and-reports/housing-and-related-strategies/>

Report to Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 19th September 2019 see <https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=402&MId=7234>

Report to Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 7th November 2019 see <https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=402&MId=7236>