

# Cheshire East Council

## Portfolio Holder Decision

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**Date of Meeting:** 16 November 2017

**Report of:** Frank Jordan – Executive Director of Place

**Subject/Title:** Cheshire East Council Housing Strategy 2018-2023:  
Approval to consult

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**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Ainsley Arnold: Housing and Planning

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### 1. Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to formally consult externally for the Cheshire East Council Housing Strategy 2018-2023, the proposed consultation is for a 6 week period between 27 November 2017 and 08 January 2018.
- 1.2 Driven by the Cheshire East Local Plan, the Housing Strategy is a significant contributor to achieving the aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan and the resident focused outcomes. Our approach is based upon the continuation and building of strong relationships with our partners to further improve the quality, quantity and choice of housing within Cheshire East, enhancing place and wellbeing, through meeting the aspirations and needs of all our residents both now and in the future.
- 1.3 There can rarely have been a more important time to set out our distinctive vision for the future of homes in our Borough and outline the steps we are determined to take to achieve it. We strongly believe that housing is fundamentally about Place and People, not just bricks and mortar - housing is about homes, it is a foundation for a stable and successful life.
- 1.4 The development of the Housing Strategy is primarily informed and shaped by engagement with our partners and other stakeholders. Approval to formally consult will enable a wide ranging number of individuals and organisations to contribute to support our aims and objectives.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning:
  - Note the draft Housing Strategy
  - Authorise officers to publically consult on the draft strategy for a period of 6 weeks, before incorporating the responses into the finalised strategy
  - Note that following the consultation period the revised strategy will be presented to Cabinet for formal adoption

### **3. Other Options Considered**

- 3.1 There are no alternative options considered. The existing Housing Strategy which ran from 2011-2016, now requires updating to align with the Council's aspirations as outlined in the key Communities Outcomes, the ambitions represented within the Local Plan and to enable us to keep up with the pace of change in the housing sector.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 Approval to formally consult on the Housing Strategy will be the catalyst enabling the Council to:
- Articulate the vision, aims and objectives of Cheshire East Council Housing Strategy 2018-2023
  - Support the delivery of the right home in the right place across the Borough
  - Allow us to focus on what matters to our communities and support the Council's vision of Putting Residents at the heart of everything we do
  - Support the delivery of Cheshire East Council's Mid-Term Financial Strategy 2017-2020

### **5. Background / Chronology**

- 5.1 Cheshire East is committed to meeting the needs of its local communities and providing the infrastructure, services and facilities required to create sustainable and stronger communities. Part of this is ensuring that we have the right housing offer to meet our ambitions for the Council's jobs-led economic growth, but also that they are of the right mix to meet the diverse housing needs across the Borough.
- 5.2 To support our ambitions, we have worked extensively to fully appreciate the challenges and opportunities recently experienced by the housing sector, to ensure we are prepared for the future direction of policy at a national level, shaping it at the local level to continue the Council's successful drive for excellence. As such, we have developed a draft Housing Strategy through informal engagement with a host of internal and external stakeholders, in preparation for approval to formally consult.
- 5.3 Since the publication of our previous Housing Strategy in 2011, there have been significant changes to the local and national political, policy and funding landscape. This new Strategy reflects these changes, and is underpinned by our Local Plan, supportive policies and strategies which will enable us to achieve our priorities for housing within the Borough.

5.4 The draft Housing Strategy has two themes;

Growth and quality of place	Cheshire East has a strong ambition for jobs-led economic growth across all areas and housing is essential to support this continuous growth. If housing is considered in isolation to our planned investment and regeneration, then sustainable growth or successful outcomes are unlikely to be achieved. We know that ensuring new homes are delivered of the right type, in the right place and giving resident's choices and support are vital for Cheshire East. Where the market is not currently meeting housing need we will explore interventions to bring these forward.
Health, wellbeing and quality of life	A key goal of our Housing Strategy is to guarantee Cheshire East residents have a place to live which supports their health, wellbeing and contributes to the quality of life. Good quality, safe and affordable housing is essential to meeting this goal. Therefore, this strategy details how we link our policy decision making with outcomes that support the health and wellbeing of all Cheshire East residents.

5.5 Central to making this Housing Strategy a success is to ensure we effectively plan, measure and monitor how we will deliver the priorities detailed within this document, which will be achieved through an agreed Delivery Plan, a tool to help us deliver our strategy. The Delivery Plan will be subject to annual reviews during the lifetime of the Strategy, ensuring the priorities remains relevant and their delivery is continually monitored.

**6. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members**

6.1 All wards and local ward Members.

**7. Implications of Recommendation**

**7.1 Policy Implications**

7.1.1 The Housing Strategy is a key deliverable to support the overarching achieving Council's objectives of delivering the right type of housing in the right place and regenerating our towns and villages as well as supporting the health and wellbeing of our residents.

7.1.2 Through directly supporting both the Corporate Plan and the Mid-Term Financial Strategy, the Housing Strategy clearly demonstrates that there is a clear role to play in supporting the delivery of the community aims and objectives, directly through the opportunities presented to achieve the key community outcomes for residents and to continue to provide excellent customer service and value for money.

- 7.1.3 Moreover, the Housing Strategy has an important contribution to the continued jobs-led economic growth of Cheshire East and the wider sub-region. Through our support for the work of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, we fully acknowledge the importance of the recently reviewed Strategic Economic Plan, which clearly sets out the role of housing in future economic development and replicates our ambition to increase supply and ensure that affordability issues across the authority are addressed.

## **7.2 Legal Implications**

- 7.2.1 In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 Section 87, the Council published a Housing Strategy in 2011, which set out its vision for housing in the borough. While the Deregulation Act 2015 abolished the statutory requirement for English authorities to produce a housing strategy as previously required, the aim of the new Housing Strategy 2018-2023 is to support the priorities for housing in Cheshire East over the next five years, across all tenures to meet housing need. It will contribute to the Council's overarching strategic objectives.

## **7.3 Financial Implications**

- 7.3.1 The eventual implication of the Housing Strategy does not envisage that there will be a major financial investment required by Cheshire East, however if funding was required for individual projects, a full business case would be compiled which would consider all financing options (both internal and external) and any potential risks to the Council. Such business cases will follow the established route for ratification including gateway approvals at the appropriate points in accordance with the Council's project management protocols.

## **7.4 Equality Implications**

- 7.4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for the development of the draft Housing Strategy. It has been determined that there are no groups who will be negatively impacted by the Strategy. It was assessed that a full Impact Assessment was not required. A further update of the Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken during the consultation period and involve our partners and other stakeholders.

## **7.5 Rural Community Implications**

- 7.5.1 Rural communities will positively benefit from the introduction of the Strategy, as it aims to address how we can provide access to affordable housing of mix tenures in all neighbourhoods of Cheshire East.

## **7.6 Human Resources Implications**

7.6.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications.

## **7.7 Public Health Implications**

7.7.1 There are no specific implications for Public Health with the exception of anticipation that a collaborative and supportive relationship is maintained in delivering the Strategy priorities through the Delivery Plan. However, this Housing Strategy has clear health benefits which will contribute towards the Council's agenda – Outcome 5, People live well and for longer.

## **7.8 Implications for Children and Young People**

7.8.1 It is envisaged that there are positive impact of the provision of services for children and young people as care leavers, as there are specific reference to improving pathways between services as well as ensuring that young people are supported in accessing a breadth of accommodation and support to enable them to live independently.

## **7.9 Other Implications (Please Specify)**

7.9.1 There are no further implications.

## **8. Risk Management**

8.1 While the assessment, mitigation and management of risk is overseen through the Council's governance arrangements associated with residential growth, as with any strategy, there is a risk that strategic direction does not translate into action on the ground. This has been mitigated by the creation of a comprehensive Delivery Plan for each priority and will be monitored annually.

## **9. Access to Information / Bibliography**

9.1 Cheshire East Council Housing Strategy 2018-2023: Draft for consultation

9.2 Cheshire East Council Housing Strategy 2018-2023 Draft for consultation: Equality Impact Assessment

## **10. Contact Information**

Contact details for this report are as follows:

**Name:** Gerard Buckley

**Designation:** Housing Policy Officer

**Tel. No:** 01270 6 (85827)

**Email:** [gerard.buckley@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:gerard.buckley@cheshireeast.gov.uk)