

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel with an update on the progress of the new Housing Strategy.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

2.1 The Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel are asked to comment on the draft Housing Strategy.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Housing is one of the key priorities of Slough's Joint Well Being Strategy (SJWS). It contributes to reducing inequalities in health through access to quality housing. There are clear links between housing and the JSNA priorities around improving health conditions so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently in their communities.

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The new Housing Strategy will touch all of the priority outcomes: -

Outcome 1: Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful;

Outcome 2: Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs;

Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay;

Outcome 4: Our residents will live in good quality homes and

Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

Although any financial implications of the new strategy cannot currently be quantified, the completed strategy will clearly lay out any financial requirements needed to deliver particular aspects. In order to deliver a step-change in housing supply, for example, the council must accept that investment, be it from partners or any other routes, must be increased to fulfil the ambitions of the strategy.

(b) Risk Management

There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights or other Legal implications arising from this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The compilation of this report has not required an Equalities Impact Assessment.

(e) Workforce

It is possible that the implementation of this strategy will require some short-term capacity to give it all the chances of success.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 On the 31st July 2019, an Inception Meeting was held to bring together a number of key stakeholders to kick off the work on the housing strategy. The consultants, Campbell Tickell, have since conducted over 41 interviews, either face-to-face or over the telephone.
- 5.2 A report with emerging themes was reported to this Panel on 28th November 2019, where comments were fed back for inclusion in the strategy.
- 5.3 A key feature of putting the strategy together has been the introduction of a Sounding Board to sense check the emerging work from inception. The Board proved very useful for shaping the current product.

6. **The Strategy Themes**

- 6.1 The strategy is broken down into nine sections: -
 - Introduction – housing for an economically inclusive Slough
 - Successes, challenges and opportunities
 - How many homes and what sort of new homes does Slough require

- Delivering new homes to support the right housing development
- Increasing supply through better use of existing homes
- Improving access to homes
- Supporting people, improving health and well-being
- Building healthy, thriving places with Slough's residents
- Action plan.

6.2 See Appendix A to this report, the Slough Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025 (draft) and Appendix B, the Action Plan.

7. Completing the strategy

7.1 There are a number of tasks still needed before the strategy is completed: -

- There are currently three meetings to be attended, which will help shape the final strategy (details contained below in 8.1);
- There are some Planning comments still needed to be included. These centre around existing frameworks and policy positions, which the strategy helps to reinforce;
- All comments and suggestions coming from the stakeholder meetings in March 2020 to be discussed and included in the strategy, where necessary/appropriate and
- The executive summary is to be completed.

8. Remaining Consultation

8.1 Officers have taken the Housing Strategy in its emerging forms to a number of meetings. Currently, there are three meetings the strategy will be taken to for an opportunity for further discussion and refinement (as this report is being written). These are: -

- The Resident Board (council tenants and leaseholders) - Tuesday 10th March 2020 at 6.30pm
- Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel - (Tuesday 17th March 2020 at 6.30pm
- Health & Social Care Partnership (health and social care professionals) – Tuesday 31st March 2020 at 10am

8.2 Officers expect that a number of other events or opportunities to capture any last comments will emerge during March.

9. Comments of Other Committees

9.1 The draft Housing Strategy was presented to the Corporate Management Team on 26th February 2020. Below are some of their key comments: -

- There needs to be the supply and demand picture at the front of the strategy. Although the action plan suggests a proper needs assessment

for Slough, officers shouldn't just rely on the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment because this is too broad. The demand picture would enable readers to know what we needed to do and how many homes are needed to be built;

- The actions are too many and need to be prioritised and
- There was a query about funding implications of the action plan.

10. Conclusion

10.1 This report attaches the draft Housing Strategy and its associated action plan. Officers are using March for the final round of discussions with relevant groups/meetings to draw out final comments to conclude the Housing Strategy.

11. Background Papers

11.1 Housing Strategy Update: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel 28th November 2019.

12. Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Housing Strategy
Appendix B – Draft Action Plan