

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Slough Wellbeing Board      **DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I**

### **FOR INFORMATION**

## **HOUSING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

This report provides the Slough Wellbeing Board with an update on the progress of implementation of the Housing Strategy Action Plan. It also provides an opportunity for comment and consideration around the timescale of actions to help shape the prioritisation and allocation of resources to deliver specific actions and impacts that have wider benefits for the Slough Wellbeing Board.

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

The Slough Wellbeing Board is recommended to note this report and provide input to help shape the delivery of the Housing Strategy Action Plan.

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

- The priorities of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) have been taken account of in the production of the Housing Strategy and cross linked to the JSNA and the Five Year Plan, with a detailed action plan that details the priorities agreed for Slough with partner organisations.
- The Housing Strategy for Slough presents a clear ambitious way forward to improve housing in the borough. It sets out priorities which will form the focus of activities and resources over the next 5 years in line with our Five Year Plan and Local Plan in seeking to deliver more homes in the borough, and of better quality to improve health and economic outcomes for residents.
- The Housing Strategy draws together all of the housing issues into one comprehensive document. It also comprises the Private Sector Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy, the Council's New Build Strategy and our approaches to supporting vulnerable adults and children as part of wider Council objectives laid out in the Five Year Plan.

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

Housing is a key determinant of health and wellbeing and it is a priority in the new Wellbeing Strategy.

It aims to ensure:

- The right supply and mix of new homes including maximising affordable housing
- That quality and best use of existing homes is improved across the council, housing association and private sector
- That land and capital resources are used in the most efficient way
- That a sustainable balance is struck between housing supply, regenerated areas and community infrastructure demands

### 3b. **The JSNA**

The Housing Strategy is a “broad brush” strategy and the key needs assessment data relating to its production ranged from specific client group needs and wider determinants of public health gained through consultation and research.

Key objectives identified:

- That specialist accommodation is available for adults and children (if needs cannot be met within ordinary housing solutions)
- That homelessness and rough sleeping is reduced
- That professionally managed and well-maintained homes are delivered including increased controls and regulation of the Private Sector
- That we ensure “Green and healthy homes” wherever possible

### 3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The key driver for the Housing Strategy is to deliver Outcome 4 of the 2017 Five Year Plan “Our residents will have access to good quality homes”. It also helps to deliver and makes significant contributions to each of the other outcomes:

- 1) Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives
- 2) Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs
- 3) Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit
- 5) Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents.

## 4. **Other Implications**

- (a) **Financial** – There are no financial implications of the proposed action.
- (b) **Risk Management** - There are no financial implications of the proposed action.
- (c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications** – There are no Human Rights Act implications from the proposed Action
- (d) **Equalities Impact Assessment** - An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in relation to the Housing Strategy and its implementation.

## 5. **Summary**

*This item provides members with a detailed update on the delivery of the Housing Strategy over the first six months of implementation.*

*It gives members a better understanding of the size and scale of our ambition and a better understanding of the housing challenges facing the borough.*

*The Board is being asked to note the progress and successes to date and comment and offer wider solutions to joint areas of operation as contained within the Action Plan.*

## 6. **Supporting Information**

6.1 Housing has been identified as one of the four key priorities in the Wellbeing Strategy. At the last housing presentation to the Wellbeing Board there was a request that housing report on the progress of implementation of the Housing Strategy and to flag-up any early challenges and issues that may have wider impacts across the partnership and the Council. The key partnership issues identified by the Board have been incorporated into the Housing Strategy as key actions and include:

- Housing opportunities for key workers.
- Services to allow elderly and disabled residents to live independently in their home and which reduce the impact of poor housing on health. These will be developed through partnership working, particularly with adult services, public health and the CCG.
- Joint work would be undertaken with the health sector and other agencies to monitor and address the health and care needs of vulnerable homeless
- People placed in Slough by other local authorities and that those authorities are required to review their placement and notification policies.

6.2 The Board has also considered whether a lead officer for housing should be a member of the Board and the option of occasional attendance and presentation of progress was considered to be the best approach.

6.3 The Housing Strategy has been finalised since the last presentation and an Equality Impact Assessment completed. It provides a comprehensive picture of the current housing needs and demands in Slough and how the Council will counter existing and anticipated challenges through robust delivery and monitoring of the implementation plan.

6.4 It is recognised that the scope of the Housing Strategy is of prime importance to the Board as it reaches far beyond lack of housing supply or poor housing as both have a fundamental affect on both physical and mental wellbeing, education, employment and community safety affecting all aspects of life and life chances for the borough's residents.

6.5 The Council is obliged to produce a new Homelessness Strategy this year and new legislation gives added weight to the prevention of homelessness. Our shared aim is to enable people to take control of their lives, remain free from negative behaviours including offending, stay mentally and physically active and avoid social exclusion.

## **7. Comments of Other Committees**

7.1 The draft Housing Strategy was discussed by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th December 2016. The Committee agreed that:

- They should be responsible for scrutinising the Housing Strategy and for formally reviewing progress against its accompanying action plan at six monthly intervals; and that
- The Council's Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel should be responsible for scrutinising all other housing related matters, including performance and operational issues.

7.2 The Council's Cabinet on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017 approved the draft Housing Strategy and associated Action Plan following full public consultation and consideration by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7.3 The Safer Slough Partnership at its meeting on the 14th June 2017 have recognised the progress made in the Housing Strategy and agreed to fully engage in the production of a new Homelessness Strategy. They recognise it is an opportunity for capturing the most pressing and complex needs in homelessness, and creating new services that have wider community benefits.

## **8. Conclusion**

8.1 The Council's Housing Strategy is an important document in setting out our vision and priority objectives for the future of Slough. The views of the Board are important in assessing the progress and priorities of the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan and capturing the early impacts and successes in housing delivery to help shape the priorities, timetable and practical joined-up approaches to delivering the Housing Strategy Action Plan including the requirement to develop a new Homeless Prevention Strategy by September 2017.

## **9. Appendices attached**

'A' - Housing Strategy Implementation Plan – updated June 2017

## **10. Background Papers**

'1 – Board Themed Discussion Housing Report - September 2016

<http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=592&MId=5616&Ver=4>

2 – Housing Strategy Update for Board

<http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=592&MId=5661&Ver=4>

3 - Equalities Impact Assessment – Available on request from author