

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	3 November 2022
Subject:	Sefton Housing Strategy 2022-2027		
Report of:	Assistant Director Place (Economic Growth and Housing)	Wards Affected:	All Wards
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member – Communities and Housing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek Cabinet approval to publish Sefton’s Housing Strategy, which sets out the vision, key themes and strategic housing priorities for Sefton over the next five years.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to:

- (1) Approve Sefton’s Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027 [as set out in Appendix 1] for publication.
- (2) Note that further work is to be undertaken in Autumn/Winter 2022 on the Housing Strategy Action Plan and Monitoring Reports. This Action Plan will include specific activities and actions to be undertaken by the Council to achieve the strategic priorities as identified in the Housing Strategy document.
- (3) Give authority to the Assistant Director Place (Economic Growth and Housing) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities to approve the Housing Strategy Action Plan and Monitoring Reports as set out under recommendation (2).

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The Government has recognised that *“housing should provide a secure foundation for individuals to live the lives they want to live. Finding the right home, in the right place, can be an essential platform for people seeking to support their families and sustain work”*. This updated Housing Strategy sets out the locally agreed, long-term vision for housing and sets out strategic housing priorities, objectives and broad target outcomes to help achieve this aim.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

The Council could utilise the existing Housing Strategy (2016 – 2021) to deliver housing priorities and guide economic growth and investment in the Borough - this option has been considered and rejected for the following reasons: The existing Housing Strategy (2016 – 2021) is now largely obsolete as many of the housing priorities contained within it have been successfully implemented. Additionally, the landscape and the way in which housing services are delivered has changed considerably over the past 5 years, therefore, a refreshed housing strategy is considered appropriate.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no revenue cost implications with adopting Sefton’s Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027. Cost implications will be considered on a case by case basis for any work relating to the delivery of the priorities highlighted in this document.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no capital cost implications with adopting Sefton’s Housing Strategy 2022-2027. Cost implications will be considered on a case by case basis for any work relating to the delivery of the priorities highlighted in this document.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): None identified.	
Legal Implications: Section 29 of the Deregulation Act 2015 removed the legal requirement for a local authority to have a housing strategy. However, preparation of such a strategy is deemed to be good practice.	
Equality Implications: An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken through development of the Housing Strategy and no negative impacts have been identified. The EIA is included in Appendix 2	
Climate Emergency Implications: The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	Y
Have a neutral impact	N
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
The draft Housing Strategy 2022-2027 sets out a clear response to the Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency. We recognise that housing is one of the main producers of greenhouse gases, so we have made long-term resolutions to tackle our	

climate emergency head on by; working with private property owners and registered providers of social housing, to help retrofit housing stock across Sefton to reduce carbon emissions.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Meeting the housing needs of the most vulnerable groups, such as those with mental health issues, learning and physical disabilities or those leaving care.

Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The places where we live will make it easy to be healthy and happy, with opportunities for better health and wellbeing on our doorstep.

Commission, broker and provide core services: Ensuring that the right housing choices are available and housing services are commissioned or provided in the most appropriate way.

Place – leadership and influencer: : Ensuring homes and neighbourhoods are developed in a way that people enjoy being part of, and take pride living in.

Drivers of change and reform: : Incorporating new technologies and materials to build better homes or retrofit existing homes with new technologies and improve energy efficiency utilising the most sustainable methods.

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Supporting housing delivery throughout Sefton leads to a range of direct economic benefits including: Local employment opportunities and workforce development in construction. The development of aspirational homes also attracts and retains economically active people within the Borough and will help to rebalance our demographic profile.

Greater income for social investment: Utilising a range of public and private housing investment funding streams to enable development of the highest quality homes in the borough in the most appropriate locations

Cleaner Greener : Leading a range of improvement initiatives and encouraging others across all types and tenures of homes to; raise housing standards, address energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and decrease the number of poor-quality houses.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 6981/22) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5181/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Discussions on the development of the draft Housing Strategy have been undertaken with a range of external stakeholders including South Sefton CCG, Registered Providers of Social Housing, Homes England, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, The Regulator of Social Housing, Volume Housebuilders, Sefton Advocacy for Older Persons and Consultants working on behalf of the Council. Further external views on the draft strategy have been sought publicly, through a 12-week consultation and public engagement process and have been incorporated within the final version of Sefton's Housing Strategy 2022-27.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Appendix 1 – Sefton's Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers:

Draft Housing Strategy approval for public consultation

<https://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=67923>

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Approval for the development of Sefton's new Housing Strategy to refresh the current 2016-21 strategy was agreed by Cabinet Member Communities and Housing in November 2021. Since this date, the draft Housing Strategy has been prepared incorporating the views of a range of internal officers and external stakeholders.
- 1.2 The development and publication of a refreshed version of the current Housing Strategy was recognised as being prudent by Cabinet Member Communities and Housing, due to a number of housing priorities being successfully implemented or fulfilled by the Council since 2016. Additionally, a range of new strategic housing goals and Sefton's adopted 2030 Vision, alongside numerous national policy and legislative changes, and changes to the operating environment, meant that a refreshed & robust updated strategy was essential for the delivery of local authorities' housing functions going forward.
- 1.3 On 6th October 2022 Cabinet approved a proposal to re-designate Selective and Additional Licensing schemes within the Borough to 2028. An up to date Housing Strategy is pre requisite for introducing a Selective Licensing scheme within the Borough. Governmental guidance states: "*selective licensing is not a tool that can be used in isolation. The local housing authority will have to show how such a designation will be a part of the overall strategic borough wide approach*"

- 1.4 A housing strategy refresh will also provide an opportunity to strengthen linkages with the strategic aims and objectives that have been subsequently implemented by both, Sefton Council and the Government since 2016. Wide-ranging and up-to-date evidential documents and the Council's Core Purpose have also been consulted upon and incorporated within this draft housing strategy, ensuring consistency across existing policies and plans.
- 1.5 A draft version of Sefton's Housing Strategy (2022-2027) was published for a wider 12-week public consultation in early May 2022 and this concluded on 31st July 2022. This draft housing strategy was developed over a number of months in partnership with a range of internal and external stakeholders. The development of a robust housing strategy has followed good practice guidance, which indicated the importance of developing a 'shared' strategy, in collaboration with key Local Authority partners, and, also through consultation with a wider group of stakeholders and the local community. A summary of the consultation responses and the Council's response to each comment can be accessed through the following link: www.sefton.gov.uk/housingstrategyconsultation

2.0 Developing the new housing strategy's vision, key themes and housing priorities

- 2.1 The vision for housing in Sefton to 2027 and beyond encompasses: – *“Building upon the successful impacts of the previous Housing Strategies to ensure that Sefton remains a great place to live, by providing opportunities to allow residents to access the highest quality housing appropriate for their needs”*.
- 2.2 The key themes and housing priorities from Sefton's outgoing Housing Strategy have been reviewed and continue to remain relevant in this strategy refresh. This ensures a measure of continuity in delivery and helps to build upon our past successful outcomes. Over the period of this strategy our housing priorities will be:
- Driving housing quality in communities and neighbourhoods;
 - Meeting people's housing needs;
 - Enabling people to live independently;
 - Tackling barriers to obtaining suitable housing for the most vulnerable and ensuring equal access to housing services;
 - Effectively utilising Council assets to support housing delivery.
- 2.3 This Housing Strategy does not sit in isolation; therefore, it references and supports numerous national, Liverpool City Region and Sefton-wide higher-level strategies, goals and the Council's Core Purpose.
- 2.4 It is also important that this strategy does not solely focus upon the provision of new housing, but also concerns itself with how housing policies can improve the local environment and quality of life for the benefit of all residents. Therefore, this strategy recognises that housing activities must support the Council's key high-level strategies including: Sefton's Vision 2030, Local Plan, Economic Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Climate Emergency Strategy

3.0 Further work – Development of a Housing Strategy Action Plan and Monitoring report

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy document is intended to be accessible for residents and stakeholders so that they can easily understand the housing priorities and vision for the borough. However, this will be complemented by a detailed Housing Strategy Action Plan. This action plan will again be developed with key partners in Autumn/Winter 2022 and will outline how the vision set out in the strategy will be achieved, and will set targets for delivery. The Action Plan will be published on the Council's website.
- 3.2 The Housing Strategy Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is responsive to change and appropriately addresses the identified housing priorities and targets. This Monitoring Report will help to reflect on progress and targets achieved over the previous 12 months, and allow for updates to Sefton's housing priorities in the future. The Monitoring Report will also be published on the Council's website.