

## BASILDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Report to:** Cabinet  
13 July 2023

### Housing Strategy 2023-2028

**Report by:** Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Renewal

**Supported by:** Director of Housing and Property

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**Enclosures:** Enclosure No.1 Risk Management Implications  
Enclosure No.2 The Housing Strategy 2023-2028  
Enclosure No.3 Evidence Base  
Enclosure No.4 Statement of Consultation

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report seeks approval of the Housing Strategy 2023-2028 which is due for renewal this year.

The Housing Strategy 2023-28 has been in development since October 2022 and has been widely consulted on and takes account of the views and comments of those that were consulted.

#### **CORPORATE PLAN AMBITIONS:**

##### Corporate Plan Ambitions

- People
- Place

#### **WARD(S):**

All Wards

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the Cabinet approves and adopts the revised Housing Strategy 2023-2028 as set out at Enclosure No. 2 to the report.**

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#### **BACKGROUND**

The Housing Strategy 2018-23 is due for renewal this year and a new 5-year strategy has been developed for the period 2023-28. Delivery of the current strategy has been reviewed annually and was last reported to the Housing and Estate Renewal Committee on 1 March 2022 (Minute 2022/107).

The Housing Strategy is a key document that provides a framework to draw together the many sources of funding and relevant policy strands into a single, coordinated strategy to tackle local housing related challenges. Three priorities have been identified which will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, Housing Strategy, and the emerging Local Plan. These priorities have been identified in collaboration with the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel and the Community Diversity Council.

1. Improve access to housing opportunities and choice
2. Make best use of council homes
3. Support residents to create neighbourhoods they wish to live in and be part of

The strategy is supported by an evidence base which is at **Enclosure No. 3**. The evidence contained in this document is drawn from Government statistics, the council's KPI's and other verified sources.

The 2023 to 2028 Housing Strategy's priorities have not changed greatly from the priorities of the 2018 to 2023 Housing Strategy. The priorities of the previous strategy were

1. Meeting future growth needs
2. Making best use of existing homes
3. Support residents to create neighbourhoods they wish to live in and be part of
4. Improve access to housing opportunities and choice

Priority 1, "Meeting future growth needs" is now an objective of priority 1 of the new Housing Strategy.

As with the previous strategy, progress will be monitored and reviewed annually. Feedback on progress and an opportunity for members to review the strategy will be made possible via Place Scrutiny annually.

## **Consultation**

The strategy has been subjected to extensive consultation. This began in October 2022 when Place Scrutiny Committee Members considered a report and provided feedback on the draft priorities to help shape the direction of the new strategy, ahead of officers undertaking detailed work on the Strategy, (Minute 501). This resulted in a minor amendment in wording under priority 1.

The Tenant and Leaseholder Panel as well as the Community Diversity Council received a presentation on the draft priorities and were invited to comment. Both groups endorsed the priorities.

Internal consultation has taken place with staff in early December 2022 where staff were asked for their thoughts on the draft priorities.

On 19 January 2023 Cabinet considered a report which sought approval of the draft priorities of the emerging 2023-28 Housing Strategy prior to the commencement of public consultation. Cabinet resolved that the draft priorities be approved as the basis for public consultation and that the Director of Housing and Property, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Renewal, be authorised to finalise the detail of, and undertake consultation as set out in the consultation planning document, (Minute 2023/28).

In line with the consultation planning document presented to Cabinet on 19 January 2023 a stakeholder event was undertaken on 31 January 2023 alongside an online public consultation from 30 January to 26 February 2023.

Each of the consultations i.e., public, staff and stakeholders resulted in a different outcome in terms of the most important priority. However, this is to be expected and reflects the different experiences of each of these groups. Therefore, it is recommended that the Housing Strategy gives equal weight to all three priorities.

The public consultation also asked if there were any additional priorities that were important to them. A number of suggestions were made that were either not in the remit of the Housing Strategy or will be covered by existing priorities. It is therefore recommended that no further priorities are introduced.

Outcomes of all the staff, stakeholder and public consultation are in **Enclosure No. 4** Statement of Consultation.

## **OPTIONS**

Approval of the Housing Strategy 2023-28 will enable the delivery of the strategy over the next 5 years. An alternative would be for the council not to have a Housing Strategy; however, the Council has a range of statutory duties to fulfil in relation to housing and homelessness and such a Strategy enables the Council to set out its agreed priorities for housing services in the Borough, and effectively maximise opportunities and choice for residents and stakeholders to shape housing service delivery over the next 5 years.

## **LEGISLATION/POLICY**

Whilst there is no statutory obligation on the Council to produce a Housing Strategy the Council does have a range of statutory duties to fulfil in relation to housing and homelessness and such a strategy will demonstrate how the Council will seek to achieve its responsibilities. The Housing Strategy will have a connection with other policies and strategies that will support the delivery of the Housing Strategy:

- Basildon Council's Corporate Plan
- Economic Development Policy
- Local Plan
- National Design Guide (2019)
- National Modal Design Code (2021)
- Essex Design Guide
- Community Safety Strategy
- Climate Change Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Private Sector Management Plan
- Housing Allocations Scheme
- ASB policy
- Safer Basildon Partnership Strategy
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy
- Consultation and Engagement Policy
- South Essex Housing Needs Assessment 2023

The outcome of consultation must be conscientiously considered as part of the decision-making process and to inform the Housing Strategy.

The Council must ensure that in the application and delivery of this strategy it pays due regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty pursuant to the Equality Act 2010.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### Corporate Plan Ambitions

#### People

We want Basildon to be home to healthy and active local communities able to support themselves and each other.

#### Place

We want Basildon to offer a high quality of life for all residents through attractive, liveable, accessible and safe neighbourhoods and towns along with the provision of enduring facilities, green spaces and town centres that meet the needs of the community.

### Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from approving the Housing Strategy 2023-2028. The Housing Strategy 2018-2023 will be delivered using existing resources where possible. The priorities identified in the Housing Strategy 2023-2028 sets the context for the allocation of relevant resources within the council's budget and medium-term financial strategy in future.

### Risk Management Implications

The risk management implications are set out at **Enclosure No. 1**.

### Diversity, Inclusion and Community Cohesion Implications

As a public authority, Basildon Borough Council is subject to the requirement under The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) found in s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 for the council to have due regard to the need to:

- a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the 2010 Act
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not, and
- c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.

The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Council must have due regard to its ongoing duties under the Equality Act 2010. Delivery plans for implementation of the strategy will need to take account of protected characteristics, ensuring they are fully inclusive and that equality impact assessments are carried out at relevant stages. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in respect of the draft Housing Strategy on 9 February 2023 which will support decision-makers in complying with the Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Decision-makers must consider the equality impact assessment and must consider how their decision will contribute towards the Council's public sector equality duty, whilst also taking into account other relevant circumstances such as economic and practical considerations

The EIA completed on 9 February considers how the proposed changes within the Housing Strategy might impact adversely or positively on those persons with protected characteristics. The strategy will have a positive effect as it provides a framework to draw together the many sources of funding and relevant policy strands into a single, coordinated strategy to tackle local housing related challenges for all residents and potential residents.

#### Other Relevant Considerations

None

#### Background Papers

None