

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Housing Strategy 2026-2031

Meeting/Date: Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth)
1 April 2026

Cabinet
21 April 2026

Executive Portfolio: Cllr S. Wakeford, Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy & Housing

Report by: Head of Economy, Regeneration and Housing Delivery

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC) current Housing Strategy was adopted by the Council in October 2020 and covered the period between 2020 to 2025, it was reviewed in December 2021 and June 2023. It is now necessary to develop a new Housing Strategy that covers the Council for the next five years or until a new strategy is developed following Local Government Reorganisation.

Since the 2020 Housing Strategy was published there has been a considerable amount of energy and commitment invested in implementing the strategy and achieving the objectives in the action plan, that were set at the time, these are referenced in the new strategy.

In developing the new five year strategy we have continued to align the strategy with the Council's Corporate Plan and Place Strategy, as we had following the mid term review in 2023 and in addition recognise the number of significant policy and legislative changes that now need to be factored into our thinking for the next five years.

This strategy sets out a comprehensive approach for the Council to focus on its strategic role to meet a broad range of housing objectives.

Recommendation(s):

The committee is requested to:

- Consider the contents of this report and;
- Provide comments on the New Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To set out the strategic direction for housing in Huntingdonshire for the next five years.
- 1.2 To highlight the housing priorities for the district and how these will be achieved by the Council directly and through working in partnership with others under the Do, Enable, Influence model of action of the Corporate Plan
- 1.3 To set out an action plan for the strategy that recognises the housing priorities.

BACKGROUND

- 1.4 Huntingdonshire last Housing Strategy was adopted in October 2020 for the period 2020-2025, it was reviewed in December 2021 and June 2023.
- 1.5 It is now necessary to deliver a new Housing Strategy for the period 2026-2031 and recognise a number of significant policy and legislative changes that now need to be factored into the Council's thinking over the next five years. This strategy sets out a comprehensive approach on how the Council will focus on its housing objectives as part of its strategic housing role.
- 1.6 The strategy will continue to align with the Corporate Plan and Place Strategy ensuring that actions will follow the Do, Enable, Influence model.
- 1.7 Since the last Housing Strategy was published there has been a considerable amount of energy and commitment invested in implementing the strategy and achieving the objectives in the action plan. These are referenced in the key achievement section of the new strategy on Page 24.
- 1.8 This new strategy includes the outcome of the recent Local Housing Needs Assessment which shows continued high levels of housing demand in Huntingdonshire and the role housing plays in determining good health and quality of life for our residents.
- 1.9 Whilst there is no specific duty for the Council to have an up to date Housing Strategy it is considered good practice. With changes being brought about by Local Government Reorganisation it remains essential for HDC to have an up to date strategy as the reshaping of local government is likely to take several years to fully implement, while housing need across Huntingdonshire continues to evolve; updating the strategy ensures the Council can respond to current challenges , such as housing affordability, homelessness prevention and population growth and the delivery of new homes.

COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 2.1 Any comments from this committee will be included in this section prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 3.1 A Housing Strategy is required to provide the overall framework for housing activity in an area, including development, homelessness, private sector housing, affordable housing etc. Therefore, without one it could lead to different teams working without clear shared direction, different housing policies not aligning and a difficulty in prioritising activities.

LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The completion of a Housing Strategy is an objective of HDC's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 and aligns to the plan under the Priority – “In creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations”, under the outcome of Improving Housing.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Whilst there is no specific statutory duty on Local Authorities to produce a Housing Strategy, most Local Authorities consider it best practice to have one, especially as they must carry out several other statutory duties in relation to Housing, including the maintenance of a Housing Allocation Scheme, reviewing housing conditions, developing a Homelessness Strategy and Tenancy Strategy.
- 5.2 Senior Officers across the Council have reviewed the new housing strategy, including colleagues from Communities and Housing Operations, Planning and Environmental Health.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There will be no additional resource implications, in implementing this Strategy, activities relating directly to HDC will be undertaken by existing teams and partnerships are already established to enable other actions to be developed.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Within the Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy, there is a priority of, “*Reducing poverty through better housing, employment and skills*” This review identifies the links across this strategy and the Housing Strategy.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 In February 2023 the Council formally approved the Council's Climate Strategy this recognises that the current cost of living and climate crises require joint attention to support the wellbeing of residents and businesses. In passing this motion, the council committed to not only the delivery of a Climate Strategy but also that in making decisions it will wherever possible seek to contribute to positive environmental and social benefits. The delivery of good quality, secure accommodation for residents supports this ambition.

EQUALITIES

- 9.1 The Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 9.2 Understanding the need for housing in HDC helps support this duty.

Appendix 1

- Housing Strategy 2026 – 2031

Background Papers

- Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025 - [Housing Strategy 2020 -2025](#)
- Mid Term Review of the Housing Strategy June 2023 - [HOUSING STRATEGY 2020-2025](#)

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