

Report to CABINET

The Housing Strategy

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Hannah Roberts, Cabinet Member-Housing.

Officer Contact: Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive, People and Place.

Report Author: Bryn Cooke, Head of Strategic Housing and Property Partnerships

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Reason for Decision

The previous Housing Strategy (2015- 2018) was approved by Cabinet in April 2015. It was a three year document that reflected the key housing challenges and opportunities facing Oldham at that time. Good practice dictates that housing strategies are reviewed every five years and no longer than every seven years. In addition as a local authority there is a statutory responsibility to periodically review the housing needs of the borough in relation to housing conditions and the needs of the local authority area. This statutory responsibility is usually articulated through the periodic publications of a housing strategy and housing stock condition surveys.

Executive Summary

Oldham has a diverse housing market: stretching out from a town centre surrounded by an inner ring of high density and compact terraced housing neighbourhoods which are increasingly areas of regeneration priority, to outer suburbs, semi- rural parish standalone settlements and dispersed smaller rural settlements within green belt and countryside.

There has been significant changes in our local housing market and our service operating model since our last housing strategy was refreshed. Devolution has occurred, with agreement to meet our housing targets through a Greater Manchester spatial planning process. Alongside this major shift and together with new burdens in national planning methodologies and standards, now dictates the need for a completely new approach to how we meet our statutory planning and housing responsibilities. This new housing strategy will complement our existing homelessness strategy, link to our 30 year housing revenue account business plan and set out the evidence base for the development of our new local plan.

The new housing strategy also responds to the travel of direction towards working in a new integrated health and social care service cluster model being driven by Oldham Cares. The housing strategy therefore picks up in one of its key themes on the key function housing plays in supporting health and social care integration and wider public service reform.

A key objective of the development of the new housing strategy has been to reset the housing delivery governance framework that can start to tackle the challenges identified in the evidence base. Help meet the opportunities to achieve the housing priority themes acknowledged over the

short, medium and long term. The accompanying delivery plan seeks to begin to start to locate housing and place shaping at the heart of Oldham's collective vision for the Borough.

The new housing strategy will

- Enable the Council to determine priorities in each district or local housing market area as defined by the LHNA evidence base;
- Inform bids for both public and private funding to support the development of new homes in Oldham.
- Support the Council and its partners to make more informed People and Place making decisions about the targeting and future integrated commissioning priorities under for example the Integrated Care Organisation (Oldham Cares) and underpin external funding bids to support investment in existing housing services and stock in Oldham.
- Enable the Council to focus and develop new policies and ways of working that better fit the operating environment.
- Inform the Council to progress its energy conservation work, and to satisfy the Council's obligations under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 and subsequent guidance.

Recommendations

To note the adoption of the Housing Strategy by Cabinet on the 24th June 2019.

Adoption of the Housing Strategy

1 Background

- 1.1 The new housing strategy has been developing since January 2018, alongside a Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA), Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and private rented sector study.
- 1.2 This work is now completed and has encompassed a full literature review and has been developed alongside wide ranging political and stakeholder input. A robust evidence base has formed the basis from which the strategies key themes and actions have been developed. For example our LHNA has been fully updated with two primary surveys: a borough wide household survey and insightful housing market survey including interviews with local estate agents and lettings agents. The LHNA will be legally binding in planning policy terms and follows the National Planning Policy Framework guidelines.
- 1.3 The new housing strategy has also been developed in line with the Oldham Plan, the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and the Greater Manchester housing strategy. The Councils leadership have also had an opportunity to discuss and endorse the further development of the key themes emerging in the strategy in January 2019 and the draft strategy was shared with the Overview and Scrutiny board in March 2019. Final internal and stakeholder consultation and input was concluded in March 2019 and public consultation was opened in May 2019 and closed on the 4 June 2019.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 There has been significant changes in our local housing market and our service operating model since our last housing strategy was refreshed. Devolution has occurred, with agreement to meet our housing targets through a Greater Manchester spatial planning process. Alongside this major shift and new burdens in national planning methodologies and standards, now dictate the need for a completely new approach to how we meet our statutory planning and housing responsibilities. This new housing strategy will complement our existing homelessness strategy, link to our 30 year housing revenue account business plan and set out the evidence base for the development of our new local plan.
 - 2.2 The new housing strategy also responds to the travel of direction towards working in a new integrated health and social care service cluster model being driven in part by Oldham Cares. The housing strategy therefore picks up in one of its key themes on the key function housing plays in supporting health and social care integration and wider public service reform.
 - 2.3 Work has been completed through the standard MHCLG methodology to calculate the local housing need figure for Oldham. The Greater Manchester SHMA has also confirmed Oldham as a Housing Market Area (HMA). In addition the completion of a local housing needs assessment (LHNA) has broken down the overall housing needs into the requirements for specific housing and affordability types and groups as per the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
 - 2.4 A key objective of the development of the new housing strategy has therefore been to reset the housing delivery framework that tackle the challenges and help meet the opportunities to achieve the housing priorities identified over the short, medium and long term. It should be viewed as a key strategic document in helping shape future service
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models and the strategy seeks to place housing and place shaping at the heart of Oldham Partnerships collective vision for the Borough.

2.5 The new strategy will support Oldham Plan in the following ways:-

- Inform Oldham's strategic housing priorities with a robust analysis off the Oldham LHNA consistent with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and other good practice; and provides a key piece of evidence to support the preparation and implementation of the Council's Local Plan;
- Created a socio-economic profile of households living in the Borough, including the key relationships between key economic assessments, stock conditions, affordability and housing need for each district;
- Created an evidence base that provides an overview of housing issues within the Borough, in particular those that have synergy with the requirements of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), our developing Thriving Communities Index, and enables the Council to better understand local housing needs and be better enabled to identify the demand for different types of housing and affordability at a more granular level as per the NPPG;
- The Council is now able to determine the need for affordable housing for Oldham and a number of broad local housing market area boundaries defined by affordability and housing characteristics;

2.6 The new housing strategy will

- Enable the Council to determine priorities in each district or local housing market area as defined by the LHNA evidence base;
- Inform bids for both public and private funding to support the development of new homes in Oldham.
- Support the Council and its partners to make more informed People and Place making decisions about the targeting and future integrated commissioning priorities under for example the already Integrated Care Organisation (Oldham Cares) and underpin external funding bids to support investment in existing housing services and stock in Oldham.
- Enable the Council to focus and develop new policies and ways of working that better fit the operating environment.
- Inform the Council to progress its energy conservation work, and to satisfy the Council's obligations under the Home Energy Conservation Act

3 **Consultation**

3.1 Consultation opened up with a postal housing study survey to 15,000 residents of the borough. Workshops and stakeholder events have taken place with the services within the Council, the Director of those services and with external partners and elected members. Public consultation began through a drop in event on the 12 December 2018. The Overview and Scrutiny Board noted the report on the 5 March 2019. The extensive consultation process ended with the draft strategy opened up for public comment for four weeks until this closed on the 4 June 2019.

4. Equality, community cohesion and crime implications

4.1 The new housing Strategy aligns to the Corporate plan in the following ways and the outcomes of the delivery plan are intended to continue to develop more cohesive communities.-

An inclusive Economy –where people and enterprise thrive.

- Attracting investment and encouraging business and enterprise to thrive. Through investment in new homes and attracting investment from developers both public and private.
- Delivering key regeneration projects that are growing our business base, creating jobs and transforming opportunities The residential elements set out in for example the Town Centre master-plans and house building feeds local building suppliers and products.
- Working with Partners to create quality work prospects-and ensuring all residents can access new skills and opportunities and be work-ready. New house building provides a range of apprenticeship and skilled and manual work opportunities

Thriving Communities –where everyone is empowered to do their bit.

- Increasing the sense of involvement and ownership of issues that affect people and they care about. Through the adoption of place plans. The strategy would make public that the Council will consider the potential for a series of Place Plans, drawn up with residents as part of the local planning or neighbourhood planning processes, to support positive resident engagement in building Oldham's future and the Council's goal of a Cooperative Council. These Place Plans might include consideration of (for example):
 1. What functions their locality might fulfil within the borough and Greater Manchester e.g. an economic centre, a place for young professionals to live, a recreational area etc;
 2. Access to transport and active travel routes, schools, retail, business locations, green spaces, leisure facilities, amenities;
 3. The roles of community groups and the voluntary sector might play in contributing to public life working alongside public service providers;
 4. The type and design of homes developed in each place (drawing on the evidence-base);
 5. The spaces between the homes and buildings – making sure there are attractive shared spaces, including green spaces, where residents are inspired to meet and interact.
 - Nurturing and safeguarding strong neighbourhoods that work together to improve their lives and the communities around them. The delivery plan calls upon the development of a Health and Care Action Plan that sets out the full range of actions we will take to ensure that housing-related matters that impact on people's health and wellbeing are being addressed. Through the Action Plan we want to be in a position to develop a Healthy Housing Services in line with the direction of travel with the strategic ambitions of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority:
 1. Support residents through a jointly commissioned 'Care and Repair' offer to carry out necessary works to their homes, ideally when this is prescribed via social prescribing or identified through MECC or another route;
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2. Reduce the likelihood that older residents will fall in their home and develop a 'rapid response' service that responds quickly when they do fall in order to stabilise their condition in their home and avoid a visit to A&E;
 3. Seek out and find 'hidden' residents, who may not be visited by a frontline worker, but who may be in need of medical attention and/or have other needs;
 4. Support positive relationships between tenants and private landlords to support successful tenancies and prevent illegal and 'no fault' evictions;
 5. Minimise the negative effects for households living in temporary accommodation;
 6. Ensure that people being discharged from hospital will go back to a home that is 'fit for discharge' either on their day of discharge or soon after so that it will not impede their recovery;
 7. Routinely record details of people's living circumstances and home condition whenever a health, care or housing staff member makes a visit, in order to build a database of where the problems might lie.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

5.1 Yes, Appendix 5 and Appendix 6.

6 **Background Papers**

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny Report- 5 March 2019

7 **Appendices**

7.1 Appendix 1- Housing Strategy 2019

Appendix 2- The Local Housing Needs Assessment

Appendix 3- Private Rented Sector Report
