

SUBJECT:	<i>Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council Joint Housing Strategy 2018 - 2021</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>Cabinet Portfolio: Healthy Communities</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Head of Healthy Communities – Martin Holt</i>
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WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>All</i>

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks authority to publish and implement the finalised version of the Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council Joint Housing Strategy (Affordable Housing and Homelessness) 2018-2021 following consideration by the Services Overview Committee and Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

- 1. That Full Council approve the final Joint Housing Strategy (Affordable Housing and Homelessness) 2018-2021 document.**
- 2. That the Head of Healthy Communities be authorised to make any final amendments to the document agreed by members and to publish it in consultation with the Healthy Communities Portfolio Holder.**

2. Reasons for Recommendations

The current Housing and Homelessness Strategies for Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council need to be reviewed and updated in view of the current housing situation across the two districts and new statutory requirements that have come into force.

3. Content of Report

3.1 The Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council Joint Housing Strategy (Affordable Housing and Homelessness) 2018-2021 provides an overview of the work and duties of both authorities in:

- responding to affordable housing need and
- meeting statutory homelessness duties.

The strategy will sit alongside the Joint Private Sector Housing Strategy that was formally adopted in 2017.

3.2 The draft Joint Housing Strategy was first reported to Members last year. The Councils did not proceed to full consultation at that time because the Homelessness Reduction Bill was published soon after and local authorities were advised that they may be subject to new

requirements relating to Homelessness Strategies. A new Code of Guidance on Homelessness was subsequently issued in February 2018 and the Homelessness Reduction Act came into force from April 2018.

- 3.3 The draft Joint Housing Strategy was revised and updated to reflect the new Homelessness Code of Guidance and Act and other updated information. The revised version was approved for consultation by the Healthy Communities Portfolio Holders and further amendments have been made following consultation (see Section 4 below). The draft strategy has also been updated to reflect the recent developments at national Policy level including the newly revised National Planning Policy Framework, Rough Sleeper Strategy and Housing Green Paper (A new deal for social housing).
- 3.4 The final version of the draft Joint Housing Strategy is in Appendix 1. Following the consultation and final amendments, it is now proposed that the Joint Housing Strategy is published and implemented.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 A 6 week consultation period on the draft strategy ran from 26th June 2018 to 6th August 2018 via the Council websites. All Members were directly notified of the consultation by e-mail (dated 26th June 2018). Direct notifications were also sent to all Town and Parish Councils and key external partner agencies inviting them to submit comments.
- 4.2 There were 8 responses to the consultation. The draft strategy has been amended to reflect the consultation feedback. The main amendments are:
- Update of the position regarding the emerging Joint Local Plan
 - Inclusion of references to Neighbourhood Plans in connection with working with Town and Parish Council
 - Increased emphasis on working jointly with Registered Providers on matters such as homelessness prevention, supporting downsizing etc.
 - Reference to making representations to Government as and when appropriate on the resources that are required to meet national expectations and regulatory requirements.
 - Update and expansion of the statistics in Appendix A.

5. Options (if any)

- 5.1 The Council has a specific statutory duty to publish a Homelessness Strategy. Therefore, if the Council does not proceed with preparing and authorising this Joint Housing Strategy document then it will still have to draft a Homelessness Strategy.
- 5.2 The Council could choose instead to continue to operate its own separate Housing strategy and policies. However, operationally, Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council are facing many of the same housing issues and there are efficiencies in the authorities taking a joint approach to addressing these issues. If the Council was to continue to operate a separate strategy, this would be out of step with the single shared housing service and other strategy documents which have been published including the Joint Private Sector Housing Strategy.

6. Corporate Implications

- 6.1 **Financial** – The Strategy highlights the potential resources available to support service delivery, but it does not propose any formal funding allocations or additional spending. Individual schemes or funding proposals to meet strategic objectives will be brought forward for consideration on a scheme by scheme basis.
- 6.2 **Legal** – The Council has a range of statutory housing responsibilities and legal duties and this strategy provides a clear framework for the activities required to meet these duties and responsibilities.

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

This report relates to the following Aims and Objectives:

- Working towards safe and healthier local communities
- Striving to conserve the environment and promote sustainability

8. Next Step

Following approval by Full Council the finalised Joint Housing Strategy will be published and implemented.

Background Papers:	None other than the legislation, policies and guidance referred to in the report
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