

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

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| REPORT: | COUNCIL |
| DATE OF DECISION | 13th December 2023 |
| REPORT TITLE: | Housing Strategy 2023/28 |
| CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR: | Susmita Sen, Corporate Director for Housing |
| LEAD OFFICER: | Simon James, Change Manager (Housing) Email: simon.james@croydon.gov.uk |
| LEAD MEMBER: | Councillor Lynne Hale, Cabinet Member for Homes and Deputy Mayor |
| CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION? | No Public |
| WARDS AFFECTED: | All |

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the Council’s Housing Strategy 2023-28 and its accompanying delivery plan.
- 1.2 The Executive Mayor is scheduled to consider the recommendations at the Cabinet on the 6th December 2023. If agreed, they require consideration and approval by full Council. This report and appendices summarise those decisions.
- 1.3 If the proposals are not agreed or the proposals amended at the 6th Dec 2023 Cabinet meeting, an update on the proposed recommendations will be given at this Council meeting or supplementary paper issued in advance of the 13th December 2023 meeting.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For the reasons set out in this report, and the report to and the decision of the Executive Mayor in Cabinet (to be taken) on the 6th December 2023, Council is asked to agree the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 as detailed in Appendix 1.A.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Housing strategy sets out the long-term objectives of Croydon Council in relation to how we aim to improve all housing related services including the management of our stock, homelessness and rough sleeping and the supply of affordable accommodation.
- 3.2 Together with the Housing Transformation programme agreed at Cabinet in December 2022 it sets out a pathway as to how the Council will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and improve services provided to Croydon residents.
- 3.3 The Housing Strategy 'sits above' and presents an overview of the following associated strategies, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, Asset Management and Resident Engagement.
- 3.4 Following the contraventions in the Regulator of Social Housing Standards and the importance of improving services to residents that this has identified, the production of a Housing Strategy setting out how the Council will improve all housing related services, is of paramount concern to all Members.
- 3.5 Equally, the role of the Improvement and Assurance Panel in identifying housing as a key concern, makes it appropriate that this matter is referred to full Council for consideration.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 A Cabinet report on the Housing Strategy is going for consideration and agreement at the 6th December Cabinet, and if agreed, the recommendations are being presented at the 13th December Council meeting for consideration and agreement.
- 4.2 The full background and details are detailed in the report at Appendix 1.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 As detailed in the attached (Appendix 1.B Consultation Responses Report).

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HOMES AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 6.1 The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that Housing Strategy includes details of how the Council will improve the availability of priority housing for domestic abuse victims and residents from other vulnerable backgrounds. Staff should be trained to detect and tackle abuse-related issues.
- 6.2 The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the following areas should be explored for inclusion in the Housing Strategy and accompanying delivery plan: (i) a simplified downsizing process; (ii) how to utilise underused garages; (iii) green energy grants;

(iv) tackling licencing problems with houses in multiple occupations; (v) overcrowding; (vi) cooperation with Education division to ensure that children placed in temporary accommodations are not excluded from education.

- 6.3. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Housing Strategy should include more detail on the following areas: (i) energy efficiency; (ii) actions to tackle antisocial behaviour.
- 6.4. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that, given the shortage of available housing in the borough, the Housing Strategy needs to provide strategic direction on how the supply of available housing in the Borough will be increased, and supported by a delivery plan providing tangible outcomes.
- 6.5. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the Residents' Complaint Process is reviewed to ensure it provides efficient resolutions to resident complaints.
- 6.6. The Homes Sub-Committee recommends that the delivery plan being developed to accompany the Housing Strategy must include clear timelines for delivery and SMART objectives, outline any interdependencies and indicate the key risks to deliver and how they will be mitigated.
- 6.7 The recommendations have been incorporated into the Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR BUSINESS PLAN

The development and implementation of the Housing Strategy 2023- 2028 is key to ensuring the Council delivers against the following priorities within the Mayor's Business Plan 2022- 2026:

- Get a grip on the finances and make the Council financially sustainable.
- Become a council which listens to, respects, and works in partnership with Croydon's diverse communities.
- Strengthen collaboration and joint working with partner organisations and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.
- Develop our workforce to deliver in a manner that respects the diversity of our communities.
- Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.
- Invest in council homes to drive up standards and develop a more responsive and effective housing service.
- Work with partners and the VCFS to promote independence, health and wellbeing and keep vulnerable adults safe

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Members are referred to the Finance Implications in the original Cabinet report, Appendix 1.

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Members are referred to the Legal Implications in the original Cabinet report, Appendix 1.

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Members are referred to the Equalities Implications as detailed in the original Cabinet report, at Appendix 1.

8.4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Members are referred to Implications on Crime and Disorder, Environment and Risk Management as detailed in the original Cabinet Report at Appendix 1

9 APPENDICES

9.1 *Appendix 1.* - Housing Strategy Cabinet report

9.2 *Appendix 1.A-* Housing Strategy

9.3 *Appendix 1.B-* Consultation Report

9.4 *Appendix 1.C-* Equalities Report

9.5 *Appendix 1.D-* Housing Delivery Plan