



Report Reference Number: PR/20/11

To: Policy Review
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Lead Executive Member: Cllr Chris Pearson, Lead Member for Housing Health and Culture
Lead Officer: June Rothwell, Head of Operational Services

Title: Draft Development Strategy for Affordable Housing

Summary:

This report introduces the new draft development strategy for affordable housing.

Recommendation:

To consider and note the contents of the report and the draft policy and to provide any comments.

Reasons for recommendation:

We are inviting the Policy Review Committee to provide their comments on the early draft to help shape a draft that we can take for Executive Approval before formal consultation.

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The proposed strategy sets out the Council's plans for how our commitment to build new Council homes and the support to delivery by Selby and District Housing Trust (SDHT). It aims to strengthen and build on the aims for Selby District Council to increase its supply of affordable housing stock through direct development as set out in the original Affordable Development Strategy in 2013.
- 1.2 As a stock-retaining Local Authority, Selby District Council owns 3000 homes and we take pride in our strong landlord management service. This strategy aims to strengthen that service by increasing the number of homes.
- 1.3 The new Affordable Development Strategy links to a number of other strategies and associated policies and procedures including the Housing

Revenue Account Business Plan and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Housing Strategy.

1.4 In February 2019 the Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment (SHMA) highlighted the requirement for more affordable housing in the Selby district and calculated the net need for affordable housing, including social rented housing, intermediate rented housing and low-cost home ownership housing products, was 134 units per annum.

1.5 There was also an identified lack of supported housing in the district.

2. Draft Affordable Housing Development Strategy

2.1 The proposed objectives of the new strategy include:

- Take a planned approach to development which provides value for money while maximising supply.
- Improve our property standards even further by increasing our investment programme. This will see us go beyond national standards and deliver real value for money for our tenants.
- Increase the supply of social and affordable homes in the district via direct development. Modelling in the HRA business plan would see the Council, in partnership with the Housing Trust, build almost 600 new properties over the next 30 years.
- Commit to the Government's 'one-for-one' replacement policy, which on average would see the Council build or acquire 20 new properties a year, replacing at the current rate we lose stock through the right to buy.

2.2 In meeting the objectives there is also a commitment to:

- Develop homes which meet the needs of households.
- Where garages and parking bays are to be removed, we will talk to those affected and where possible offer an alternative vacant garage nearby.
- Where it may become necessary to decant or relocate households, they will be given priority to move, either permanently or temporarily, to suitable housing in an area of their choice. In many cases where practical, they will be offered the opportunity of returning to one of the new properties. In most cases tenants who move as part of a new development, will be entitled to compensation.
- Have regard to the "Older Person's Housing and Accommodation" and commit to increase the supply of economically viable and requirements for specialist housing options, as outlined in the SHMA and the HRA Business Plan.

- Recognise fuel poverty and rising energy prices affect the affordability of running a household. New homes will be built to the highest affordable energy efficient standards to mitigate the likely rises in energy prices over the lifetime of new homes.
- Sensitivity to local context as Selby District is varied in its character, so new homes should embody a sense of place which is derived from local context and in terms of layout, scale, form, and materials.
- New developments will be designed to create safe, attractive, accessible environments and where appropriate they should look for opportunities to enhance the public realm.
- Develop a standard post-occupancy satisfaction survey and benchmark this data appropriately as residents of the new homes will have the opportunity to provide feedback after living in homes for 9-12 months to enable the Council to consider any improvements necessary and include them in subsequent projects.
- Work in partnership with a consultative forum of tenants and leaseholders to set standards.

2.3 The core funding to support this new build strategy will come from the HRA Business Plan which outlines a total of £10 million overall for new development over the period of this strategy.

2.4 The Council's existing housing development and acquisitions programme is set out in the Council's capital programme which was approved in February 2019. Each scheme would be properly assessed for viability and its contribution to the business. This provides a value for money assessment in some instances which are greater than pure return on investment.

2.5 The Council will maximise opportunities to make use of land which is already held for housing purposes. To allow the Council to meet its targets for delivery, it will also be important to explore the potential of acquiring other land.

2.6 The Council has established links with Registered Providers which make a significant contribution to housing supply in the District. The draft strategy proposes that this continues, and the Council intends to work alongside our partners and envisages a complimentary approach to the delivery of affordable homes

2.7 The proposed strategy includes an Action Plan which includes 16 specific actions:

1. Build the capability within the Housing Development Team to deliver a successful development and enabling programme.

2. Develop and publish a 3-year rolling development programme with an objective of achieving 20+ units p.a.
3. Review corporately all Council land ownership to identify potential housing development sites for new Council housing.
4. Consider all developments with S106 new builds to consider viability.
5. Potential development sites across the district to be reviewed and negotiations to be carried out following necessary approvals.
6. Establish effective working relationships with a range of development partners.
7. Establish the means to monitor and assess existing Council assets and potential acquisition opportunities for redevelopment.
8. Improve the efficiency of the housing stock. Reduce the level of under-occupation, helping to alleviate the housing burden on the Council.
9. Establish the relationship between the Council and the S&DHT and how decisions will be made as to which vehicle is the most suitable company to deliver affordable housing to rent.
10. Deliver a range of accommodation to help our partners meet their statutory responsibilities and reduce the burden on the public purse. This would include a proactive Right to Buy buy-back where appropriate former council housing comes on the market.
11. Increase the number of units affected or created by the redevelopment programme to >20 per annum by 2021.
12. To develop a scheme viability assessment process to be applied to all proposed new developments in the district.
13. Review of 5-year development pipeline to be considered in relation to budgeted finances within HRA Business Plan and to inform the next business plan review.
14. Introduce a 12-month follow-up survey on all new developments and redevelopments to identify issues and learning to inform future developments.
15. Produce a Policy to support this Action Plan.
16. Produce a Procedures Guide to support the strategy.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 We are inviting early comments from the Policy Review Committee and from the Housing Development Board. These comments will be considered and a final draft, once finalised will be taken to the Executive Committee for approval prior to the formal consultation.

4. Implications

4.1 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

4.2 Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

5. Conclusion

We invite comments on the draft strategy. Any comments will be considered prior to finalising the draft and Policy review will be invited to comment on the final draft following Executive approval.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Affordable Housing Development Strategy

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