

Housing Committee

10 October 2018



Title **Housing Strategy 2019-2024**

Report of [Cllr Gabriel Rozenberg](#)

Wards [All](#)

Status [Public](#)

Urgent [No](#)

Key [Yes](#)

Enclosures [Appendix 1 – Draft Housing Strategy](#)

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Summary

The council has developed a new draft Housing Strategy to take account of major changes in the housing sector and wider demographic and economic changes, including rising housing costs, a shift in tenure from owner occupation to private renting, the impact of the Grenfell Tower fire disaster and legislative changes.

If approved by the Housing Committee, the council will undertake a public consultation on the aims of the draft strategy with key stakeholders including housing associations, developers, tenants and residents. Housing Committee will then be asked to review the responses to the consultation and approve a final version of the Housing Strategy.

Officers' Recommendations

1. That the Housing Committee consider and, subject to any changes, approve the proposed draft Housing Strategy for consultation.

2. That the results of the consultation be reported back to Housing Committee on 1 April 2019 together with officer recommendations and a revised Strategy, if appropriate.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The council's Housing Strategy dates from 2015, and a number of changes have occurred since then which mean that the council's approach to housing needs to be reviewed and updated. These changes include:
- changes in Government Policy,
 - a new London Mayor with a new London Housing Strategy,
 - new legislation including the Housing and Planning Act 2016, and
 - the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, and
 - the updated Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities.
- 1.2 The council's Homelessness Strategy also requires an update to take account of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017). Barnet's Homelessness Strategy is currently a component of the Housing Strategy but it is proposed the two are separated to reflect the increased focus on tackling homelessness.
- 1.3 Officers have updated the evidence base that supports the Housing Strategy. A new Strategic Housing Market Assessment has been commissioned, setting out the level of demand for housing in the borough.
- 1.4 Since 2015, other significant events have impacted on Housing at a national level, including the EU referendum and the Grenfell Tower fire disaster.
- 1.5 Additionally, the council is in the process of updating the Local Plan, and the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee is preparing a Regeneration Strategy.
- 1.6 The Housing Committee considered the above matters in June 2018, and instructed council officers to prepare a new draft Housing Strategy based on the following themes:
- **Raising standards in the private rented sector.**
 - **Delivering more homes that people can afford.**
 - **Safe and secure homes.**
 - **Promoting independence.**
- 1.7 Officers have now produced a new draft Housing Strategy for the consideration of the Housing Committee which is attached at Appendix 1.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Housing Committee consider the draft Housing Strategy and, subject to any changes, approve it for a public consultation to take place, and that following this, a further draft be brought back to the Housing Committee to be considered for adoption at its meeting on 1 April 2019.

- 2.2 A period of public consultation will ensure that Barnet residents, the council's partners and other stakeholders have an opportunity to comment on the Housing Strategy before it is finalised.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The Housing Committee has already instructed officers to draft a new Housing Strategy, at the meeting in June 2018, so alternative options have not been considered further. Not preparing a new Housing Strategy was not recommended for the reason that the current strategy would not be reflective of changes that have occurred since 2015.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following on from approval from Housing Committee a consultation exercise is planned to take place from November 2018 to February 2019.
- 4.2 Housing Committee will be asked to consider and approve a final version of the strategy in April 2019 which will have considered the outcome of the consultation exercise.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Housing Strategy contributes to the council's Corporate plan purpose as follows:

Successful Places	Meeting the housing needs of the borough is key to ensuring Barnet remains a successful place
Great Outcomes	Housing is important to helping residents achieve great outcomes
Quality Services	Housing services provided by Barnet Homes, Re and Housing Associations
Resilient Communities	Access to housing and reducing homelessness is key to building resilient communities

- 5.1.2 The Housing Strategy contributes to key priorities identified in the council's Corporate plan priorities including ***Increasing the housing supply, including Colindale*** and ***Building compliance and fire safety***.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 The Housing Strategy includes proposals to consider the case for selective licensing of private rented accommodation in some parts of the borough, and additional resources for licencing and private sector enforcement activity. It is anticipated that such proposals, if considered appropriate, will come to committee in 2019 before the Housing Strategy is finalised, and it is the intention that these proposals will be funded through additional licence fees secured and income received as a result of enforcement action, for example fixed penalty notices.

5.2.2 Other activities and proposals in the Housing Strategy are planned to be funded through existing council budgets and plans.

5.3 **Social Value**

5.3.1 Not applicable

5.4 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 The Deregulation Act 2015 removed the power (in section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003) on the Secretary of State to require local housing authorities in England to produce a housing strategy. This does not prevent an authority from having such a strategy.

5.4.2 Section 333D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires that any local housing strategy prepared by a local housing authority in Greater London must be in general conformity with the London Housing Strategy (the Mayor's strategy).

5.4.3

The council's Constitution, Article 7.5 - Responsibility for Functions, states that the Housing Committee is responsible '*for housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, commissioning of environmental health functions for private sector housing*'.

5.5 **Risk Management**

5.5.1 There is a risk that the housing requirements of the Borough are not met if the Housing Strategy is not updated.

5.6 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the Public-Sector Equality Duty which requires a public authority (or those exercising public functions) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

5.6.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies

and the delivery of services. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

5.6.3 The Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 sets the Strategic Equalities Objective, which is: that citizens will be treated equally, with understanding and respect, and will have equal access to quality services which provide value to the tax payer.

5.6.4 Changes to policies and services are analysed in order to assess the potential equalities impacts and risks and identify any mitigating action possible, through an equalities impact assessment, before final decisions are made. Consideration will also be made to the equalities and data cohesion summary.

5.6.5 A full equalities impact assessment of the draft Housing Strategy will be carried out after consultation and prior to reporting back to the Housing Committee on 1 April 2019.

5.7 **Corporate Parenting**

5.7.1 Promoting independence is proposed to be a central theme of the Housing Strategy. This includes ensuring that care leavers make a successful transition to independent living.

5.8 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.8.1 Initial consultation has been undertaken with some of the council's stakeholders, including the Children and Young Person's Partnership Board, the Performance Advisory Group comprising tenant and leaseholder representatives and the Barnet Housing Association Liaison Group.

5.8.2 Subject to approval by the Housing Committee, a wider public consultation will take place during November 2018 to February 2019. This will include an online survey and inviting comments from partner organisations and other stakeholders.

5.8.3 It is intended that a report on more detailed proposals relating to private sector enforcement and regulation will come to Housing Committee in January 2019, and that in respect of any proposal for an area to have selective licensing, this will be subject to its own consultation

5.9 **Insight**

5.9.1 The Housing Strategy was informed by an evidence base. A summary of the Housing Strategy evidence base was reported to the Housing Committee in June 2018.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 Housing Committee 21 June 2018 – Item 7 Housing Strategy -
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9486&Ver=4>
- 6.2 Housing Strategy (2015)
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24071/Housing%20Strategt.pdf>

