

This report is public	
New Cherwell District Council Housing Strategy 2025-2030	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	3 February 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Housing – Councillor Nick Cotter
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	14 January 2025
Report of	Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing – Nicola Riley

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the new Cherwell District Council Housing Strategy 2025-2030.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To approve the Cherwell District Council Housing Strategy 2025-2030.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy outlines the approach that Cherwell plans to take to meet its housing objectives and challenges over the coming 5 years and sets objectives, targets and policies for how the authority intends to manage and deliver its strategic housing role.
- 2.2 The new strategy reflects local and national context in developing its priorities and objectives.
- 2.3 The new strategy, in draft form underwent public and stakeholder consultation in October and November 2024. It also was presented at the October Overview and Scrutiny meeting. A summary of the comments from the consultation and Overview and Scrutiny are presented within the appendix of the report.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	There are no new financial implications outlined in the report as the existing arrangement is captured in the base revenue budget.

<p>Legal</p>	<p>Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 6 January 2025</p> <p>There is no specific statutory duty for the Council to produce a Housing Strategy. Section 87(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 previously granted the Secretary of State the power to require local authorities to have a housing strategy and to specify what the contents of this should be. This power was never exercised by the Secretary of State in relation to England. Consequently, section 29 of the Deregulation Act 2015 removed this power for all English Authorities meaning that this provision only now applies to Welsh Authorities.</p> <p>Under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 every local housing authority is required to consider and review on a periodic basis the housing conditions in their area along with the housing needs of the area with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation. This means that local authorities are under a duty to assess the housing needs of their population and plan strategically to meet that need. Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004 imposes a further duty on all local housing authorities to keep housing conditions in their area under review. The production of a Housing Strategy provides a mechanism through which the Council can satisfy these statutory requirements.</p> <p>Although the statutory provisions under section 87(1) of the Local Government 2003 no longer apply in England the Explanatory Notes to section 87 of Local Government Act 2003 (detailed at paragraph 215) provide a useful description of what a housing strategy is: <i>'A local housing strategy is the local housing authority's vision for housing in its area. It sets out objectives and targets and policies on how the authority intends to manage and deliver its strategic housing role and provides an overarching framework against which the authority considers and formulates other policies on more specific housing issues.'</i></p> <p>Despite there being no specific statutory requirement to produce a Housing Strategy it is considered best practice for a local authority to set out its future strategic plan for housing in a Housing Strategy and for that strategy to be developed by evidence and consultation.</p> <p>Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer/ AD Law & Governance, 6 January 2025</p>
<p>Risk Management</p>	<p>As it is part of our housing duties, we should review current policy to ensure it is compliant with legislation, is fair and inclusive and is meeting the needs of the district.</p> <p>Therefore, a regular review of this policy is prudent as part of mitigating actions of non-compliance. This and any further risks will be managed through the Service Operational Risk and will be escalated to the Leadership Risk Register as and when deemed necessary.</p>

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 6 January 2025				
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact	x			An Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment is included as an Appendices of the report. This review has been developed in line with the principles of our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion framework. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 29 July 2024.
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	x			
Climate & Environmental Impact	x			The Housing Strategy supports existing or proposed activities to improve the quality of new housing. It also includes activities that will have a positive impact on the Council reducing the climate and environmental impact of housing activities that relate to existing property.
ICT & Digital Impact		x		Not applicable
Data Impact		x		Not applicable
Procurement & subsidy		x		Not applicable
Council Priorities	Housing that meets your needs			
Human Resources	Not applicable			
Property	Not applicable			
Consultation & Engagement	The Housing Strategy underwent public and stakeholder engagement, as outlined in the Executive Summary.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council develops and delivers a Housing Strategy as part of its role as the local housing authority. The last strategy span was from 2019 to 2024. Therefore, a review and development of a new strategy is required to reflect changing national and local context over recent years and develop new priorities and objectives to deliver.
- 3.2 The September Executive approved for the Housing Strategy to proceed to consultation, as is required for a document of this type. As outlined in the Executive Summary, this took place and the results are outlined within the Appendix.

4. Details

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy provides a strategic overview of local housing issues and set out what both the Council and our partners will need to do, or consider, to address them. It will help shape the housing services and policies, from our role in providing services to vulnerable people, to how we ensure appropriate management of housing within the district and taking into account our role as the local planning authority.
- 4.2 The strategy has 3 main priorities for delivery and on which actions are based. These 3 priorities are
- Prioritise the delivery of homes that people can afford and that are suitable for the needs of the community.
 - Improving the existing condition of properties within Cherwell. Ensuring high property standards and properties that are fit for the future, working towards net zero.
 - Promoting health and wellbeing through housing, tackling homelessness, improving support. Helping to create sustainable communities.
- 4.3 The priorities have been produced following a review of the housing pressures and challenges nationally and locally. These include, affordability of housing, supply of affordable and social housing, increasing homelessness rates and the discrepancy locally between earnings and housing costs.
- 4.4 The consultation that took place concentrated on the 3 key themes and their alignment to achieving the objectives of the strategy. The consultation also gave opportunities for comments and suggestions from those participating. The results of the consultation are within Appendix 3.
- 4.5 Following the consultation, an Action Plan has been developed, that is now attached to the strategy document.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not bring forward a new Housing Strategy. This is rejected as it is a best practice that the Council produces and reviews its housing strategy.

6. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 It is important that the Council has up to date policies for its key service areas and it is important that they are legislatively and operationally sound. A periodic review of policies is therefore appropriate.

Decision Information

Key Decision	Yes, community threshold met
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Cherwell District Council Housing Strategy 2025-30
Appendix 2	Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment
Appendix 3	Consultation Outcomes
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
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Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Ian Boll, Corporate Director – Communities, 6 January 2025.