

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing

Empty Homes Strategy 2025-20301. Purpose of Report

To update the Empty Homes Strategy in accordance with the Council's corporate priority - Housing – a good quality home for everyone.

2. Recommendation

Policy Overview Working Group is asked to RECOMMEND Cabinet to RESOLVE that the updated Empty Homes Strategy be approved.

3. Detail

The Council recognises the importance of bringing long term empty homes back into use and the attached document sets out the practical way the Council intends to do this, set in the strategic context. The Strategy aims to build on the work done and progress made as a result of the implementation of the Empty Homes Strategy 2020. The Strategy is contained in **Appendix 1** and the change table is attached in **Appendix 2** to highlight the key changes within the Strategy.

4. Key Decision

This report is a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as it affects all wards in the Council's area.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Policy Overview Working Group will make a recommendation on this policy.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Assistant Director Finance Services were as follows:

There are no additional financial implications for the Council to consider at this stage. Whilst any prioritisation work would be within existing budgets, some of the options available, such as an empty dwelling management order or a compulsory purchase, would have additional resource implications. Any significant budget implications in the future, over and above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Whilst there is no requirement to hold an Empty Homes Strategy, the Council does retain strategic housing responsibilities and this document helps towards continued delivery of its statutory duties. The Council's powers and duties in relation to enforcement are contained within various statutes including the Housing Act 1985, the Housing Act 2004, the Law of Property Act 1925 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. In cases where enforcement action is required, advice and input from Legal Services is always sought.

8. Human Resources Implications

There were no comments from the Human Resources Manager.

9. Union Comments

There were no Union comments.

10. Climate Change Implications

The climate change implications are contained within the report.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

No equality impact assessment is required as this is a refresh of an existing policy with no significant changes in the approach taken.

13. Background Papers

Nil.