



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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| Report for: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Title of report: | Tenancy Strategy |
| Date: | 21.05.2024 |
| Report on behalf of: | Councillor Simy Dhyani, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property Services. |
| Part: | I |
| If Part II, reason: | N/A |
| Appendices: | Tenancy Strategy 2024 – 2028- Appendix 1 Community Impact Assessment- Appendix 2 Previous version of Tenancy Strategy- Appendix 3 |
| Background papers: | |
| Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report: | |

Report Author / Responsible Officer

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| Corporate Priorities | Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery |
| Wards affected | All Wards |

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| Purpose of the report: | 1. To present to Overview and Scrutiny the new draft Tenancy Strategy |
| Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s): | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve strategy progression to enable the document to be published. 2. Provide feedback on the draft strategy, if required. |
| Period for post policy/project review: | Strategy will be in place for 4 years. |

1 Introduction/Background:

The council's Tenancy Strategy needs to be reviewed to ensure it is compliant and aligns with other key housing policies. In addition it needs to align with the regulators consumer standards.

Local authorities are required to have a Tenancy Strategy.

This report sets out the key areas, includes details of tenant engagement and recommends next steps.

2 Key Issues/proposals/main body of the report:

The Localism Act 2011 played a pivotal role in granting Councils the authority to shape the provision and management of social housing within their respective localities. This legislation eliminated the obligation for Registered Providers (RPs) and Councils to offer the most secure tenancy available, instead introducing a new form of tenancy known as a fixed-term tenancy for Councils. The underlying objective was to enable social housing landlords to assess a tenant's circumstances upon the conclusion of a tenancy, and if improved, to facilitate the household's transition to alternative tenures such as the private rented sector (PRS) or affordable home ownership.

Nevertheless, the responsibility to formulate a tenancy strategy for social housing providers, which articulates local housing requirements and delineates how social housing should be allocated in alignment with the Council's vision for its residents, persisted with the responsible Council.

A tenancy strategy must guide and influence local registered providers for framing their own policies and procedures. In particular:

- What type of tenancies will be granted.
- Under what circumstances in which different tenancies will be applied.
- Will the local authority (LA) be offered secure or flexible tenancies.

In addition, the Tenancy Strategy can:

- Help LAs to assess the housing needs of their area and allocate resources effectively.
- Offers security of tenure to applicants, by offering lifetime tenancies.
- Present an overview of national and local housing considerations.
- Housing plays a crucial role in promoting social inclusion and community cohesion, a strategy can outline initiatives to support vulnerable groups such as providing accessible housing for people with disabilities.
- Helps LAs to effectively manage and make best use of their stock.

- Meet legal requirements by ensuring compliance with housing legislation and regulatory frameworks.

Therefore, the development of a robust tenancy strategy is crucial to address these issues and maximise the value derived from our property assets.

The tenancy strategy is underpinned by the Housing Allocations and Tenancy Management policies as well as the Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategies.

A draft 2024-26 strategy is appended to this report for consideration.

The new version of the strategy has been created with the Council's new vision for strategy and policy documents, incorporating a more detailed approach compared to previous versions.

3 Options and alternatives considered

N/A- Tenancy Strategy is a statutory document that is required for publishing by all Local Authorities.

4 Consultation

Consultation has been completed with the following groups:

Housing Senior Leadership Team- March 2024.

Tenants and Leaseholder Committee- March 2024.

Senior Leadership Team- April 2024.

Portfolio holder group- April 2024

Registered Providers- May 2024.

Onward committee approvals June 2024.

5 Financial and value for money implications:

N/A

6 Legal Implications

As per below in 'risk implications'

7 Risk implications:

The implementation of the proposed tenancy strategy may be associated with certain risks, including:

Legal Risks: Failure to comply with relevant tenancy laws and regulations could result in legal disputes and financial penalties.

Stakeholder Resistance: Resistance from internal stakeholders or tenants to changes introduced by the strategy could impede its successful implementation.

8 Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:

Community Impact Assessment carried out for the Tenancy Strategy, the analysis of the impact to the community has concluded that the strategy will have a positive and neutral impact to the community. No negative impacted predicted.

The strategy outlines an approach of local and national housing considerations, giving an overview of the tenancies that will be offered and the support provided if required. These decisions are not based on the characteristics of each household but their housing situation.

The strategy does not discriminate against protected characteristic groups and falls in line with the Council's equality policy.

Human Rights –there are no Human Rights Implications arising from this report.

9 Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and wellbeing, community safety)

N/A

10 Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)

N/A

11 Conclusions:

The recommended strategy enclosed in this report focuses on a balanced approach of how the Council will adapt its approach to administering tenancies. Current and long term approach is offering tenants lifetime tenancies, allowing safety and security of tenure rather than taking the approach of offering flexible tenancies. The strategy gives an overview of national and local housing pressures, further details on how the Council administers this strategy and tackles these challenges are linked within this strategy, including the Allocations Policy, Tenancy Management Policy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy.

The strategy aligns with our corporate priorities by ensuring access to quality housing for all eligible residents, strengthens communities and helps reduce homelessness within the borough.