

**Agenda Item No:**



Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Annual Report of the Housing Statement 2018**

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**The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked:**

1. Approve the Housing Statement Annual Report 2018 for publication on the Ashford Borough Council website
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**Date of O&S meeting:** 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**Chair of O&S Committee:** Cllr Brendan Chiltern

**Relevant Portfolio(s):** Cllr Gerald White, Portfolio Holder for Housing

**Summary:** This report summarises the development of the Housing Statement 2018 – 2023 and the consultation carried out prior to its publication in September 2018. The report also includes the Housing Statement Annual report 2018 at appendix 1.

**Exempt from Publication:** **NO** (delete as appropriate)

**Background Papers:** None

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## **Report Title: Annual Report of the Housing Statement 2018**

### **Introduction and Background**

1. The Housing Statement 2018 – 2023 sets out that a report on how the three overarching priorities are being met will be presented annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report will also note progress on developing each of the specialist strategies/plans that sit beneath the Housing Statement.
2. The Housing Statement was published in September 2018. Therefore this year the Annual Report will focus on the development of the Housing Statement further to setting out the proposed new approach in the Annual Report of the Housing Framework 2017. An update on the current status of each of the specific sub strategies/plans that sit beneath the Housing Statement is also included in the Annual Report. The Annual Report 2018 is attached at Appendix 1.
3. Subsequent Annual Reports will detail progress on meeting the three overarching priorities.

### **Housing Statement 2018 – 2023**

4. The proposed approach from 2018, was to set out overarching priorities in a Housing Statement. Beneath this will be developed, renewed or refreshed a series of specific strategies taking a more in-depth appraisal of challenges and opportunities together with a detailed action plan. The Housing Statement 2018 - 2023 is available at <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/housing/i-want-a-home/our-strategic-approach-to-housing/>
5. The three overarching priorities are:
  1. Increasing the supply of homes that residents can afford and will help meet local housing need
  2. To ensure housing enables independent living and promotes good health and wellbeing
  3. Support housing initiatives that stimulate prosperity, employment opportunities and economic activity

### **Consultation**

6. The Consultation process is summarised below. A report of the consultation is available at <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/housing/i-want-a-home/our-strategic-approach-to-housing/>
7. January 2018 – A draft Housing Statement was circulated to all elected members seeking their views on the proposed approach. One positive response was received.
8. May 2018 – A report to Cabinet requested approval to consult with key partners and stakeholders on the draft Housing Statement
9. Consultation carried out for six weeks from 18<sup>th</sup> June to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018. Eight responses received.
10. Amendments to draft Housing Statement were approved by Portfolio Holder and Head of Housing. As minor amendments the Cabinet approval did not require the Housing Statement to go back to Cabinet.

## **Publication**

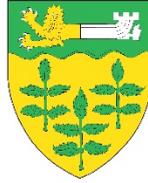
11. The Housing Statement was published in September 2018
12. All elected members were advised of the outcome of the consultation and publication of the Housing Statement in the Information Digest 169.
13. Consultees were provided with a link to the published Housing Statement document and the consultation report.

## **Conclusion**

14. The Annual Report of the Housing Statement for 2018 records the development of this new approach of setting an overarching statement with three broad priorities.
15. The next and subsequent Annual Reports will provide a summary of how we are delivering against the three overarching priorities as the Housing Statement will then have been embedded as the overarching strategic document setting the direction of travel for the previous 12 months.

## **Contact and Email**

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**ASHFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Housing Statement Annual Report

## 2018

## 1. Introduction

This Annual Report sets out the process followed prior to publication of the Housing Statement 2018 – 2023 in September 2018. The Housing Statement can be viewed on the Ashford Borough Council's Strategic Housing webpage <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/housing/i-want-a-home/our-strategic-approach-to-housing/>

## 2. Background

The Deregulation Act 2015 removed the power to require councils to prepare housing strategies. In agreement with the Portfolio Holder and Head of Housing a proposal was put forward to write a concise Housing Statement. This will set out broad overarching objectives and provide a foundation to produce detailed strategies and plans that address specific areas of housing delivery and management.

The proposal was outlined to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the Annual Report of the Housing Framework 2017 (minute number 201).

A draft Housing Statement was presented to Cabinet in May 2018 and approval sought to go out to consultation to key partners and stakeholders.

## 3. Housing Statement 2018-2023

The Housing Statement sets out our overarching priorities for housing and how these link to delivering the Corporate Plan priorities. In particular priority 2 'Quality Housing and Homes for All'.

The priorities of the Housing Statement are:

- Increasing the supply of homes that residents can afford and will help meet local housing need.
- To ensure housing enables independent living and promotes good health and wellbeing
- To support housing initiatives that stimulate prosperity, employment opportunities and economic activity.

These priorities are driven by the challenges and opportunities identified for delivering quality homes across all tenures. The emphasis is on enabling residents to make suitable housing choices that meet their needs, especially for local people unable to access homes through the open market. Providing a suitable, safe, affordable home is a key factor in achieving personal wellbeing, educational attainment and economic prosperity for the occupiers, which also benefits the wider community. Coordination between housing services and activities delivered by other council services (such as; stimulating job creation and the promotion of health and wellbeing projects) will strengthen achieving the overarching priorities.

Beneath the Housing Statement sit a number of strategies or plans each addressing a specific subject area. By taking a more targeted approach it is hoped that improved engagement with interested parties can be nurtured to feed into meaningful action plans that have multi agency ownership and delivery objectives. A table detailing the status of each strategy/plan is included in section 6.

#### 4. Consultation

Further to the agreement of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Head of Housing to take a new approach and develop a Housing Statement all Members were updated in January 2018 and their views sought on the proposed approach. One positive comment was received, no negative comments were received.

In May 2018, Cabinet resolved that:

(i) the draft Housing Statement be circulated to key partners and stakeholders for comment.

(ii) the Portfolio Holder and the Head of Housing be authorised to approve any minor changes arising from the consultation prior to the publication of the Housing Statement (any significant changes would be reported back to Cabinet for approval). (Minute number 461).

A consultation ran for six weeks from the 18<sup>th</sup> June to the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018. A total of eight responses were received. A full report of the consultation can be found at <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/housing/i-want-a-home/our-strategic-approach-to-housing/>

The comments received were broadly supportive of the proposed approach. Where appropriate the draft Housing Statement was amended to reflect the points raised where they were relevant to the overarching nature of this document.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Head of Housing agreed the amendments in line with the Cabinet resolution above and the Housing Statement was published in September 2018.

#### 5. Publication

All members were advised of the publication of the Housing Statement 2018-2023 via the Information Digest 169 (circulated 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018). This included a report of the consultation process and a copy of the Housing Statement 2018-2023.

The Housing Statement was available to view on the Strategic Housing Web page, together with the report of the consultation from 25<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

All partners and stakeholders were advised of the publication of the Housing Statement and provided with the link to the Strategic Housing webpage.

Consultees who had made individual responses were contacted by email and advised of the publication of the Housing Statement and sent a copy of the Consultation Report detailing the council's response to the matters they had raised.

6. Strategy / plan progress table.

Appendix 1\_Housing Statement Annual Report 2018\_Draft 1

Strategy/Plan	Status	Comment	Expected Report to Cabinet
Affordable Housing Supply and Allocation Strategy	To be progressed	Internal and external workshops have taken place to gather ideas and good practice on delivery of affordable homes and investigate a range of options that maybe available in addition to current delivery mechanisms.	
HRA Asset Management Strategy	In progress		
Tenancy Strategy	Last revision January 2017	Government recently announced no longer mandatory to use fixed term tenancies. A view may need to taken on reviewing our Tenancy Strategy in light of this decision.	
Tenant Participation Strategy	In progress	Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) has undertaken a review and further to this are setting out how they could further support the development of a Tenant Participation Strategy	
Private Sector Housing Strategy	To be progressed		

Appendix 1\_Housing Statement Annual Report 2018\_Draft 1

Homelessness Strategy	Current Homelessness Strategy published 2016	Introduction of Homelessness Reduction Act has meant a period of adjustment during its implementation. A refresh of the Homelessness Strategy is required to reflect the new legislation.	
Health and Housing Strategy	In Progress	Discussions held with Health colleague from Ashford CCG and agreed a joint memorandum of understanding could aid joint working and better deployment of resources.	