

## BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ADULTS & COMMUNITIES TO CABINET ON 17 NOVEMBER 2021

**PUBLIC or PRIVATE: PUBLIC**

#### **PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING PLAN 2030**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report introduces the draft Private Sector Housing Plan 2030, outlining an ambition, key commitments, and a delivery plan for raising private sector housing standards in Barnsley.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Cabinet support the ambition for our residents living in the private sector that “Homes in Barnsley are safe, warm and sustainable and people feel invested in and connected to their home and local community.”**
- 2.2 **It is recommended that Cabinet endorse the overall Private Sector Housing Plan encompassing 4 primary commitments and the implementation of the delivery plan.**

#### **3. INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1 Our shared vision is for Barnsley to be the place of possibilities for everyone. We all have an important role in working together to achieve our vision of Barnsley's future and our long-term ambitions. By 2030, we want everyone to benefit from, and contribute to, making our borough a thriving place of possibilities. The Private Sector Housing Plan, attached to this report as **Appendix 1**, will help us to achieve a Healthy, Learning, Growing and Sustainable Barnsley. Specifically, the plan contributes towards the following Council Plan priorities and Barnsley 2030 ambitions:

##### **Healthy Barnsley**

- People are safe and feel safe.
- People live independently with good physical and mental health for as long as possible.
- We have reduced inequalities in health and income across the borough.
- Everyone is able to enjoy a life in good physical and mental health.

- Fewer people live in poverty and everyone has the resources they need to look after themselves and their families.
- People can access the right support, at the right time and place and are able to tackle problems early.
- Our diverse communities are welcoming, supportive and resilient

### **Learning Barnsley**

- People have access to early help and support.

### **Growing Barnsley**

- People are supported to have safe, warm, sustainable homes.
- People have a wider choice of quality, affordable and sustainable housing, to suit their needs and lifestyle

### **Sustainable Barnsley**

- People live in great places, are recycling more and wasting less, feel connected and valued in their community.
- People live in sustainable communities with reduced carbon emissions and increased access to affordable and sustainable energy sources.
- People are proud of and look after their local environment.

3.2 The Private Sector Housing Plan sits directly beneath the Council's overarching Housing Strategy. It complements and supports other local strategic plans and strategies including the Council Plan, Safer Barnsley Partnership Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The plan sets out the Council's commitment to ensuring that our residents can live in good quality, well maintained homes that provide safe, warm and healthy environments where people can live well and thrive. Its purpose is to galvanise all key stakeholders to contribute and be accountable for delivering our key priorities, which support the broader strategic ambitions for Barnsley. The plan focuses mainly on private rented housing but also considers owner-occupiers and some Registered Providers where the Council has a duty to regulate housing, environmental or behavioural standards.

3.3 The plan establishes an ambition for the sector that '**homes are safe, warm and sustainable, and people feel invested in and connected to their home and local community**'. It acknowledges that dealing with housing conditions in isolation will not support us to achieve our vision and that a more holistic approach is required. This includes dealing effectively with anti-social behaviour and environmental crime and blight, with an overall emphasis on working together to identify and protect our most vulnerable people.

3.4 The delivery plan, attached to this report at **Appendix 2** details the actions we will take to fulfil our commitments, describing how we will work with and support tenants, residents, Landlords and Letting Agents to raise standards, reduce inequalities and promote cohesive and tolerant communities. The delivery plan will be refreshed annually, and progress reported into the Housing & Energy Board.

#### **4. PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION**

4.1 The proposal is that Cabinet considers and endorses a Private Sector Housing Plan for Barnsley to run between 2021 and 2024.

4.2 The justification for endorsing the plan is that Barnsley would benefit from:

- A coordinated plan to ensure good standards of housing in all sectors and for all residents
- A collaborative approach to ensure that those who are vulnerable, in need or disadvantaged can access appropriate and timely support
- Those providing housing to others being engaged to ensure good standards are achieved and maintained
- Housing standards being considered within the broader context of the streets and neighbourhoods in which housing is located and that all areas in Barnsley are places where people want to live

#### **5. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES**

5.1 Consideration has been given to continuing with the current fragmented approaches, with teams and services operating in silos to address the challenges presented by the sector according to their own area of responsibility. This will not bring about the collaborative driving up of standards we are seeking to achieve for our town.

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS**

6.1 It is expected that the implementation of the plan will impact positively on all neighbourhoods and communities, reduce health inequalities, and improve housing, behaviour and environmental standards for all our current and future residents.

#### **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Service Director Finance (S151 Officer).

7.2 While there are no direct financial implications associated with the plan, in order to deliver against the commitments and actions, a reorganisation of staff is required within Safer Communities. This will allow the team to bridge the identified gaps around tackling low level anti-social behaviour and safeguarding our most vulnerable residents. It is expected that the refocus will

be achieved within the existing staffing budget.

## **8. EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 As at paragraph 7, some realignment of staff resources will be required which may include changes to existing job profiles.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report, save for the continuing exercising of the Council's powers and the discharging of statutory duties.

## **10. CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The plan will be available to customers in various formats including in print and via the Council website, with biteable sections embedded throughout the Private Sector Housing webpages. It considers how improvements can be made to accessing services to raise standards in the sector.

## **11. COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The Private Sector Housing Plan has been designed in line with the Council Plan 2021-2024 and Barnsley 2030. This plan will be supported by a web page that focuses on public understanding of the plan using multimedia to shape the knowledge of our work and the benefits for them as residents. Using a web page in this way, we can make sure it is interactive by adding updates and new information as we move through the plan, keeping the public in touch with the narrative. A webpage has been created which can be viewed using the following link <http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/private-housing-strategy>

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

- 12.1 Consultation on the draft plan has taken place with all relevant internal teams and services including Warm Homes, Public Health, Housing Sustainability and Climate Change, Stronger, Safer and Healthier Communities, Adult Social Care, Neighbourhood Services, Waste Management, Communications, Planning, Equalities and Inclusion, Mental Health and Childrens Services.
- 12.2 Wider consultation includes Berneslai Homes Property Management Service, S70 Residents Group and Barnsley Residential Landlords Association (BRLA) and all members of the Housing & Energy Board.
- 12.3 A total of 40 separate responses were received resulting in some minor amendments being made to the initial draft version. The feedback received was presented to the Housing and Energy Board and amendments agreed.

## **13. EQUALITY IMPACT**

- 13.1 Equality Impact Assessment Pre-screening completed determining a full EIA was not required for the plan as a whole. Consultation with the Equalities and

Inclusion Team determined some individual actions within the plan require full EIAs, some require light-touch EIAs, and some do not require EIAs. Those required are to be completed by the leads for the relevant actions once these have been established.

## **14. THE CORPORATE PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

- 14.1 The plan supports and builds on the strategic ambitions of the Barnsley 2030 vision – ‘Barnsley, the place of possibilities’ and the 4 commitments are clearly aligned to the corporate priorities of a healthy, learning, growing and sustainable Barnsley in the context of private sector housing as follows:

**Healthy Barnsley** - Ensuring that housing standards and living conditions in Barnsley are of good quality and contribute towards better health outcomes for all.

**Learning Barnsley** – To do all we can to make sure those residents who are hardest to reach or vulnerable know how to access support, understand how they can contribute and know their rights and responsibilities.

**Growing Barnsley** – To value the contribution of the private rented sector in meeting our housing needs, supporting good Landlords and dealing robustly with those who act unlawfully.

**Sustainable Barnsley** - Ensuring all areas, neighbourhoods and streets in Barnsley, irrespective of housing tenure or type are places where people want to live and are proud to live.

## **15. TACKLING THE IMPACT OF POVERTY**

- 15.1 There is an emphasis on the causes and impacts of poverty including fuel poverty within the plan, and actions created to proactively identify and support those in greatest need within our communities.

## **16. TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES**

- 16.1 The focus on healthy homes and reducing health inequalities is weaved throughout the plan.

## **17. REDUCTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER**

- 17.1 The plan highlights how crime and disorder can impact negatively on a person's health and wellbeing and the way they feel about their home and the area where they live. It recognises that dealing with housing standards in isolation will not achieve our vision of people living in safe, warm and sustainable homes. It considers that to do this also requires holistic partnership approaches to stop, reduce or minimise the impacts of crime and housing-related anti-social behaviour.

**18. LIST OF APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1: Draft Private Sector Housing Plan
- Appendix 2: Private Sector Housing Delivery Plan

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Financial Implications/Consultation  
  
06.09.2021  
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*(To be signed by senior Financial Services officer  
where no financial implications)*