

Draft Breckland Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2016-20

Matthew Hogan, Shared Strategic Housing Manager

Ross Bangs, Housing Manager

A shifting national housing policy context

- Government ambitions to significantly boost housing supply
- A policy focus on increasing access to home ownership
- A policy ambition to better integrate health, social care and housing services
- An ambition to improve the professionalism of the private rented sector
- A focus on continuous reform to the welfare benefits system, in order to incentive employment and reduce expenditure
- A growing call for local authorities to support a broader range of homeless households

The draft strategy – How has it been developed?

- Developed over a number of months
- Policy review has been completed
- Local evidence review has been completed
- Workshops with key external partners
- Discussions with industry bodies (e.g. Federation of Master Builders, National Landlords Association)
- Officers have sought to create an accessible and easy to understand document

What does the draft strategy say?

- Structured around three sections
- **Section 1** - Introduction sets out the national and local policy picture and the strategic content
- **Section 2** - Housing context in Breckland – an analysis of the housing picture in Breckland, based on available evidence and observable trends
- **Section 3** - Defines the priorities, identifies key activities and sets out a suite of actions that we will focus on delivering in order to deliver the strategy

Priority One: Preventing Homelessness

- Focus on the need to build stronger partnerships between agencies
- Debt and budgeting advice as a cornerstone of our strategic approach to homelessness
- A focus on making supporting access to employment and skills training a key strand of our approach to preventing homelessness
- A focus on supporting those with complex and multiple needs from experiencing repeat homelessness
- Preparing household and partners for Universal Credit
- Making focusing on domestic abuse a key area of focus

Priority Two: Improving health outcomes by improving housing

- A proposal to explore developing a holistic 'handy persons service' to support vulnerable people to remain independent in their own home
- Details of our planned strategy to address fuel poverty through a targeted approach, in conjunction with health partners
- Details of our commitment to meeting the housing needs of those with dementia
- Details of a how the council proposes to engage with private landlords and seek to support the growth of a good quality PRS, whilst address poor quality and unfit accommodation and landlords

Priority Three: Supporting Housing Growth

- A strong case in favour of the housing growth
- Sets the scene for the council directly investing in new housing
- Support for the government's ambitions to increase home ownership
- A commitment to supporting the supply of low cost rented housing, given its local importance in meeting need
- Support for Custom and Self Build Housing
- Our approach to planning for and meeting the needs of older people
- A commitment to support small and medium house builders in making a contribution to the supply of new housing

Next steps...

- Public consultation for 28 days
- A consultation process, designed to engage partners in buying into a single vision for the housing and homelessness agenda over the next four years
- Plans to consult with key partners, in addition to the general public
- A post-consultation document will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny in January/February 2017

Any questions?