

Report to Cabinet

04 August 2026



Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030

Lead Member:

Cllr Vanessa Renshaw
Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection

Lead Officer:

Nesta Barker - Service Director - Regulatory Services

Key Decision: Yes

Ward(s): All

Appendices: None

Report Assurance:

	Name	Date
Lead Officer	Nesta Barker	01/07/26
Monitoring Officer	Olwen Brown	20/07/26
Section 151	Craig Turner	17/07/26
Chief Executive	Gordon Mole	17/07/26
Cabinet Member	Cllr Vanessa Renshaw	21/07/26

Report Summary

The process of reviewing and updating the Housing and Homelessness Strategy commenced in 2025. The Draft Strategy has subsequently been considered by a previous cabinet, subject to public consultation and reviewed by the current administration. Following these stages, and the incorporation of relevant amendments, the Strategy is now presented to Cabinet for approval and publication.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030.

1 Background

- 1.1 Developing and maintaining a housing strategy enables the local authorities to assess current and emerging challenges, establish priorities and objectives, and plan effectively for the future.
- 1.2 Housing plays a vital role in people's health, wellbeing and quality of life. Regularly reviewing and updating the Strategy ensures that the Council continues to provide an appropriate framework for working with residents, partners and stakeholders to address local housing needs.
- 1.4 The current Housing Strategy was adopted in 2021 with an associated four-year action plan. The current Homelessness Strategy was adopted in 2020 with a five-year action plan. As a period of 4 years had passed, it is considered appropriate to review and refresh the strategy.
- 1.5 The process of updating the Housing and Homelessness Strategy began in 2025. On 2 December 2025, Cabinet considered a report on the Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030. Cabinet approved the draft strategy for public consultation and authorised the Service Director - Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, to agree the final version for publication following the consultation stage.
- 1.6 The draft strategy was published for public consultation on the Council's website on 20 January 2026. In addition, members of the Homelessness Forum were notified by email and invited to submit their views and comments on the draft strategy.
- 1.7 Three responses were received during the consultation period. Overall, the feedback was positive, with respondents expressing support for the strategic priorities and objectives set out within the Strategy.
- 1.8 Following consultation, a small number of amendments were made. These included specific reference to Aspire Housing to recognise its important role in delivering housing-related projects and services across the borough. References to the Renters' Rights Bill were also updated to reflect its enactment as an Act of Parliament.
- 1.9 The amendments made following consultation were minor in nature. The consultation responses did not identify any significant issues or recommend substantial changes to the strategic priorities, objectives or proposed actions

contained within the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030 which is at Appendix 1 of this report.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 In May 2026, Borough Council elections resulted in a change in political leadership. The draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy has subsequently been reviewed by the new administration. Whilst supportive of the overall direction, aims and objectives of the Strategy, the administration has identified four areas that it wishes to give greater prominence within the document:
- Advocacy for Article 4 Directions to enable greater local control over Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
 - Prioritising improvements in energy efficiency, reducing fuel poverty and lowering household energy costs, rather than focusing solely on decarbonisation objectives.
 - Supporting the provision of housing that meets the needs of local communities.
 - Strengthening the focus on supported housing provision within the borough.
- 2.2 As a result, amendments have been made to the wording of the Strategy to reflect these priorities. These changes do not alter the overall strategic direction of the document but seek to place greater emphasis on matters of importance to the current administration.
- 2.3 Although Cabinet previously authorised the Service Director - Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, to agree the final version of the Strategy following public consultation, it is considered appropriate that the revised document be referred back to Cabinet for consideration and formal approval.
- 2.4 Given that the Strategy was subject to an eight-week public consultation in early 2026, and that the amendments subsequently made are limited in scope and do not materially alter the Strategy's strategic objectives, it is not considered necessary to undertake a further round of public consultation before adoption.

3 Strategic Approach

- 3.1 The Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030 is structured around three cross-cutting priorities that recognise the links between housing, health, economic prosperity and homelessness:
- Housing and Health
 - Housing and Prosperity
 - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
- 3.2 These priorities have associated objectives.

Priority 1: Housing and Health aims to foster strategic joined-up thinking and policy setting on health and housing, and to continuously improve housing standards and the energy efficiency of the housing stock.

Priority 2: Housing and Prosperity seeks to develop a housing market that is vibrant and economically prosperous and meets the needs of our residents; to facilitate the development of a range of affordable housing that meets identified housing needs; and to contribute to the economic regeneration of town centres through the incorporation of mixed-use developments.

Priority 3: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping endeavours to continue providing early intervention and partnership working in order to prevent homelessness; to support those who are faced with homelessness issues, particularly those who are rough sleeping; and to operate a housing allocation system, including both registration and allocation processes, that enables those in housing need to access appropriate social housing.

4 Finance & Resources

- 4.1 Delivery of the actions set out within the Housing and Homelessness Strategy will have implications for a number of Council services. It is intended that these actions will be embedded within existing and future service plans and delivered through available resources where possible. Any financial implications arising from the implementation of the Strategy will be considered and managed through the Council's annual budget-setting process and service planning arrangements.

5 Legal & Governance

- 5.1 Whilst there is no statutory requirement for the Council to adopt a Housing and Homelessness Strategy, it provides an important framework for setting priorities and coordinating activity across a range of policy areas, including planning, housing standards, homelessness prevention, disabled facilities grants and partnership working with key stakeholders.

6 Supporting Information

- 6.1 Draft Housing Strategy 2026-2030
- 6.2 02/12/2025 – Cabinet - [Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2026-2030](#)