



**COUNCILLOR GEORGE  
DAVIES**

**CABINET  
18<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016**

**HOUSING STRATEGY 2016 - 2020**

**Councillor George Davies said:**

“The importance of high quality, affordable homes cannot be underestimated. The impact a good home has on a family is almost immeasurable in terms of health, wellbeing, social mobility and general quality of life.

This Housing Strategy is a key part of delivering our 2020 Vision, setting out our strategic direction to ensure one of our most important pledges to make sure that living in Wirral means living in a good home, is achieved. This is a vital legacy that this generation must pass on to the next. Clearly, building thousands of new homes is a key challenge for us, however it is important to recognise that increasing the numbers of homes built can help kick start our economy, encourage more people to live and work in our borough and transform the lives of our current residents.”

**REPORT SUMMARY**

The Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision sets out a shared partnership vision to improve outcomes for Wirral residents. Delivery of the priorities and outcomes described in the Plan are underpinned through the development and implementation of a set of key strategies and a Delivery Plan.

This report provides Cabinet with Wirral’s Housing Strategy 2016 - 2020; a key strategic document which articulates the ambition related to the Wirral Plan Environment Priority: *‘Wirral has an attractive and sustainable environment, where good health and an excellent quality of life is enjoyed by everyone who lives here’*

The report recognises the fact that a safe and secure home is vital to all Wirral residents. To respond to this, the Housing Strategy aims to build more homes, improve the quality of Wirral's housing offer and also meet the housing and support needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently. As a result the strategy affects all Wards within the Borough and therefore this report is considered a key decision.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That Cabinet approves the Housing Strategy 2016 - 2020 set out at Appendix One to this report.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 The Housing Strategy 2016 - 2020 details how the ambitions and outcomes set out within the Environment priority of the Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision will be driven forward and achieved.
- 1.2 The strategy has been informed and developed as a result of key research, analysis and ongoing consultation and discussion with key partners and stakeholders to ‘reality check’ our priorities and the approach we need to take to move forward. It provides the clear framework for focusing our direction of travel ensuring collectively with our partners, we have the flexibility to respond to new and emerging issues as they arise, which impact directly on the borough as a whole.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

No other options have been considered.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 A five year Wirral Plan received approval at the meeting of full Council on 13th July 2015 and has been adopted by all strategic partners from the public, private and third sectors. The plan contains twenty pledges to be achieved by 2020; and in particular under the Environment theme the pledge for housing commits:

*A safe and secure home is vital to all Wirral residents. We are working to improve the quality and supply of Wirral's housing stock, providing more affordable homes and specialist housing solutions, including extra care homes and supported living accommodation.*

- 3.2 The Housing Strategy 2016 – 2020 sets out the authority’s long term strategic direction for Wirral, aligning with the Wirral Plan and its key priorities and responding to updated and new evidence, has reinvigorated and consolidated its key themes to drive forward change, specifically over the next five years focusing on:
- Building more homes to meet our economic growth ambitions
  - Improving the quality of Wirral’s housing offer for our residents
  - Meeting the housing and support needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently.
- 3.3 The actions supporting the strategy will be regularly reviewed and performance reported through appropriate governance arrangements.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy provides the context and approach to meet housing demand in Wirral. An increase in the numbers and types of housing will deliver increased Council Tax income whilst Extra Care Housing development provides additional financial benefits.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. As projects to deliver the strategy are developed the legal implications will be identified as part of the Action Plan.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 The Housing Strategy 2016 - 2020 will be co-ordinated in partnership through existing staff resources. Any additional resource requirements will be identified as the Action Plan continues to be reviewed and developed further.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 The Corporate Risk Register will be refreshed in line with the new Wirral Plan developments to ensure that any risks to delivery are understood and mitigating actions are put in place as appropriate.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The Housing Strategy 2016 - 2020 has been underpinned by the major stakeholder consultation undertaken as part of the development of the original long term Housing Strategy in 2011.
- 8.2 In addition, a range of consultation exercises with key stakeholders and partners have continued to take place since that time, along with new research, analysis and ongoing reviews of the extensive evidence base in place. All of this has informed the final draft of the strategy.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The potential impact has been reviewed with regard to equality and the impact assessment can be found at:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/>

**REPORT AUTHOR: Sue Hooper**  
**Strategic Housing and Investment Manager**  
telephone: 0151 691 8245  
email: [suehooper@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:suehooper@wirral.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix One – Housing Strategy 2016 - 2020**

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

| <b>Council Meeting</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|------------------------|-------------|
| None                   |             |