

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING BOARD

15th May 2024

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| TITLE: | Housing Vision Blueprint |
| PORTFOLIO HOLDER: | Cllr Anthony McKeown – Leader and Executive member for Assets Cllr Fiona Sloman - Executive member for Housing |
| CONTACT OFFICER: | Matt Trewartha – (Interim Head of Assets) Lisa-Marie Olsen (Principal Housing Officer Assets) Andy Gerrish - Strategic Lead Housing and Assets (interim) |
| WARDS INVOLVED: | All |

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 To update members on the development of our vision for High Peak Borough Council's Housing and Neighbourhoods Services for the next 30 years. An initial workshop was held to begin to create a vision that will direct the ambition for sustainability and growth over the next 30 years.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To approve 'The Housing Vision Blueprint' to begin to develop the detail of how High Peak Borough Council (HPBC) will achieve a long-term strategy for its existing homes and meet the future needs of tenants and future tenants through a new supply of Affordable Housing.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 A workshop was held on the 9th April 2024, with officers and the Executive present, to discuss the aim of creating a housing portfolio that could address the following three strands of sustainability:

People – to develop decent homes necessary for current and future tenants of the High Peak that create neighbourhoods with strong communities at their heart.

Planet – to deliver on net zero ambitions and the Council's wider environmental objectives.

Profit – to ensure that the financial forecasts and the operations of the finances generate sufficient income and surpluses to meet all on-going costs, to deliver capital works, and to meet any growth ambitions.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The vision will align with the following Borough Plan objectives:

- Aim 2 - Future proof housing.
 - Increasing the supply of Affordable homes and specialist housing
 - Develop and implement a plan to increase the HPBC housing stock.
 - Enhancing our repairs and maintenance service and reviewing and refreshing our approach to neighbour / estate management.
- Aim 4 - To protect and improve the environment including responding to the climate emergency.
- Aim 5 - To use resources effectively and provide value for money.
 - New ways of generating money
 - Rationalisation Strategy

5. **Alternative Options**

5.1 To continue with the current Business Plan of Reactive Repairs and Planned Improvements to existing homes in HPBC.

6. **Implications**

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| 6.1 | <u>Community safety, including safeguarding and prevention of terrorism.</u> No implications at this stage. |
| 6.2 | <u>Workforce</u> This project requires a multi-disciplinary approach, co-ordinating expertise from various teams. The following teams will contribute staff to the delivery of this project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets • Finance • Legal • Communication • Regeneration |
| 6.3 | <u>Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment</u> No implications at this stage. |

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| 6.4 | <p><u>Financial Considerations</u></p> <p>Available Capital Budget for improvements and New Homes. Availability of Grant Funding Streams.</p> |
| 6.5 | <p><u>Legal</u></p> <p>Legal advice will be sought at all relevant stages and where necessary independent external advice will be sought.</p> |
| 6.6 | <p><u>Climate Change and Sustainability</u></p> <p>Improving the energy efficiency of existing homes and creating new homes that are in line with the Future Homes Standard.</p> <p>No implications at this stage but aspirations towards ambitious standards of sustainability.</p> |
| 6.7 | <p><u>Conservation and Enhancement of Biodiversity</u></p> <p>No implications at this stage.</p> |
| 6.8 | <p><u>Consultation</u></p> <p>No consultation has yet been undertaken to date with Tenants but is an inherent aspect of developing the plan.</p> |
| 6.9 | <p><u>Risk Assessment</u></p> <p>Not applicable at this stage.</p> |

Martin Owen
Executive Director (Resources)

**Web Links and
Background Papers**

Contact details

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7. Detail

7.1 The format of the first meeting was an informal, guided discussion and an exchange of ideas with members of the Executive and key Officers.

7.2 The strategy to follow will provide the framework for meeting the Vision. Attendees were encouraged to provide ideas and discussion points that can then inform a strategy following on from the vision.

7.3 Agreement was reached on 10 key areas:

- Rents - our homes must be fairly priced and affordable.
- Passive house – For any new house this will be our preferred construction standard.
- Match growth with forecast demographic and societal changes.
- Aspiration to hold a stock portfolio of 6,000 homes.
- Building upwards – consideration of the opportunity to build with more floors than we do currently and the potential for remodelling of existing HPBC homes.
- To enhance the social and environmental environment around HPBC homes.
- To create a Decent Homes internal standard for HPBC.
- To retain the ownership of HPBC homes within the Council.
- To review becoming a Registered Provider with Homes England.
- Two strands of focus for the Housing Vision:
 - a) Repair, Replace, Replenish.
 - b) A Growth Strategy for new homes.

7.6 Three areas required further exploration:

- The aim to test some early Pilot schemes.
- Achieving best value in all aspects of maintenance and capital works.
- The availability of land in the HPBC area.

7.7 Further reports will follow detailing programme progress and, where appropriate, consultation measures.

Questions the development of the Vision might pose

“You talk about profit, should you be profiting from tenants?”

We must ensure that income from rents meets all the on-going costs of managing and maintaining our stock as well as delivering the best service we can for our tenants. To have a financial plan that does this and gives us the opportunity to invest in our estate, improve our properties and even add new, higher specification and better environmental standard properties means that we must also develop a surplus from our accounts. This will never be excessive and will always be held only for the purposes of our housing.

“You say this vision and plan is for 30 years, I need work doing on my property now”

We have plans in place to deal with any repairs that are needed and have a capital programme of works that sets out improvements such as new windows, bathrooms, and kitchens. Houses and property are long-term assets that need to be thought of in these terms. We want to ensure that we deliver the best we can for our current tenants and that we hand over properties that the next generations will want to live in without having unbalanced financial plans. We feel that the 30 year strategy will give us the best way to handover what we set out to the next generation secure in the knowledge that it will meet our three sustainability goals of People, Planet and Profit.

“How do you know what the future people of the High Peak will need?”

We use statistical forecasts and experts to help us with the estimates about how many people we think will need housing, what type of people they may be and what their needs might be. This will help us with the number and types of properties we need. We then use experts in properties, construction, and trades to work out what construction types and standards we should aim for. All of this will come together in our plan.

“I know you already have a very long waiting list for properties, how will this 30-year vision help them?”

We know that the demand for our housing is a lot more than the houses we can supply. Our aim through this vision is to work to address this by i) making the properties we have as good as we can make them to be the homes our tenants want and ii) to find opportunities to add significantly more to our portfolio.