



Committee and Date
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Item

Public



Housing Strategy 2025-2030

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1. Synopsis

1.1 The draft 2025-2030 Housing Strategy outlines Shropshire Council’s approach to managing and delivering housing responsibilities, highlights past achievements and current work, and identifies future opportunities to meet Shropshire’s housing needs.

2. Executive Summary

2.1. [The Shropshire Plan 2022-2025](#) provides the overarching strategic framework for the council, underpinned by its vision: *Shropshire living the best life*. This vision is supported by four interlinked priorities: *healthy people, healthy economy, healthy environment, and healthy organisation*.

2.2. Aligned with the **healthy economy** priority, the 2025-2030 Housing Strategy outlines the council’s approach to ensuring an appropriate mix of high-quality homes in the right locations. This supports Shropshire’s diverse needs, including housing for people with disabilities and attracting a skilled workforce to reduce commuting distances.

2.3. The strategy also reflects the vision of providing well designed, decent homes that protect Shropshire’s unique urban and rural environments and promote residents’ health and wellbeing throughout their lives. It highlights achievements to date, details ongoing housing related work, and identifies future opportunities, investments, and improvements to meet the housing needs effectively.

- 2.4. The draft Housing Strategy establishes five key priorities for the next five years. These priorities remain consistent with the previous strategy, providing the flexibility needed to deliver specific actions and outcomes effectively.
- a. **Meeting Current and Future Housing Needs:** Address the diverse housing needs of Shropshire’s growing population, with a focus on particular groups within communities.
 - b. **Providing Affordable Housing Options:** Ensure that those unable to access housing through the open market have affordable and appropriate housing choices that meet their needs.
 - c. **Reducing and Preventing Homelessness:** Work to prevent homelessness and where it occurs, provide safe, secure accommodation with clear pathways to resettlement.
 - d. **Improving Housing Access and Sustainability:** Provide a mix of housing options across urban and rural areas that meet diverse needs, focusing on safety, tenure, size, type, and design while minimising environmental impact in response to climate change.
 - e. **Supporting Economic Growth:** Address the housing needs of key workers and provide intermediate housing options to help businesses attract and retain the local workforce they require.
- 2.5. Following an approved eight-week consultation period, an updated strategy will be brought back to full council for consideration. Should any viewpoints appear under-represented during this period, the council will consider extending the consultation to promote and encourage inclusivity. All feedback received will be carefully reviewed, and the strategy will be amended where appropriate to reflect these insights.
- 2.6. An action plan sits alongside this strategy and will be set out as immediate-, short-, medium- and long-term actions. This plan, along with the overall targets will be regularly reviewed and updated annually by Shropshire Council throughout the lifespan of the Strategy. Updates on progress will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board, aligning with other priorities identified in the [Shropshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027](#). The full strategy will be reviewed towards the end of its five-year term. It may be reviewed sooner if prompted by central government legislative changes or significant council policy developments which impact upon it.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Cabinet is requested to approve the Draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030, as outlined in Appendix 1, for an eight-week public and stakeholder consultation period. This recommendation seeks Cabinet’s agreement to proceed with the consultation, ensuring that feedback from residents, stakeholders, and partners is incorporated to create a robust and inclusive final document aligned with the Council’s priorities.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. The risk if the consultation is not undertaken is that the Council may miss critical feedback from residents, stakeholders, and partners, resulting in a strategy that does not fully address local housing needs or reflect community priorities. To mitigate this, we should proceed with the proposed eight-week consultation period which will help to encourage inclusivity, and that the final strategy is robust and representative of diverse perspectives.
- 4.2. There is a risk that a lack of meaningful engagement could lead to limited input from key stakeholders and communities, reducing the strategy's effectiveness and credibility. To mitigate this, an engagement plan, including targeted outreach to vulnerable groups, housing providers and community organisations will be implemented to maximise participation.
- 4.3. To mitigate the risk of delays, clear timelines will be established for consultation, analysis of feedback, and strategy refinement to ensure timely progression and final approval.
- 4.4. Local elections for Shropshire Council will take place on Thursday 1st May, with the pre-election period commencing on Monday, 10th March, following the publication of the notice of election. This period, governed by Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986 (as amended in 1988), imposes restrictions on certain activities. In light of this, we will not be launching or running a consultation during this time. However, following 1st May, consultation and subsequent steps will proceed in line with the established timelines to maintain progress towards final approval.
- 4.5. If the strategy does not adequately address the needs of vulnerable groups, including care leavers, individuals with disabilities, and rough sleepers, their housing outcomes will be negatively impacted. To mitigate this, the strategy prioritises inclusivity and provides a framework for addressing the housing needs of vulnerable groups, with input from relevant stakeholders during the consultation phase to refine these priorities further.
- 4.6. A failure to fully consider equalities and human rights impacts could lead to legal challenges and presents a potential risk. An initial Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) has been carried out ahead of the proposed consultation and will be included in consultation documentation available to the public and stakeholders, to demonstrate efforts to ensure the strategy is fair, equitable and compliant with statutory requirements.
- 4.7. Ahead of the proposed consultation, this initial assessment of the Draft Housing Strategy indicates a likely low to medium positive impact for individuals and households across a range of groupings, particularly for the Protected Characteristics of Age and Disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010. The strategy aims to improve housing outcomes for all Shropshire residents,

addressing long-term challenges such as economic sustainability, housing affordability, and the need to attract and retain key workers to support vital industries.

- 4.8. Positive impacts are also anticipated for the Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showperson communities, who are considered within the Protected Characteristic grouping of Race and for whom there are also considerations around social inclusion. For those within the intersecting Protected Characteristic groupings of Race and of Religion or Belief, such as refugee families, anticipated impacts range from neutral to low to medium positive. Outreach efforts are planned to support those for whom English is not their first language, ensuring equitable access to housing services.
- 4.9. The Strategy incorporates measures to mitigate potential negative impacts and enhance positive outcomes, such as assessing housing accessibility and adaptation needs, addressing homelessness and housing instability, and promoting social inclusion and equality. It also highlights the importance of supporting vulnerable groups, such as care leavers, those experiencing fuel poverty, long-term rough sleepers, and veterans and their families, in alignment with the Armed Forces Act 2021. The Council is committed to maximising equal outcomes and will continue to refine its approach through consultation feedback, ensuring support for all, including those with neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, or those at risk of hate crimes or social exclusion.
- 4.10. The initial assessment of the Housing Strategy indicates positive health and well-being outcomes for individuals and the wider community. By prioritising energy-efficient and accessible housing, the strategy will improve living conditions, helping to reduce the health risks associated with fuel poverty, such as respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. The focus on addressing homelessness and housing instability is expected to have a direct benefit on mental health by providing secure housing for vulnerable individuals and families.
- 4.11. The Council will continue to monitor and review these impacts, ensuring that housing developments are accessible to vulnerable groups, including those with disabilities. Measures to support individuals at risk of social exclusion, such as care leavers and long-term rough sleepers, will also be put in place to safeguard their physical and mental health. The strategy also promotes social inclusion and community cohesion, which are key factors in enhancing overall well-being. The Council will continue to monitor the health impacts of the strategy and take action to mitigate any negative effects, including ensuring that housing developments are accessible to individuals with disabilities and other vulnerabilities.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. Shropshire Council is currently managing an unprecedented financial position as budgeted for within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2029/30 approved by Cabinet on 12 February 2025. While all Cabinet Reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve:
- scaling down initiatives,

- changing the scope,
 - delaying implementation, or
 - extending delivery timescales.
- 5.2. Approving the Draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 for an eight-week public and stakeholder consultation has no direct financial implications.
- 5.3. Several of the priorities in the proposed action plan are already in hand or have been agreed, and will be funded by existing resources, for example, grant funding from central Government or through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan. Each further project associated with the strategy, where delivered by the Council, will be subject to its own funding approval, contingent upon a thorough business case evaluation, availability of funding and appropriate approvals. This approach ensures that financial considerations are assessed individually for each project, maintaining transparency and accountability in resource allocation. It should be noted that opportunities will also be taken to collaborate with Registered Provider landlords and others to support delivery of the Strategy.
- 5.4. The implications of the Chancellor's 30th October 2024 budget are yet to be fully understood, as local authorities await confirmation of specific allocations. However, the reduction in the discount rate for Right to Buy properties, and the change to allow Councils to retain the full receipt from all Right to Buy sales will benefit the Housing Revenue Account and provide a stronger capital base for newbuild delivery. Longer term confidence in rent charges will also support effective business planning and investment in the Council's existing housing stock.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. The draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 is expected to have a positive impact on climate change objectives by supporting the development of sustainable and energy-efficient housing.
- 6.2. **Energy and Fuel Consumption**
The strategy prioritises reducing energy use in housing by encouraging energy efficient construction and retrofitting existing homes to improve insulation and heating systems. This will contribute to lower fuel consumption across the county. In alignment with the [Sustainable Affordable Warmth Strategy](#), we will promote energy efficient construction and retrofitting practices to ensure long-term environmental and financial benefits.
- 6.3. **Renewable Energy Generation**
The strategy supports integrating renewable energy technologies, such as solar panels and heat pumps, into new and existing housing developments where feasible.
- 6.4. **Carbon Offsetting or Mitigation**
By promoting sustainable housing design and reducing reliance on fossil fuels, the strategy will contribute to Shropshire's goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

6.5. Climate Change Adaptation

The strategy emphasises housing designs that are resilient to extreme weather conditions, such as better flood defences and sustainable drainage systems to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

7. Background

- 7.1. The development of the draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 is essential to address the evolving needs within Shropshire. The existing Housing Strategy is set to expire in 2025, making it necessary to create a new strategy that reflects changes in any primary legislation and guidance, and aligns with current national and local priorities. The strategy will ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory duties while linking to wider policy areas, such as economic growth and climate change.
- 7.2. The draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 has been developed around the same vision as the previous strategy (2020-2025): that 'All homes are well designed decent homes of high quality, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the 'right home in the right place' to support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives.' The vision also emphasises that all Shropshire residents should have access to the right home in the right place, supporting and promoting their health and well-being throughout their lives.
- 7.3. In addressing the significant challenges faced in housing, it is crucial to clearly outline our objectives and develop a framework that ensures the Council works closely with a range of stakeholders and partners to deliver effective housing and housing related services. The need for a focused approach and collaboration is more pressing than ever in the current climate.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1. Legislative changes have provided a significant backdrop to our new housing strategy, shaping both policy direction and operational responsibilities.
 - [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#): This Act placed new duties on local authorities to take a strategic approach to homelessness prevention. Councils now have a legal responsibility to provide advice and support to anyone at risk of homelessness, aiming to prevent them from losing their home before they reach crisis point
 - [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#): This act provided the legislative framework for commitments made in the Levelling Up White Paper. It introduced reforms to speed up the planning system, giving local authorities more tools to manage housing developments effectively and respond to local needs.
 - [Fairer Private Rented Sector White Paper 2022](#): This set out the government's plans to tackle poor housing conditions in the private rented sector and protect tenants from unfair treatment.
 - [Renters' Rights Bill 2024](#): This legislation aims to strengthen tenant protections, including the abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions and

new obligations on landlords to meet minimum housing standards. Further recommendations include extending the Decent Homes Standard to private rented homes.

- 8.2 As national policy continues to evolve, we will respond proactively ensuring our housing strategy remains aligned with legislative developments while seeking opportunities to influence policy where appropriate.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. The draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 will help to inform the Council's housing related services, ensuring they align with local needs and demand, thereby supporting the effective and efficient use of resources. The strategy will also provide a clear communication platform for residents, developers, landlords, and other stakeholders about the Council's housing priorities, helping to achieve better housing outcomes for the county.
- 9.2. Before finalising the strategy, it is important to undertake an eight-week public and stakeholder consultation. Feedback and comments from the community, residents and key stakeholders will play a vital role in shaping the strategy, ensuring it reflects the needs and concerns of those it aims to serve. This consultation process will allow the Council to listen to residents, refine the strategy, and make necessary adjustments to improve it, ensuring that the final draft is well informed and responsive to the community's needs.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Local Member: All

Appendices [Please list the titles of Appendices]

Appendix 1: Draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030

Appendix 2: Action Plan (included at the end of Appendix 1)

Appendix 3: Key strategies and legislation (included at the end of Appendix 1)

Appendix 4: Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)