

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to the Cabinet

Meeting Date: 16 July 2019
Cabinet Member: Councillor Craig ab Iago
Contact Officer: Arwel Wyn Owen
Item Title: Housing Strategy 2020/21

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To approve the Housing Strategy in order to present to Cabinet for adoption

2 REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

The Cabinet are required to recommend the Housing Strategy before it is presented for formal approval by the full Council on the 18th July of 2019 and to outline how we proceed over the next 5 years.

On the 18th of June 2019 the Council Cabinet approved an initial allocation of £1.25m towards 3 schemes which will be implemented during 2019-20.

Once the Council have formally adopted the Housing Strategy the Cabinet will undertake a cost benefit analysis of all the proposals contained in the Strategy and will then formulate an expenditure plan

3 INTRODUCTION

The Housing Strategy highlights 26 individual schemes which will be considered along with an indication of the resource which is likely to be available. Some schemes create opportunities to attract additional external grant funding, to maximize attainment. Confirmation of investment will help progress and expand existing initiatives and to take advantage of collaborative opportunities by forging partnerships.

The paramount consideration however will be what schemes are likely to deliver the most benefit to the residents of Gwynedd with due consideration to the cost of delivery.

Whilst we have secured the second home premium to fund an extended programme of activity, which would not otherwise be available, it is important that the resource is used effectively to maximize its impact. We shall therefore

need to carefully assess all the proposals presented in the Strategy and to prioritize wisely.

Equality Impact Assessment

We are required to undertake an equalities impact assessment of our recommendations in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010

The Department have undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment which is attached as an appendix to this report. This assessment does not believe there are any negative impacts associated with adopting the Strategy.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Wellbeing Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty the Council has published well-being objectives which outline how it will improve well-being in the "Gwynedd Plan 2018-2023".

The principles of the Act have been an integral consideration in the preparation of the Housing Strategy and the Strategy intertwines with the Act's 7 well-being goals, and the Council's well-being objectives. The objectives has been a central consideration in the preparation of the Strategy and the principles of working outlined in Part 5 of the Strategy mirror the 7 well-being goals.

The action plans will be measured in part on the basis of these principles and the Council will expect all partners to adopt the working methods across the work programs. The operating principles will allow us to respond and meet Gwynedd's housing needs, without undermining people's future well-being. The proposed plans have been drawn up with the intention of working innovatively to encourage preventative action in order to try to reduce and avoid problems evolving in the future.

Consultation

We have considered the input our partners in developing the direction of the Strategy and the content has been reviewed in respond to comments and ideas received. The proposed schemes will allow us to promote further joint working and to identify new ways of working alongside our partners in order to maximize the benefit and impact upon the people of Gwynedd. We anticipate that a number of the proposals can help us to build new partnerships and strengthen existing arrangements by promoting joint planning and delivery in order to respond to the welfare needs of the people of Gwynedd.

In addition to consulting with stakeholders the Drafting Strategy was placed on the Council's website for a period of one month.

4 REASON AND JUSTIFICATION BEHIND THE DECISION

The purpose of this application is to secure support for the vision and ambition outlined in the Strategy which will help deliver an ambitious and transformational programme which will benefit the people of Gwynedd. The Cabinet meeting which met on the 18th of June 2019 have approved expenditure of £1.25 for 3 schemes to be implemented during 2019-20. It is intended to add to the list of schemes which would be delivered during

2019-20.

Gwynedd Council has received additional council tax income by charging a higher premium on second homes and long term empty properties and has committed that a proportion of the money collected, would be reinvested in housing to make a difference in the community. The attached Strategy confirms how part of that funding will be committed and how it will be prioritized in the future.

A copy of the Draft Housing Strategy was presented to the Care Scrutiny Committee on the 28th of March 2019 following an informal discussion with the Scrutiny Committee on the 31st January 2019. The content was adapted to address observations received and was supported by the Committee.

6 NEXT STEPS & TIMETABLE

The work program will be implemented on confirmation of funding.

7 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

Comments of Statutory Officers

Chief Finance Officer:

Gwynedd's Housing Strategy sets out a long term ambition and outlines a range of possible priorities. Approving the report before Cabinet does not commit any further funding beyond what was approved by the Cabinet on the 18th of June 2019 ,an allocation of £1.25m outlined in section 6 this confirms the intention to establish a medium term work plan. I note that the appendices highlights proposals which could be prioritized by the Cabinet along with the potential funding sources which may be available I can affirm that the figures provide a fair estimation.

Monitoring Officer:

The report and appendices provide an appropriate basis for the Cabinet to come to a decision on recommending the Strategy. It is correctly noted that the Housing Strategy forms part of the Councils Policy Framework and consequently the decision to adopt rests with the Full Council but on the recommendation of the Cabinet.

Local Member/s:

Not applicable.

Consultation

A copy of the Strategy has also been shared with key partners to help co-ordinate priorities and to ensure that it is possible to achieve within the timeframe. A draft consultation copy was also been placed on the Council's website.