

## **Appendix C Feedback from TD and WS Scrutiny**

Minutes of meetings as follows:

### **TDBC / Community Scrutiny – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

2.1 Community Scrutiny are asked to:

- A. Provide 'in principle' support to the vision, priorities and ambitions of the draft SSHF
- B. To challenge/scrutinise the detail and identify content that may require further clarity or amendment. To provide a view on whether Scrutiny consider some priorities/ambitions are more important than others
- C. To challenge the content of the draft Equalities Impact Assessment and to suggest any further additions / amendments.

The Committee supported and provided in principle support to the vision, priorities and ambitions of the draft SSHF.

The Committee challenged and scrutinised the detail and identified the following content that may require further clarity or amendment:

- Green/Environmental concerns to be more prominent such as Eco-building/Renewable Energy
- To ensure that we consult with local (Somerset) Transition Town Groups/Community Bodies

Community Scrutiny wish to be engaged with the development of the subsequent Multi-Agency Delivery Plan. The Committee also believe that TDBC should have an its own Action Plan, to identify how we will respond to the current Housing Crisis

Furthermore, the Committee suggested some detail that should be considered for the Delivery Plan / Action Plan:

- Bringing the use of 'income poor assets' (e.g. space above shops / empty buildings) back into play by the use of grants
- Possible suggestion of using NHB receipts to support the Ambitions in this Framework around social and affordable housing and rough sleeping

The Committee challenged the content of the Draft Equalities Impact Assessment and suggested further addition/amendment as follows:

- To clarify that 'Multi-Agency' includes reference to the Third Sector
- Many people will fit in to more than one category of 'protected characteristics' e.g. young and BME. The EIA should describe how the needs of such people will be considered

Finally, the committee recommend that each Councillor responds individually to the consultation if they can

### **West Somerset Council / Scrutiny Committee– 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

The report WSC 35/18 was presented by Councillor K Turner.

The purpose of the report was to highlight the key facts and challenges within the local housing market, for the proposal of a vision for homes and housing across Somerset that embraced strong and effective strategic leadership; a local economy that provided opportunity for all; homes in Somerset were good for your health; and a society that supported the vulnerable.

The current Somerset Strategic Housing Framework (SSHF) was prepared in 2013 and had an end-date of 2016, and was due for a review. It contained priorities that related to the availability of affordable housing, making best use of the existing housing stock and supported the vulnerable.

The SSHF was prepared by the Somerset Strategic Housing Officers Group (SSHG) which reported to the Somerset Strategic Housing Partnership (SSHP). The West Somerset representatives were Councillor Keith Turner and Mark Leeman (Strategy and Partnership Lead Officer).

The process of the review had begun in 2016. There was work being carried out behind the scenes which involved conversations with the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Somerset Strategic Planning Conference and the Somerset Academy.

The revised draft SSHF was published in February 2018 and was subject to consultation until 30 April 2018. After the consultation period closed, officers would prepare a report that responded to any feedback (by early summer 2018) and sought to adopt the SSHF by late summer 2018. The officers would also develop a multi-agency delivery plan that was focused on key activity and would be monitored by SSHP.

The corporate strategy had five key themes:-

1) Our Communities – the draft SSHF sought to increase the availability of affordable housing (all tenures); to deliver more housing options for rural communities, single people, young people and the elderly; to support our most vulnerable residents; and to develop employment opportunities.

2) Business and Enterprise – the draft SSHF sought the removal of barriers to housing growth. This included both the provision of infrastructure and skills development within the construction sector.

3) Our Place and Infrastructure – the draft SSHF sought to maximize the legacy of Hinkley Point C.

4) An Efficient and Modern Council – the draft SSHF challenged the Council to think creatively and radically about how it delivered housing related services, which included the provision of new housing. It also challenged the Council to develop 'asset' based models of service delivery i.e. problem solving by working with talent and ideas generated within local communities.

5) People, Place and Prosperity – the draft SSHF was consistent with the Council's aims for Transformation. It sought to support vulnerable people and families, to adopt a creative place-based approach to a service delivery, and to aspire to an economy that worked for the benefit of all. The draft SSHF would help the Council deliver integrated systems leadership that would enable the Transformation of service delivery for the benefit of our communities and local business.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Concern was raised on two risks highlighted in the risk assessment on staff and resources.

*Unfortunately the outcome of the Transformation Project was unknown. The Strategy and Partnership Lead believed that the future of the SSHP should be stable for the next couple of months, but if this was to change for the worse, then it would be up to the Portfolio Holder and the SSHG to seek resource from within the Partnership.*

- *Members queried the ambitions mentioned and wanted reassurance that the ambitions would be more detailed and robust. At present the document was at the draft consultation stage and was open for feedback and amendments.*

- *Concern was raised on what control the SSHP had over private developers and how they measured the effectiveness of the previous strategy.*

*It was difficult to monitor or state how effective the previous strategy was and would need to be addressed for the future. The Officer confirmed that the Housing Strategy covered all forms of housing and not just new builds.*

- *Members queried whether low cost ownership schemes could be promoted within the area.*

*Yes they could, however, the mortgages were not easily obtained for those schemes.*

- *Concern was raised on the Housing Sector as a whole.*

*National policy dictated the majority of what happened within the sector. The Elphicke House Report detailed the challenges faced by Councils and how to stimulate the housing market for all types of tenure. The report would be circulated to Members.*

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny Committee:-

- a) Provided 'in principle' support, with the assurance that the resources would be in place to deliver, the vision, priorities and ambitions of the draft SSHP;
- b) Challenged and scrutinised the detail and identity content that might require further clarity or amendment. Provided a view on whether Scrutiny considered some of the priorities and ambitions were more important than others; and
- c) Challenged the content of the draft Equalities Impact Assessment and suggested any further additions and amendments.