

# **‘Home in on Housing’ - Dorset Council's role and response for the new and emerging Housing Strategy**

## **Appendix 1: Housing Board – role description**

### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The scale of our ambition for Housing requires a cross-Council and multi-agency approach. As part of that, it is proposed to create a Housing Board composed of Portfolio Holders for People – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing; Assets and Property; Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy; People – Children, Education, Skills and Early Help; and Economic Growth and Levelling Up. The Lead Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness is also proposed as a member of the Board, with the option to co-opt further Members when their expertise or insight is required.
- 1.2 The Housing Board aims to collaboratively address the diverse residential needs encompassing these portfolios. By fostering cooperation and shared objectives across Directorates, the Housing Board will bring together matters to support decision making and Cabinet oversight, resource allocation, and strategic planning, ultimately enhancing the quality of housing and residential services provided to our community.
- 1.3 There will also be an Officer Board to prepare and oversee the operational delivery of the Housing programme.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The demand for comprehensive and integrated solutions to housing-related challenges has become increasingly evident. The overlapping nature of housing, property management, finance, adult social care, and children’s services requires a unified approach.
- 2.2 By establishing a Housing Board, we aim to harness the collective expertise and resources across these portfolios to develop holistic solutions.

### **3. Objectives**

- 3.1 The Housing Board’s primary objectives includes:
  - i) Collaboration: Facilitating communication and cooperation to address residential needs more effectively.
  - ii) Strategic Planning: Developing Cross-Council strategies that consider the housing continuum from child to adult, encompassing diverse needs and life stages.

- iii) Resource Optimisation: Enhancing resource allocation efficiency by working across the Council on budgeting and planning to avoid duplication and make best use of resources.
- iv) Innovation: Encouraging innovative approaches to housing challenges by leveraging insights and experiences from multiple portfolios.
- v) Community Impact: Improving the quality of housing and residential services to positively impact the lives of our residents.

#### **4. Composition and Roles**

- 4.1 The Housing Board will consist of Portfolio Holders People – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing; Assets and Property; Finance, Commercial and Capital Strategy; People – Children, Education, Skills and Early Help; and Economic Growth and Levelling Up and the Lead Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness. Each Portfolio Holder will bring their expertise to discussions, ensuring a well-rounded approach to addressing residential needs.
- 4.2 The Board will meet regularly to deliberate on strategic initiatives, review progress, and make informed recommendations. In the first instance, the Housing Board will meet to agree its scope, terms of reference and expectations. The Board is for strategic discussion, including reporting and recommending further matters for decision to other formal committees and Cabinet.

#### **5. Governance and Accountability**

- 5.1 A designated Chair, selected from among the Portfolio Holders, will lead the Housing Board. This is proposed to be Cllr Jane Somper, as the Portfolio Holder for Adults, Housing and Public Health but can be determined as the Board progresses.
- 5.2 The Chair will ensure that the Board's objectives are met, discussions are productive, and recommendations align with the overall strategic goals of the council.
- 5.3 Regular reporting to the Council Cabinet and relevant overview and scrutiny committees will ensure transparency and accountability.

#### **6. Implementation Plan**

- i) Establish terms of reference outlining the Housing Board's objectives, responsibilities, and meeting frequency.

- ii) Confirm the Chair and provide necessary support for their role.
- iii) Arrange the first Housing Board meeting to introduce members, set objectives, and establish a roadmap for initial actions.
- iv) Develop a communication strategy to ensure efficient information sharing between the Housing Board and their respective departments.
- v) Monitor progress through regular updates provided by the Chair to the Council Cabinet.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The establishment of a Housing Board comprised of Adults, Housing and Public Health; Property and Assets; Finance; Children's Services; and Economic Growth is a strategic step towards addressing complex housing needs comprehensively. By fostering collaboration and synergy among these portfolios, we will enhance our ability to provide high-quality housing solutions and residential services to our community. This initiative aligns with our commitment to creating a better living environment for all residents.