

DECISION-MAKER:	Cabinet		
SUBJECT:	NEW SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL HOUSING STRATEGY 2026-2031		
DATE OF DECISION:	27 th January 2025		
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR FRAMPTON CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING		
CORPORATE PLAN OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES	Outcome: A Growing Southampton A Healthier Southampton		
	Priority: A Growing Southampton: Deliver the homes, sustainable transport and social infrastructure Southampton needs to thrive. A Healthier Southampton: Improve the quality of our homes and housing service and reduce homelessness.		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director – Resident Services	
	Name	Carol Maclellan	
	E-mail	Carol.maclellan@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Title	Director - Resident Services	
	Name	Jamie Brenchley	Tel: 023 8083 3687
	E-mail	Jamie.brenchley@southampton.gov.uk	
Author	Title	Senior Policy Advisor	
	Name:	Arlene Beaumont-Rhodes	Tel: 023 8083 3351
	E-mail	arlene.beaumont-rhodes@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

BRIEF SUMMARY

The current Housing Strategy was agreed in 2016 and comes to an end in 2026. The Strategy needs to be revisited and developed to reflect the housing challenges Southampton faces today.

The new Southampton City Council (SCC) Housing Strategy 2026 – 2031 (Appendix 1) will replace the expiring Housing Strategy. An eight-week public consultation on the

strategy was launched on 28th July 2025 and closed on 21st September 2025. The consultation received 220 responses.

The responses from the consultation were positive, with most comments rating the vision and themes important. To reflect the responses, amendments were made to the strategy. These include;

- Foreword to better showcase work of the housing service
- The vision section has been made clearer
- Health section to include reference to the National 10 Year Health Plan
- Added a more focused delivery plan;
- Amended governance structure

The strategy focuses on delivering a vision to create a thriving, inclusive community where everyone has access to safe, affordable, healthy, and sustainable housing. It focuses on three core themes:

- Improving Our Landlord Services
- Increasing Quality Homes in the City
- Supporting Strong & Resilient Communities

The strategy is cross-cutting and includes the development of action plans that align with the Corporate Plan and will be included in the business plans for the organisation for 2026/27 onwards.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	To approve the new Southampton City Council Housing Strategy 2026-2031.
	(ii)	To note the feedback from formal consultation on the Housing Strategy and how feedback will be used, presented in Members Room Document 1.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	The new strategy reflects the housing challenges facing Southampton and is a key tool for place-shaping, linking housing with infrastructure, health, education, and economic goals.
----	--

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2.	Allow the current housing strategy to expire without producing an updated or new version. This approach is not recommended. The existing strategy is no longer fit for purpose due to the evolving changes in the housing market. It is crucial for us to stay abreast of these changes and challenges to ensure our strategy remains relevant and effective.
----	---

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3.	The current Housing Strategy, agreed in 2016, expires in 2026 and no longer reflects the scale or complexity of the housing challenges facing Southampton. While it recognised the importance of housing as a foundation for a good quality of life, it lacked strategic, and service commitments needed to deliver that ambition.
4.	It is proposed that the new SCC Housing Strategy 2026-2031 replaces the current strategy. Its vision is to create a thriving, inclusive community where everyone has access to safe, affordable, healthy and sustainable housing. This is in -line with Southampton’s 10-year city plan which commits to dramatically increasing the number of new homes and improving the quality of current homes as well as meeting local housing needs.

5.	<p>The thematic areas and priorities were developed following consideration of the of the challenges faced across the city. They link to the Corporate Plan priorities, Housing Regulatory recommendations and regulations/legislation. The three core priorities are supported by associated action plans, timelines, and investment priorities.</p> <p>The thematic areas and outcomes:</p> <p>1. Improving Our Landlord Services</p> <p>We are focused on ensuring homes are safe, healthy, good quality and well-maintained. We need to understand our customers’ needs, characteristics, experiences and expectations to shape how we plan, deliver and improve – every day and at every level.</p> <p>These efforts respond directly to the Housing Regulator’s findings and reinforces our commitment to becoming a better, more responsive landlord.</p> <p>Outcome: A housing service shaped by resident voices, where homes are safer, relationships stronger, and trust rebuilt through everyday outstanding service.</p> <p>2. Increasing Quality Homes in the City</p> <p>Southampton needs to increase the availability of good quality housing to meet growing demand, support economic growth and reduce adverse health and social impacts, and address inequality.</p> <p>By increasing housing supply and improving quality across both the private and public sectors, we can support a more inclusive local economy and reduce health and social inequalities that stem from housing disadvantage. This includes a focus on sustainability, specialist provision, and better use of existing stock.</p> <p>Outcome: A housing system that supports everyone (residents, workers, and employers) with more accessible, sustainable, and affordable homes across the city.</p> <p>3. Supporting Strong and Resilient Communities –</p> <p>Housing is key to creating healthy, thriving communities. We will work with partners to prevent homelessness, support independence, and collaborate with residents, businesses, and organisations to make neighbourhoods safe and welcoming for everyone.</p> <p>Outcome: A city of connected communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, contribute, and feel at home.</p>
6.	<p>Development of the new strategy has been led by the following guiding principles agreed by Cabinet and Management Board in September 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A five-year (2026-31) plan ▪ Focus on consolidating progress and building on what we have started ▪ Owning and addressing organisation performance challenges
7	Engagement
7.1	<p>Stakeholder engagement has included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Directorate Leadership Team ▪ Housing Strategy and Working Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing Improvement Board ▪ Executive Management Board, Council leader, and Cabinet lead for Housing ▪ Workshop with group leaders in July 2025 and consultation feedback update in November 2025 ▪ Housing Scrutiny Board July 2025 ▪ Tenant and Leaseholder engagement group ▪ Overview Scrutiny Management committee (OSMC): August 2025 ▪ Health Overview Scrutiny Panel (HOSP) August 2025 						
8	A public consultation took place between 28 th July and 21 st September 2025 and received 220 responses.						
8.1	<p>The aim of the consultation was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearly communicate the proposed plans to residents and stakeholders; ▪ Ensure any resident, business or stakeholder in Southampton that wished to comment on the proposals had the opportunity to do so; and ▪ Allow participants to propose alternative suggestions for consideration which they feel could achieve the objectives of the plans in a different way. 						
8.2	An online survey was used for the consultation questionnaire which gave a brief outline of each priority along with a reference to the section in the draft strategy.						
8.3	An Equality Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) was published with the consultation (Appendix 2)						
8.4	<p>The consultation was promoted in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Via email/survey to health groups, landlords, tenants <p>Bulletin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weekly City News ▪ Monthly Tenant’s Link - dedicated to social housing tenants ▪ Stay Connected - weekly internal bulletin for SCC staff <p>Digital display screens in our council blocks reminding people to take part using the QR Code</p> <p>Social Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facebook ▪ Nextdoor – community focused ▪ Bluesky ▪ LinkedIn ▪ Viva Engage – SCC internal <p>Tenant Engagement Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ email to tenants <p>Local library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ advertised digitally, and available on paper 						
9	A Consultation Report (Members Room Document 1) includes a full breakdown of the consultation results.						
9.1	A summary of the consultation, our response to the consultation feedback is provided in sections 9.2 – 9.4						
9.2	<p>Who responded</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Demographic</th> <th>Tenure</th> <th>Interest</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 62% Female, 38% Male </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40% homeowners </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 97% southampton residents </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Demographic	Tenure	Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 62% Female, 38% Male 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40% homeowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 97% southampton residents
Demographic	Tenure	Interest					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 62% Female, 38% Male 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40% homeowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 97% southampton residents 					

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 91% White British ▪ 38% reported a disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 33% council tenants ▪ 16% private landlords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 13% SCC employees ▪ 9% landlords
9.3	Areas	Consultation feedback	Our Response
	Foreword	Did not highlight work that the housing service was already doing.	Foreword refined to highlight what the service started and its ongoing journey.
	Vision	Remove information about the employers, and transient population	Amended to ensure clarity
	Priority 1: Improving our landlord services	<p>There was mixed satisfaction with current services. With mostly dissatisfaction with maintenance (43%).</p> <p>Strong support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neighbourhood environment (95%) ▪ Optimisation of existing stock (94%) ▪ Working with customers (93%) ▪ Asset Investment Strategy & Plan (88%) 	<p>The strategy was amended to address repairs where we will improve communications and introduce post-repair satisfactions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced Decent Neighbourhoods programme ▪ Greater use of our system to ensure efficiency for minor works and continuously review and monitor allocation policy ▪ Customer Insight ▪ Continued spend on decent homes projects.
	Priority 2: Increasing Quality Homes in the City	<p>High dissatisfaction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing availability (59%) ▪ Affordability (61%) ▪ Private rented quality (63%) <p>Strong support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affordable housing (93%) ▪ Housing Supply (92%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Real incentive to produce the new Private Sector Housing Strategy ▪ Health need assessment on the rental sector

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New-build quality (94%) 	
	Priority 3: Supporting Strong and Resident Communities	Dissatisfaction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homelessness prevention (58%) ▪ Adapted housing (38%) ▪ Resident engagement (51%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure faster disabled grant processing ▪ Continue to strengthen early intervention partnerships ▪ Accessible housing embedded in Local Plan ▪ Housing Strategy make linkages to 10-Year Health Plan

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 11. | The new Housing Strategy was developed with existing resources. Delivery of initiatives within the new strategy will include resource implications which will be assessed and reported at the point of decision. |
|-----|--|

Property/Other

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 12. | Southampton City Council holds 17,861 stocks, which is considered as property to be maintained and managed in an effective and efficient way. Additionally, the strategy will impact homes managed by the private sector within the city. |
|-----|---|

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

- | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 13. | Housing Act 1985 and Housing Act 1996 |
|-----|---------------------------------------|

Other Legal Implications:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 14. | Southampton City Council is the housing authority for the city and is responsible for fulfilling a range of duties to ensure that residents have access to safe, affordable and suitable housing options within its communities. |
|-----|--|

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 15. | Not producing a new housing strategy would result in the continuation of an outdated and not-fit-for-purpose strategy. This would negatively impact the services provided by the Council to its residents. Without a forward-thinking strategy, there could be adverse effects on the availability of suitable housing (decent homes), and it may hinder the attraction of investors, employers, and short-term renters. |
|-----|--|

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 16. | The proposals contained in the new strategy are in accordance with the Council's policy to provide good quality, affordable and sustainable housing to support strong resilient neighbourhoods. |
|-----|---|

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Draft SCC Housing Strategy 2026-2031
----	--------------------------------------

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	Consultation Report
2.	You Said, We Did
3.	ESIA

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	Yes
--	------------

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
---	-----------

Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	Southampton City Council - Regulatory Judgement: 27 November 2024
2.	Southampton City Plan 2035
3.	Southampton City Council Corporate Plan