
Subject: DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL HOUSING DELIVERY ACTION PLAN 2020

Meeting and Date: Cabinet - 1 June 2020

Report of: Lois Jarrett, Head of Planning, Regeneration and Development

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nicholas Kenton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services

Decision Type: Non-Key

Classification: Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To seek approval for the Housing Delivery Action Plan 2020.

Recommendation: That Cabinet approves the Housing Delivery Action Plan 2020 attached at Appendix 1.

1. Summary

1.1 The Council registered a 92% performance measured against the Government's housing delivery test. The result means the Council can apply a 5% buffer to its annual 5 years housing land supply calculation and should produce an action plan that assesses the causes of under delivery, explores ways to reduce the risk of further under-delivery and identifies actions to increase delivery. The Council's Housing Delivery Action Plan 2020 has been produced in line with national planning practice guidance and provides a set of initiatives to help increase the supply of new dwellings within the Dover district.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 In February 2017 the Government published a housing white paper 'Fixing our broken housing market'. The paper set out plans to reform the market and boost the supply of new homes in England. Within the white paper a mechanism called the housing delivery test (HDT) was introduced with the aim of holding local authorities and wider interests accountable for their performance in their role of ensuring a sufficient quantity of new homes are delivered within their area. The HDT became embedded within planning policy with the introduction of the revised National Planning Policy Framework in 2018 and remains in the current iteration of the document published in February 2019 (NPPF 2019).

2.2 The NPPF 2019 defines the HDT as measuring the net additional dwellings provided in a local authority area against the homes required, using national statistics and local authority data. The NPPF at paragraph 75 stipulates that where the housing delivery test indicates that delivery has fallen below 95% of the Local Authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the authority should produce an action plan in line with national planning guidance, to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years.

2.3 The mechanics behind how the HDT works and the Council's performance were reported in the Housing Supply Technical paper, an appendix to the Council's Authority Monitoring report presented to this Cabinet in December 2019 and was

published on the Councils website in January 2020¹. The Housing Supply technical paper reported a 92% result for the Council measured against the HDT, a position that was confirmed when the MHCLG published the formal results on 13 February 2020. The performance of 92% means the Council can apply a 5% buffer to the Council's 5 years housing land supply calculation and should produce a Housing Delivery Action Plan (HDAP) for the district.

- 2.4 The requirement for a local authority to produce a HDAP has been set out within national policy and as such this determines that the requirement to produce a HDAP and the HDAP itself are material considerations in planning decision making.
- 2.5 The framework and criteria that should be considered when producing a HDAP have been set out within National Planning Practice Guidance² and have been applied in the production of the Councils HDAP. As recommended in guidance, key stakeholders from the development industry including landowners, developers, planning consultants and estate agents were given the opportunity to attend a forum and provide feedback on the draft HDAP for the Council. Feedback from the forum will be considered when developing future HDAP's for the Council.
- 2.6 The Councils HDAP set outs:
- Potential performance against future HDTs;
 - The demographic, geographic, infrastructure, natural and built environment context in the district of Dover;
 - Dover District Council's Development Plan;
 - Housing delivery rates and analysis;
 - External factors affecting delivery within the District;
 - Summary of the Council's housing delivery issues, challenges, problems and weaknesses;
 - Action plan initiatives; and,
- Monitoring and review of the HDAP.
- 2.7 The action plan initiatives in the HDAP are categorised by Local Plan, Development Management and delivery of housing sites. Each initiative sets out its purpose, the time frame, priority, implementation and outcomes. Based on the Council's anticipated future performance against the HDT it is appropriate to consider initiatives that are both medium-term and long-term as well as addressing the short term. Initiatives will be reviewed within future HDAPs and updated and amended where required to help support the supply of new dwellings.
- 2.8 At present, it is uncertain what the impact of COVID-19 will be on future dwelling completions and housing land supply monitoring. The HDAP takes a retrospective look at housing completions during the monitoring years 2016/7, 2017/18 and 2018/19 and identifies factors that impacted on dwelling delivery. The initiatives in the HDAP are forward looking, focusing on interventions that the Council can take to

¹ Dover District Council Housing Technical Paper 2019:
<https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Regeneration/PDF/Housing-Supply-Technical-Paper-2019-1.pdf>

² NPPG 2019 Housing Supply and Delivery:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-supply-and-delivery#housing-delivery-test>

aid in the delivery of new dwellings. Inevitably, when the country comes out of the COVID-19 pandemic both societal and economic support will be required and the HDAP initiatives will help contribute to the process.

3. Identification of Options

3.1 To approve the HDAP for 2020.

3.2 Not to approve the HDAP for 2020

4. Evaluation of Options

4.1 By approving the HDAP for 2020 the Council will have complied with the national planning policy requirement and provided a set of initiatives that will help increase the supply of new dwellings within the district. Further, by approving the HDAP the Council will be contributing to the post COVID-19 pandemic societal and economic recovery by expediting and increasing the supply of new homes within the district

4.2 If the Cabinet were not to approve the HDAP then there would be no framework of initiatives agreed to increase the supply of new dwellings in the district. The likely outcome will be a deteriorating future performance of housing delivery against the HDT through constraints to dwelling supply not being addressed. This will likely result in the Council facing the more stringent penalties stipulated within the HDT.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 There are no resource implications in the approval of the HDAP 2020.

5.2 Once agreed by Cabinet, a copy of the HDAP 2020 will be placed on the Council's website.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

6.1 There is no human, economic or environmental impacts from the options set out within this report to approve or not approve the HDAP 2020. If the HDAP 2020 were to be approved, then it would be appropriate to consider the impacts from initiatives within action plan as they progress.

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Accountancy: Finance have been consulted and have nothing further to add (SG).

7.2 Comments from the Planning Solicitor: "The Planning Solicitor has been consulted in the production of this report and has no further comments to make."

7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Housing Delivery Action Plan 2020

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