

Blaby District Council

Cabinet Executive

Date of Meeting	7 November 2022
Title of Report	Scrutiny Commission Recommendations to Cabinet Executive: Affordable Housing This is not a Key Decision and is not on the Forward Plan
Lead Member	Cllr. Les Phillimore - Housing, Community & Environmental Services
Report Author	Senior Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Corporate Priority	A Place to Live

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 This report presents the findings and recommendation of the Live Scrutiny Working Group following a review of Affordable Housing in the District.

2. Recommendation(s) to Cabinet Executive

- 2.1 That Cabinet considers the Affordable Housing report and recommendations at Appendix A.
- 2.2 That a written response to the report recommendations is provided to the Scrutiny Commission within 2 months of receipt of the report using the response form at Appendix B.

3. Reason for Decisions Recommended

- 3.1 It is a legal requirement for Cabinet Executive to respond to Scrutiny Commission recommendations within two months of receiving any such recommendations.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The report seeks to ensure that the continuing and increasing challenge of affordable housing provision within the Blaby District is reflected and forms a core focus in the Local Plan and associated Blaby District policies and strategies.

The Working Group acknowledges that the shortage of affordable homes remains one of the biggest policy challenges across the UK and is not confined to the Blaby District. We also acknowledge that at the time of considering the review scope, the up-to-date Leicester & Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground had not yet been received.

Whilst conducting this piece of work, members have gained a thorough understanding of the many factors, difficulties and barriers that have contributed to the current housing situation, as well as a greater understanding of the complexities involved in addressing it. We have therefore sought to think creatively in formulating our recommendations, following discussions with various stakeholders, that will lead to an improvement in the provision of affordable homes and a reduction in the growing number of families and single households that are becoming homeless. From the evidence received, it is clear that to address this increasing and urgent need, there must be a strong and proactive lead from the authority, working closely with relevant stakeholders, to ensure that all possible opportunities are explored.

The Working Group's initial scope and key tasks were to:

- Investigate what policy adjustments can be suggested/implemented that may increase our delivery of affordable housing within our District.
- Including what we can change/improve in our local plan to accommodate the above objective.
- Review the 15 or more threshold to bring it in line with other policy requirements.
- Review the need for viability assessments where a contribution is made (RP's need to provide financial info for homes England / viability assessments have always proved the need for contribution).

Scrutiny report findings and recommendations, approved by the Scrutiny Commission on 19 October 2022, are attached at Appendix A.

4.2 Proposal(s)

Scrutiny requires Cabinet Executive to:

- Consider the report
- To respond by identifying actions proposed in light of the report
- If Scrutiny has published the report, to publish any response
- If Scrutiny has copied the report to a member, to provide a copy of their response to the member.

The notice of requirement with Scrutiny recommendations is attached at Appendix B for response by Cabinet Executive within 2 months of receipt of its report. Cabinet Executive must comply with the notice of requirement.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

As outlined within Appendix A.

4.4 Significant Issues

No significant issues relating to Human Rights, Legal Implications, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities and Climate Local were identified.

5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

5.1 There are no cost or savings implications relating to this report.

6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

6.1 None

7. Other options considered

7.1 No other options were considered.

8. Environmental impact

8.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered the impact on the Environment, and there are no areas of concern.

9. Other significant issues

9.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

10. Appendix

10.1 Appendix A – Live Scrutiny Working Group Review of Affordable Housing,

10.2 Appendix B - Scrutiny Commission Notice of Requirement

11. Background paper(s)

11.1 None

12. Report author's contact details

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