



North Devon Council

Report Date: 06 September 2021

Topic: Housing Issues within North Devon

Report by: Chief Executive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. There has been much talk recently regarding a housing crisis and several Parish and Town Councils have declared a “Housing Emergency” as an acknowledgment of the difficulties currently facing those seeking accommodation.
- 1.2. This report recommends an in depth look at some of the issues affecting the local market.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Council hold an informal Panel meeting, inviting relevant organisations and individuals to make representations, with a view to preparing a set of actions and recommendations.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To fully understand the issues around the local housing market and to try to draw together some recommendations that can be implemented locally

4. REPORT

- 4.1. There is little doubt that the housing market in North Devon has changed significantly over the past 12-18 months. House prices have increased substantially and the permanent rental market has significantly reduced, partly as a result of the increase in the short term holiday let market. Many buyers from outside of the area have also been attracted during the pandemic. At the same time, the number of people presenting as homeless has increased significantly.
- 4.2. Impacts are being felt by individuals, businesses, communities and by public services.
- 4.3. The issues around the current housing crisis are complex and go beyond the holiday market. Issues such as empty properties, housing standards, energy efficiency, housing supply, affordability, national and local policies are all also relevant and need examination.
- 4.4. For that reason, it is recommended that Councillors and officers engage with the relevant agencies and organisations and those affected by the issues through an informal Panel which will draw together a report setting out recommendations on actions that the District Council can take and points on which government assistance is required.

4.5. Membership of the Panel will be for Committee to determine but it is suggested that it should consist of members of the Policy Development Committee, Leader and Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Housing. Other Councillors would, of course, be able to attend and speak.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There are no resource implications from the recommendations

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. (Please detail if there are/are not any equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report. If so, please complete the Equality Impact Assessment Summary form available on Insite and email to the Corporate and Community Services Team at equality@northdevon.gov.uk).

There are no equality implications from the recommendations

7. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

7.1. Under normal circumstances, an in depth examination of issues such as this would be undertaken by the Policy Development Committee. However, it is considered that the issue is of wider ranging strategic interest which warrants wider involvement and a forum that operates outside of the fairly rigid procedures that exist at Committee.

8. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report). None

10. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

10.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Group Leaders, Head of Planning, Housing and Health