

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Cabinet
Date:	22 June 2026
Subject:	Housing Strategy 2026-2031 Update
Lead Member:	Cllr Iftakhar Ahmed, Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness and Communities
Chief Officer:	Will Tuckley, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Francesca Stott, Interim Chief of Staff
Ward(s):	All
Key Decision:	YES
Exempt:	NO
Decision Subject To Call In:	YES
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Slough Borough Council Housing Strategy 2026-2031 Appendix 2 – Housing Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report presents Slough's Housing Strategy 2026-2031, setting out the Council's long-term approach to addressing housing need and delivering homes and neighbourhoods that meet the needs of residents. The Strategy is structured around five key priorities and provides a framework to guide housing activity, investment and partnership working across the Borough over the lifetime of the Strategy.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the Housing Strategy 2026-2031 as set out in Appendix 1.
- b) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, to approve minor amendments to the Housing Strategy, including in response to feedback from residents, tenants and other interested parties.

Reason:

To provide a clear strategic framework for the Council's approach to housing over the period 2026–2031, supporting the delivery of housing priorities, informing future service planning and investment decisions, and ensuring housing activity is aligned with wider corporate priorities and resident needs.

Commissioner Review

This Housing Strategy 2026–2031 and its focus on housing supply, homelessness, affordability, housing quality and the Council’s role as landlord is to be welcomed. These are central issues for Slough’s improvement journey, bearing in mind resident outcomes and financial sustainability.

However, the key issue is deliverability. The Strategy should be regularly reviewed to ensure actions are being implemented with clear priorities, milestones, accountabilities, resources and measurable outcomes. Given the Council’s financial position, it will also be important that future proposals are affordable, aligned to the Medium Term Financial Strategy as well as the HRA, and demonstrate value for money.

The direction of travel is supported, but approval of the Strategy should be seen as the starting point. The Best Value test will be whether the Council can deliver measurable improvements for residents while reducing avoidable costs, strengthening compliance and prioritising deliverables within available resources.

2. Report

Introductory paragraph

2.1 Introduction

The Housing Strategy 2026–2031 sets out the Council’s long-term approach to addressing housing need and delivering homes and neighbourhoods that meet the needs of residents across Slough. The Strategy aligns with and supports the priorities set out within the Corporate Plan and wider Council strategies and plans, including the refreshed Local Plan, Economic Regeneration Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This alignment will support a more joined-up approach across the Council and help ensure housing activity contributes to wider priorities and outcomes for residents.

Options considered

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1: Approve the Housing Strategy 2026–2031 and use it as the basis for ongoing engagement and delivery planning across the Borough. Recommended	Provides a clear strategic framework for the Council’s housing priorities and long-term approach to housing need. Supports coordinated working across the Council and with residents, Registered Providers, developers and wider partners. Provides a framework for future housing policies, investment decisions and service improvement activity.	None identified.

Options	Pros	Cons
<p>Option 2: Do not approve the Housing Strategy 2026–2031.</p> <p>Not recommended</p>	<p>No clear advantage identified.</p>	<p>The Council would not have an up-to-date strategic framework to guide housing priorities, partnership working and future housing activity across the Borough.</p>

Background

The Housing Strategy 2026–2031 sets out the Council’s long-term approach to addressing housing need and delivering high-quality homes and neighbourhoods across Slough. It provides a strategic framework for responding to growing demand, affordability pressures and changing demographic needs, while supporting wider corporate priorities around health, economic growth, regeneration and sustainability. The Strategy is evidence-led and aligned with key Council plans, ensuring a coordinated, borough-wide approach to housing delivery and improvement.

Slough faces a number of significant housing challenges. Demand for housing continues to outstrip supply, affordability pressures remain amongst the highest in the country and homelessness has increased in recent years. The Borough also experiences high levels of overcrowding, increasing demand for specialist and supported housing, and a need to improve housing quality and standards across all tenures. At the same time, housing plays a critical role in supporting wider outcomes including health and wellbeing, educational attainment, economic growth, community safety and environmental sustainability. The Housing Strategy provides a framework for addressing these challenges and ensuring housing contributes positively to the Council’s wider ambitions for residents and communities.

At its core, the Strategy is structured around five priorities:

1. Increase affordable housing supply and build more new homes for residents.
2. Work to end homelessness and meet housing need, ensuring housing is affordable and accessible to all residents.
3. Create neighbourhoods and homes where residents want to live, work and play and address inequalities.
4. Address the sustainability and zero-carbon challenges in new and existing homes.
5. Be the best landlord we can be, improve the quality and management of our Council Housing.

Together, these priorities set a clear direction for delivering safe, secure, affordable and sustainable homes that meet the needs of residents and support thriving communities across Slough.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 *Financial implications*

- 3.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of the Housing Strategy itself. However, delivery of the Strategy and the implementation of individual policies and programmes may incur financial implications over the lifetime of the Strategy. Any specific financial implications, funding requirements or budgetary impacts will be identified and considered through future reports and presented to Cabinet as proposals are developed.

3.2 *Legal implications*

- 3.2.1 The Council has a range of statutory duties and powers relating to housing, homelessness, planning, landlord services and private sector housing standards. The Housing Strategy provides a strategic framework to support the Council in delivering these functions over the period 2026–2031.

The Strategy also reflects wider legislative and regulatory changes affecting the housing sector, including reforms arising through the Renters Rights Act and requirements associated with the Regulator of Social Housing. Any future decisions arising from delivery of the Strategy will be subject to separate decision-making processes and consideration of any specific legal implications at that stage.

3.3 *Risk management implications*

- 3.3.1 The Council's corporate risk register contains the following risks of failure to provide safe temporary accommodation within budget, health and safety failure to prevent physical injury or mental health, failure to achieve financial sustainability and a balanced MTFs, failure of council subsidiaries and failure to safeguard children and young people and meet the demands on adult social care. In addition, the Council has received a C3 rating from the Regulator of Social Housing in relation to its function as a housing landlord. Safe and fit for purpose housing, whether in the social housing or private market, is critical to addressing health inequalities and a failure to properly manage the market as a whole will increase pressure on the Council in relation to increased homelessness. This in turn places financial pressure on the Council and risks the Council being unable to balance its budget.

3.4 *Environmental implications*

- 3.4.1 The Housing Strategy supports the Council's wider environmental and sustainability ambitions, including improving the energy efficiency of homes, reducing carbon emissions and supporting the delivery of sustainable development across the Borough.

Any specific environmental implications arising from future projects, programmes or investment decisions flowing from the Strategy will be considered through separate reports and decision-making processes where appropriate.

3.5 *Equality implications*

- 3.5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Housing Strategy 2026–2031. The assessment found that the Strategy is expected to have an overall positive impact by increasing access to affordable housing, reducing homelessness, improving housing quality and supporting inclusive communities.

3.5.2 Positive impacts were identified for a number of groups with protected characteristics, including older people, disabled residents, families with children and residents from ethnic minority communities, who are disproportionately affected by housing need, affordability pressures and poor housing conditions. No significant adverse impacts have been identified at this strategic level. Where individual projects or policies arising from the Strategy may have specific equality implications, these will be assessed separately through project-level Equality Impact Assessments.

3.6 *Corporate Parenting Implications*

3.6.1 The Council takes its responsibilities as corporate parent to the children who are Looked After in Slough incredibly seriously and has developed a protocol with Housing to ensure that Young People leaving care are given the support and concrete assistance they need on the journey to independence. Housing is a key area where the duty enshrined in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 is particularly relevant.

3.6.2 The Council can fulfil its duty by ensuring it has in place effective advice and support for young people leaving care, securing settled accommodation via staying put arrangements and supporting with deposits and financial management. The Council has a protocol in place to support young people leaving care who are at risk of homelessness or has built up arrears. Advice and support can also include preparedness for adulthood and a tapering approach to supported accommodation to allow young people to build up the skills to live independently.

4. **Background Papers**

None.