

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

**Date**                    **07 November 2019**

**Report of:**            **Deputy Chief Executive Officer**

**Subject:**              **DRAFT FAREHAM HOUSING GREENER POLICY**

#### **SUMMARY**

Fareham Housing undertakes a number of greener measures in regard to its housing stock. This policy sets out the commitment to improve on existing practices and will form part of the pledge to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Housing Scrutiny Panel consider and comment on the draft Fareham Housing Greener Policy in advance of it being presented to the December meeting of the Executive for approval.

## INTRODUCTION

1. As the effects of climate change is becoming more widely understood, the Government is starting to deliver its commitment through such documents as 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' (2018) and the 2019 amendment to the Climate Change Act (2008). The impact of any further legislation may in turn affect the ways that Councils are able to deliver their services or build affordable housing. In anticipation and in recognition of any potential effects, the Council has already started to address environmental improvements.

## CURRENT GREENER COMMITMENTS

2. In June 2019, the Executive approved the draft Affordable Housing Strategy for consultation. The strategy's main objective is to provide the right homes in the right places for those in need of affordable housing. One of the outcomes of the consultation was the inclusion of producing a policy detailing approach to Council owned stock. This has been added as an action under Objective 2 and was approved at the October Executive meeting.
3. At the September Executive Meeting the Leader pledged Fareham Borough Council's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030. This pledge would be met through a working group led by Councillor Martin, with initial work being focussed on establishing a carbon footprint baseline before a more detailed action plan is put in place. The commitment builds on previous environmental work already undertaken such as the Single Use Plastic (SUP) project.
4. Fareham Housing has also undertaken a number of sustainability projects in recent years including the development of six Passivhaus units at Coldeast, implementation of solar panels at sheltered schemes and replacing fittings and fixtures such as lightbulbs and taps with more energy saving models.
5. In order to keep building on this success and meet the action within the Affordable Housing Strategy, Fareham Housing has drafted a Greener Policy. This policy sets out a series of principles it is committing to with the aim of lowering carbon emissions lost from housing stock. Reducing emissions can be achieved through such measures as improving insulation, installing efficient heating systems or designing more sustainable homes from the ground up. An additional benefit of this work is that they can also help our tenants lower their energy costs and tackle fuel poverty.

## THE FAREHAM HOUSING GREENER POLICY

6. The Fareham Housing Greener Policy is set out as four principles to guide users through the greener measures Fareham Housing is committing to. These principles start at the early stages of housing development through to the maintenance and improvement of existing stock. Consideration is also given to ensure grant funding opportunities can be maximised to remain in line with any budgetary restrictions.
7. **Principle 1**, 'Minimise consumption of resources', commits to improving water and energy efficiency, exploring the use of renewable technologies and improving the

SAP<sup>1</sup> and CO2 ratings in Council owned stock. The work under this principle will build on the existing responsive and planned maintenance programmes and focus on implementing more energy efficient fixtures and fittings (where possible). Any improvements may have the additional benefit of lowering energy costs for our tenants.

8. **Principle 2**, 'Promote sustainable lifestyles', will build on the existing advice already available with the aim of enabling more informed, sustainable choices.
9. **Principle 3**, 'Build homes that meet the sustainability needs of our customers now and in the future', looks at how Fareham Housing will consider both future development and improvements to existing stock. Consideration of greener principles at the design stage will ensure any future projects continue to meet both the needs of our customers and realise the greener commitment.
10. **Principle 4**, 'Deliver a greener standard', will ensure that the other principles can be delivered in a way that does not compromise budgetary restrictions. It is expected that the price of renewable technologies will become more affordable as they become more mainstream, and more grant funding opportunities will become available. Delivery of a greener standard also expands on the first principle in that an understanding of where fuel poverty exists can help those households most in need of energy saving measures.
11. It is important to recognise that not all tenants will be familiar with these new technologies so will be informed on how to use them correctly. Tenants will also be encouraged to provide feedback, ensuring guidance is easily understood and the technologies are working optimally.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

12. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report.

## **CONCLUSION**

13. Members are invited to provide their views on the draft Fareham Housing Greener Policy prior to the document being presented to the Executive in December.

**Appendices:** Appendix A – Draft Fareham Housing Greener Policy

**Background Papers:**

**Reference Papers:**

**Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Fleur Allaway – Housing Policy Officer (Ext x4304)

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<sup>1</sup> SAP ratings quantify a dwellings performance in terms of energy use and is used to produce an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate).