1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides the Housing Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the Housing Big Conversation report and information regarding the development of the Council’s new housing strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Waltham Forest Council’s priorities include a commitment to working to ensure all residents have a safe roof over their head.

2.2 In recent years our housing achievements have included:

- Delivering more affordable housing than any other London borough – an average of 47% (21% higher than the London average)
- Dissolving the ALMO and bringing all housing services back in-house, as well as integrating Housing into the Families and Homes directorate
- Setting up Waltham Forest Developments, the Council-owned company created to assist regeneration and the Council’s home building programme
- Launching the Private Rented Property Licensing Scheme
- Developing a Housing-led Local Area Coordination Pilot
- Introducing a new Resident Engagement strategy and relaunching our Resident Engagement framework

2.3 In order to develop our future housing plans, the Council will be producing a new Housing Strategy in 2018. The Housing Big Conversation report acts as a direction of travel document, setting out the current context for housing in
Waltham Forest and posing the “big questions” that we will be asking as we progress the strategy.

2.4 The three key themes identified within the document are:

- **Putting housing at the heart of the Council’s mission to improve the quality of people’s lives** by shaping places that work for local people, adopting a “think family” approach to develop new ways of working and collaborating with partners to achieve the best outcomes.

- **Ensuring a decent roof over everyone’s head** by ensuring the right mix of housing, managing the quality of housing available and helping residents find the right housing solution for them.

- **Empowering and engaging residents** by becoming a digitally enabled Council, improving the customer experience for tenants and leaseholders and providing more than just a roof to empower residents to access better lives.

2.5 The document is intended to encourage engagement with the development of the housing strategy and we will be carrying out consultation with residents as well as internal and external stakeholders over the coming months. Consultation on the final draft document will start in summer 2018 with the final strategy to be published in October 2018.

2.6 A high level draft of the new housing strategy will be brought to the March Housing Scrutiny meeting for discussion before a final document is published for consultation in the Summer.

2.7 Further information on the Big Conversation report and the consultation can be found on the [Council website](#).

3. **IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no direct financial or legal implications arising from this report.

4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 The Committee is requested to note the information contained in this report.

5. **APPENDICES**

5.1 A copy of the Housing Big Conversation report is attached as Appendix A to this report (hard copies will be available at the meeting).
6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 None.