



HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To: Scrutiny Committee Members: Councillors Todd-Jones (Chair), Bird (Vice-Chair), Avery, Gawthrope, Holland, R. Moore, Page-Croft and Smart

Alternates: Councillors Abbott and T. Moore

Tenants and Leaseholders: Lulu Agate (Tenant Representative) Diane Best (Leaseholder Representative), Kay Harris (Tenant Representative), John Marais (Tenant Representative), Diana Minns (Vice Chair /Tenant Representative), and Mandy Powell-Hardy (Tenant Representative).

Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Price

Despatched: Thursday, 23 February 2017

Date: Tuesday, 7 March 2017

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Committee Room 1 & 2, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ

Contact: Toni Birkin

Direct Dial: 01223 457013

AGENDA

1 Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare at this stage any interests that they may have in an item shown on this agenda. If any member of the Committee is unsure whether or not they should declare an interest on a particular matter, they should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer **before** the meeting.

3 Minutes (*Pages 7 - 22*)

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

4 Public Questions

Please see information at the end of the agenda.

Items for Decision by the Executive Councillor for Housing, Without Debate

These Items will already have received approval in principle from the Executive Councillor. The Executive Councillor will be asked to approve the recommendations as set out in the officer's report.

There will be no debate on these items, but members of the Scrutiny Committee and members of the public may ask questions or comment on the items if they comply with the Council's rules on Public Speaking set out below.

Items for Debate by the Committee and then Decision by the Executive Councillor for Housing

These items will require the Executive Councillor to make a decision after hearing the views of the Scrutiny Committee.

There will be a full debate on these items, and members of the public may ask questions or comment on the items if they comply with the Council's rules on Public Speaking set out below.

Part 1: To be chaired by Vice Chair (Tenant/Leaseholder Representative)
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Items for Debate by the Committee and then Decision by the Executive Councillor for Housing

5 Resident Involvement Strategy: 2017-2020 (Pages 23 - 46)

Part 2: To be taken by the Chair of the Committee
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Items for Debate by the Committee and then Decision by the Executive Councillor for Housing

6 Interim Housing Strategy Statement 2017 (Pages 47 - 98)

Exclusion of Press and Public

It is recommended that the committee resolves to exclude the press and public during item 7 by virtue of paragraph(s)3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

7 New Housing by the Council (Pages 99 - 148)

- 8 Council Newbuild Redevelopment - 9-10A Ventress Close Scheme Approval** *(Pages 149 - 162)*
- 9 Council Newbuild Redevelopment - 9-28 Anstey Way Scheme Approval** *(Pages 163 - 178)*
- 10 Sale of Roof Voids (and Other Property) to Leaseholders** *(Pages 179 - 182)*
- 11 Introduction of an Empty Homes Loan Scheme** *(Pages 183 - 212)*

Information for the Public

Location The meeting is in the Guildhall on the Market Square (CB2 3QJ).

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- For questions and/or statements regarding items on the published agenda, the deadline is the start of the meeting.
- For questions and/or statements regarding items NOT on the published agenda, the deadline is 10 a.m. the day before the meeting.

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HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 January 2017

5.30 - 8.15 pm

Present:

Scrutiny Committee Members: Councillors Todd-Jones (Chair), Bird (Vice-Chair), Avery, Gawthrope, Holland, R. Moore, Page-Croft, Smart, Price (Executive Councillor), Agate, Best, Harris, Marais, Minns and Powell-Hardy

Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Price

Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives: Lulu Agate, Diane Best, Kay Harris, John Marais, Diana Minns, Mandy Powell-Hardy and Terry Sweeney

Officers:

Strategic Director: Suzanne McBride

Strategic Advisor - Housing and Welfare Reform: Liz Bisset

Head of Housing Services: Tom Bremner

Head of Estates & Facilities: Trevor Burdon:

Business Manager & Principal Accountant (Shared Housing Finance Team):
Julia Hovells

Manager Temp Housing & Housing Support: Frances Swann

Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**17/1/HSC Apologies**

No apologies were received.

17/2/HSC Declarations of Interest

Councillor, leaseholder or tenants representative	Item	Interest
Cllr Bird	16/50/HSC	Personal: Has used the service in the past.
Cllr Avery	16/52/HSC	Personal: Rents a Cambridge City Council garage.
Tenant	16/50/HSC	Personal: Has used the service in the past.

Representative		
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17/3/HSC Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed as a correct record.

17/4/HSC Public Questions

There were no public questions.

17/5/HSC Procurement of a new Housing Management Information System

This Item was chaired by Diana Minns (Vice Chair / Tenant Representative)

Matter for Decision

The report proposed a joint procurement exercise with South Cambridgeshire District Council, to provide a Housing Management Information System for both authorities. The Housing Services would remain distinct, with two instances of the new system provided, but recognised that moving to the use of a single provider would make it easier for the two Councils to share some or all of their housing services in the future.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved a capital budget of £500,000 for Cambridge City Council's share of the up-front costs of jointly procuring a new Housing Management Information System with South Cambridgeshire District Council. The cost is to be fully met from existing repairs and renewals funds.
- ii. Noted the current annual support and maintenance revenue budget of £75,000.
- iii. Recognised the procurement benefits of undertaking this project now, in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- iv. Approved that the authority proceeds with this joint procurement exercise, and that following a compliant competitive process, the Strategic Director is given delegated authority to tender and award a contract on behalf of Cambridge City Council.

Reason for the Decision

To procure a modern, fit for purpose housing and property management system for the HRA, the wholly owned housing company and any other assets

held by the Council which require management activity to be undertaken as set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Business Manager/Principal Accountant.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Welcomed the information regarding home ownership.
- ii. Suggested that tenant and leaseholder representative could be used as part of the consultation process.

The Business Manager/Principal Accountant stated the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The joint project board would develop a communications strategy.
- ii. The full tender would include a requirement for other providers to share the service in future.
- iii. No additional maintenance budget would be agreed until the system was in place. Cost would vary depending on what host system was selected.
- iv. Cost would be shared across the authorities proportionally, based on the number of properties under management and the number of users of the system.
- v. The system would be flexible enough to cope with any impact of devolution.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

17/6/HSC Adaptations Policy for HRA Property

This Item was chaired by Diana Minns (Vice Chair / Tenant Representative)

Matter for Decision

A comprehensive review of the Disabled Adaptations Service had been completed and the Policy would replace the previous version dated 2008. In order to continue to provide a high quality adaptations service to its tenants and to balance the best use of its resources, the City Council aims to bring greater parity between the way housing adaptations are managed through the housing revenue account and the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) regime applied to other social housing and the private sector.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved the Disabled Adaptations Policy 2017.

Reason for the Decision

As a result of government changes announced in 2015, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is facing significant financial pressures requiring fundamental reviews of all HRA funded housing services. These reviews are described in the Housing Transformation reports submitted to Housing Scrutiny Committee throughout 2015 and 2016 and are further reported to this meeting in January 2017. Proposals previously approved by the Scrutiny Committee specifically included for a review of the adaptation service for disabled tenants which has not been examined since 2008.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Head of Estates & Facilities.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Expressed concerns regarding the move towards parity with Registered Social Landlords and the potential for this to be a 'race to the bottom' with further cuts to follow.
- ii. Expressed concern that means testing would hit those on low incomes but with savings, harder than those with a higher income but little or no savings.
- iii. Discussed the suggestion around moving tenants to a more suitable property rather than carrying out extensive alterations and concluded this was sensible.
- iv. Were satisfied that tenants would be assisted with relocation costs that were appropriate (in line with the under occupancy policy).

- i. Praised officers as there had been good consultation.

The Temporary Housing and Housing Support Manager and the Head of Estates & Facilities responded to Members' questions as follows:

- ii. The policy needed to be fit for purpose.
- iii. Current policy had no upper limit for adaptations to an individual property.
- iv. Clarified how fencing could be classed as adaptations where a tenant or leaseholders needs meant that they needed more than the standard chain link fencing.
- v. The first £1,000 of any adaptation would be free of charge.
- vi. A leaflet would be produced clarifying applicants rights and responsibility.
- vii. Based on the pattern of past applications, it was expected that less than 30% of applicants would be required to contribute financially towards adaptations. However, past patterns cannot predict future need and the policy was seen as the best way to achieve the maximum for the limited budget.

The Strategic Director confirmed that the policy was needed as the current position was unclear and confusing. She confirmed that a clear policy setting out the options was needed to allow tenants and leaseholders to make informed choices.

The Executive Councillor stated that he understood the concerns over means testing. However, the policy had had a long drafting process, extensive consultation and had been well received.

The Committee resolved by 9 votes to 2 to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

17/7/HSC Housing Transformation Programme 2017/18

This Item was chaired by Diana Minns (Vice Chair / Tenant Representative)

Matter for Decision

The Housing Transformation programme was effectively the second year of a fundamental review of housing services. A programme of service changes and savings for 2016/17 was agreed in October 2015. The report fulfilled the requirement for further service transformation and savings proposals to be identified to meet a number of objectives, including the need to achieve a balanced budget in the longer term.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Agreed the changes to achieve savings as set out in section 4 of the Officer's report.
- ii. Support the future workstreams described in section 7 of the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Advisor – Housing and Welfare Reforms.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Were satisfied that the report contained no surprises.
- ii. Suggested that staff training would be key to the success of the project.
- iii. Questioned how tenants would be informed of the changes.
- iv. Stated that vulnerable tenants should be protected and that this should include tenants who might become vulnerable at a future date.

The Strategic Advisor – Housing and Welfare Reforms stated the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Confirmed that the transformation budget could be used for resident involvement purposes linked to the transformation agenda.
- ii. This was an initial headlines report and that more detailed reports would follow.

The Committee resolved by 12 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

17/8/HSC Housing Revenue Account Budget Setting Report

This Item was chaired by Diana Minns (Vice Chair / Tenant Representative)

Matter for Decision

- i. The HRA Budget-Setting Report provided an overview of the review of the key assumptions. It set out the key parameters for the detailed recommendations and final budget proposals, and is the basis for the finalisation of the 2017/18 budgets.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

Under Part 1 of the agenda, the Executive Councillor **resolved to:**

Review of Rents and Charges

- a) Approve that council dwellings rents for all social housing properties be reduced by 1%, in line with legislative requirements, introduced as part of the Welfare Reform and Work Act, with effect from 3rd April 2017. This equates to an average rent reduction at the time of writing this report of £1.00 per week on a 52 week basis.
- b) Approve that affordable rents are reviewed in line with rent legislation, to ensure that the rents charged are no more than 80% of market rent, with this figure then reduced by 1%, as with social housing. Local policy is to cap affordable rents at the Local Housing Allowance level, which will result in a rent freeze from 3rd April 2017.
- c) Approve inflationary increases of 2.4% in garage and parking space rents for 2017/18, in line with the base rate of inflation for the year assumed in the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- d) Approve the proposed service charges for Housing Revenue Account services and facilities, as shown in Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

- e) Approve the proposed leasehold administration charges for 2017, as detailed in Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- f) Approve that caretaking, building cleaning, estate services, grounds maintenance, temporary housing premises and utilities, sheltered scheme premises and utilities, digital television aerial, flat cleaning and catering charges continue to be recovered at full cost, as detailed in Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report, recognising that local authorities should endeavour to limit increases to inflation as measured by CPI at September 2016 (1%) plus 1%, wherever possible.
- g) Approve that service charges for gas maintenance, door entry systems, lifts and electrical and mechanical maintenance are increased in an attempt recover full estimated costs, as detailed in Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report, recognising that local authorities should endeavour to limit increases to inflation as measured by CPI at September 2016 (1%) plus 1%, equivalent to an increase of 2% in total, wherever possible.
- h) Approve the transfer of budgets for smoke detectors, fencing and third party professional fees to revenue, from capital, recognising the work being carried out in these areas in the future.

Revenue – HRA

Revised Budget 2016/17:

- i) Approve with any amendments, the Revised Budget identified in Section 4 of the HRA Budget Setting Report, which reflects a net reduction in the use of HRA reserves for 2016/17 of £229,650.

Budget 2017/18:

- j) Approve with any amendments, the Non-Cash Limit items shown in Appendix D (1) of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- k) Approve with any amendments, the Savings, Increased Income, Unavoidable Revenue Pressures and Reduced Income proposals, shown in Appendix D (1) of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

- l) Approve the resulting Housing Revenue Account revenue budget as summarised in the Housing Revenue Account Summary Forecast 2016/17 to 2021/22 shown in Appendix J of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

Under Part 2 of the agenda, the Executive Councillor for Housing, **resolved to** recommend to Council (following scrutiny and debate at Housing Scrutiny Committee):

Treasury Management

- m) Request that, in 2017/18, officers conclude a review of the existing approach to treasury management, which requires 25% of the value of the housing debt to be set-aside by the point at which the loan portfolio matures. The review will consider the risks associated with a recommendation to fully re-finance the loan portfolio, against the potential financial benefit to the business plan in the shorter term of investing the resource in income generating assets. A separate report will be brought back to Housing Scrutiny Committee in 2017/18 following this review.

Housing Capital

- n) Approval of capital bids, shown in Appendix D (2) of the HRA Budget Setting Report, to include balcony works at Kings Hedges and Arbury, additional investment in Disabled Facilities Grants, and replacement of the existing housing management information system, where the cost of the latter will be met from an existing repair and renewals fund for IT services.
- o) Approval of the transfer of budgets for smoke detectors, fencing and third party professional fees from capital to revenue, recognising the work being carried out in these areas in the future.
- p) Approval of the latest Decent Homes Programme, to include updated allocation of decent homes expenditure for new build dwellings, as detailed in Appendix E of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- q) Approval of re-profiling of budget totalling £954,000 for the new build schemes at Water Lane, Hawkins Road and Fulbourn Road, where completion of dwellings is now anticipated in 2017/18, as detailed in

Appendices E and H, and summarised in Appendix K, of the HRA Budget Setting Report

- r) Incorporation into the Housing Capital Investment Plan, of anticipated grant of £14,000,000 per annum for 5 years, in respect of devolution funding to assist in the delivery of 500 new affordable homes in the city.
- s) Approval of a £20,000,000 per annum, new build programme, for 5 years beginning in April 2017, recognising that devolution has been approved, that the authority will receive a grant of £14,000,000 per annum towards the delivery of new affordable homes and will utilise retained right to buy receipts and HRA resources to meet the balance of funding required. This programme will replace the previous RTB New Build Programme and the assumption that the authority may need to provide grants to registered providers when sufficient resource were no longer available to top up retained right to buy receipts.
- t) Approval to earmark additional resource of £1,740,000 towards the cost of the re-provision of the existing 23 socially rented homes at Anstey Way, allowing a revised scheme to be brought forward, with any additionality on the site being funded from the devolution programme, using devolution grant and retained right to buy receipts.
- u) Approval of the revised Housing Capital Investment Plan as shown in Appendix K of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

General

- v) Approval of delegation to the Head of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, to make the necessary detailed budgetary adjustments in the HRA, in respect of savings approved as part of the HRA Budget Setting Report, following the outcome of consultation with both tenants and staff about proposed service changes and resulting final savings.
- w) Approval of delegation to the Head of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, to approve an in year increase in the budget for disabled facilities grants, in direct relation to any increase in the capital grant funding for this purpose, as received from the County Council through the Better Care Fund.
- x) Approval of delegation to the Head of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, to make the necessary detailed budgetary adjustments in the HRA, to

reflect the impact of the triennial valuation of the Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Scheme.

- y) Approval of delegation to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Head of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, to draw down resource from the ear-marked reserve for potential debt redemption or re-investment, for the purpose of open market property acquisition or new build housing development, should the need arise, in order to meet quarterly deadlines for the use of retained right to buy receipts.

Post Meeting Addendum

Subsequent to the committee meeting, a typing error was identified in one of the recommendations in the HRA Budget Setting Report for 2017/18.

The HRA BSR was constructed on the basis that garage rents will go up from April 2017 by 1.9%, which is the base rate of inflation used for the HRA for 2017/18. This base rate of inflation increases to 2.4% from April 2018.

The table in Section 3 of the report on page 25, details the new charges, with the 1.9% applied to them from April 2017, and letters have been prepared on this basis.

The wording in the recommendation incorrectly stated that garage rents would increase by 2.4% and should have read 1.9% as below:

Approve inflationary increases of 1.9% in garage and parking space rents for 2017/18, in line with the base rate of inflation for the year assumed in the HRA Budget Setting Report

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Business Manager/Principal Accountant (Shared Housing Finance Team).

Councillor Avery presented Liberal Democrat amendment to the budget. The committee discussed the proposals within the amendment regarding a 2% reduction in the annual set-aside debt repayment fund.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report and the proposed amendment:

- i. Sought clarification regarding fixed term tenancies.
- ii. Suggested that the position regarding Pay-to-Stay was unclear.
- iii. Welcomed the potential additional housing that devolution would bring.
- iv. Suggested that the Liberal Democrat amendment was an interesting idea but that it was premature as the set-aside budget would be fully reviewed in the near future.
- v. Suggested that identifying a potential additional funding source and then looking for something to spend it on was not the best approach.
- vi. Stated that the Housing Transformation Programme would result in a restructure of staff and that added posts at this stage would be unhelpful.
- vii. Supported Councillor Avery's view that the inherited debt was unfair.

The Business Manager/Principal Accountant (Shared Housing Finance Team) stated the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Pay-to-Stay would be difficult to implement as the council does not hold the required information. Fixed term tenancies were an alternative option.
- ii. Confirmed that although 'Pay to Stay' was no longer a requirement, an option to apply it locally for incomes levels above £60,000 was available.
- iii. Confirmed that the original budget for debt repayment had been based on repaying 100% of the debt. Based on peer authority review, this had been reduced to the current position of a set-aside that would repay 25% of the debt. This was due for review and a decision based on an examination of the risks would come to this committee at a later date.

Councillor Executive Councillor stated that there was no intention to instigate the voluntary scheme Pay-to-Stay.

The following vote was chaired by Diana Minns (Vice Chair /Tenant Representative)

The Liberal Democrats Group alternative budget: **8 votes in favour to 4 against**. The amendment was lost.

Resolved (**by 12 vote to 0**) to endorse the original recommendations A to Y.

The following votes were chaired by Councillor Todd-Jones

Resolved (**6 votes to 0**) to endorse the original report recommendations M to Y of the budget proposals

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

17/9/HSC Housing General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2017/18 to 2021/22

This Item was chaired by Councillor Todd-Jones

Matter for Decision

The following report detailed the budget proposals relating to this portfolio that were included in the Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2017/18 which would be considered at the following meetings:

Date	Committee	Comments
23 January 2017	Strategy & Resources	Consider proposals / recommendations from all Scrutiny Committees in relation to their portfolios
26 January 2017	The Executive	Budget amendment may be presented
13 February 2017	Strategy & Resources	Consider any further amendments including opposition proposals
23 February 2017	Council	Approves General Fund Budget and sets Council Tax

The report also included a recommendation concerning the review of charges for this portfolio.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

Review of Charges:

- i. Approved the proposed charges for this portfolio's services and facilities, as shown in Appendix A to the Officer's report.

Revenue:

- ii. Noted the revenue budget proposals as shown in Appendix B to the Officer's report.

Capital:

- iii. Noted that there are no capital bids or savings presented for this portfolio.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Business Manager/Principal Accountant (Shared Housing Finance Team).

The Committee noted the proposals.

The Committee resolved by 6 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

17/10/HSC Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency - Service Changes

This Item was chaired by Councillor Todd-Jones

Matter for Decision

Approval was requested for an increase in the level of fees charged by Cambs Home Improvement Agency (CHIA) from 12% to 15%. The additional fee income was required to replace annual revenue support which was being progressively reduced by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) with effect from April 2017 as part of wider plans for the funding and delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants across all Cambridgeshire Councils.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved an increase in the level of fees charged by Cambs Home Improvement Agency (CHIA), from 12% to 15%, for managing Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and Repairs Assistance (RA) funded adaptations and repairs work with effect from 1 April 2017.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the officer's report, CCC and CCG have both confirmed that revenue support for all of the County's HIA's will cease altogether with effect from 1 April 2018 so the CHIA is committed to significant change during 2017 in order to remain viable entirely from the fee income generated. A fee basis of 15% would be required for this to be possible and is consistent with charges levied elsewhere by other HIA's.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Without the a 15% fee it is unlikely that the CHIA would be able to generate sufficient income in the short term (12 months) at least in order to recover the income lost following changes to CCC and CCG revenue funding support in 2017/18.

The alternative to an increase in fee levels from 12% to 15% would be a reduction in CHIA operating costs which would mean a reduction capacity and consequent reduction in service outputs at a time when expectations are for greater activity from the increasing DFG funding available.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Head of Estates & Facilities

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Sought clarification regarding the potential for efficiency saving.
- ii. Stated that this was an undervalued service that performed a very important function.

The Business Manager/Principal Accountant (Shared Housing Finance Team) said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The agency needed to be viable financially and was already very efficient.
- ii. Stated that the increase in charges would bring the service in line with a similar agency in Peterborough which was considered exemplar.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm

CHAIR



To: Councillor Kevin Price Executive Councillor for Housing
Report by: Tom Bremner, Head Of Housing
Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing 7/3/2017 Scrutiny Committee
Wards affected: All wards containing council housing

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2017-2020

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 With scarcer resources in the housing service, Resident Involvement must provide a targeted service that responds to the needs of tenants, the priorities of the housing service and satisfies regulatory requirements.

1.2 A Resident Involvement Strategy (appendix I) offers a clear outcome-based method of ensuring that Resident Involvement continues to provide an effective, value-for-money service that answers the needs of today's social housing climate.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- a) To approve the Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020 (appx. 1)

3. Background

3.1 Resident Involvement has not had a standalone strategy for some years. In the past, there was an expectation to publish a 'tenant compact', which set out the Resident Involvement 'offer' to tenants (and leaseholders).

3.2 However, with the shift in regulators since 2009 (Audit Commission, Tenant Services Authority, Homes and Communities Agency), there have been varying expectations of what Resident Involvement is and how it should be delivered in social housing.

3.3 Locally, the 2016 review of housing services saw Resident Involvement resources reduced by approximately 37%. With fewer resources, it is crucial that Resident Involvement provides a targeted service that responds to the needs of tenants & leaseholders, the priorities of the housing service and satisfies the regulatory requirements of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

3.4 A Resident Involvement Strategy (appendix I) offers an outcome-based method of ensuring that Resident Involvement continues to provide an effective, value-for-money service that answers the needs of today's social housing climate. In designing this strategy, three main resources were used:

- HCA Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
- TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards
- Tenant & Leaseholder Resident Involvement Survey

HCA Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

3.5 The housing regulator (the Homes & Communities Agency) publishes a Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. There are three required outcomes in the standard that social landlords are expected to meet:

- Customer service, choice and complaints
- Involvement and empowerment
- Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

3.6 Each outcome includes details on what the provider should offer in order to meet the required outcomes. The standard also lists specific expectations for each required outcome.

TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards

3.7 In addition, TPAS offer a set of National Tenant Engagement Standards. These are not statutory requirements but are a good example of what a modern Resident Involvement service should be offering in 2017. The TPAS standards also provide a good set of best practice examples that meet the HCA's regulatory requirements.

Tenant & Leaseholder Resident Involvement Survey

3.8 Combined, the HCA and TPAS standards offer a good framework for a Resident Involvement Strategy. In addition to these two resources, Cambridge City Council has also conducted some local consultation with tenants and leaseholders to make sure that the strategy also reflects their priorities.

3.9 The Survey asked tenants and leaseholder for their views on key areas. Full results can be found in appendix II. Headline results include:

Tenant & Leaseholder top three priorities for housing services
1. Building new council housing
2. Repairing your home (and or communal/block repairs)
3. Tackling anti-social behaviour
Tenant & Leaseholder preferred methods for receiving information
1. Open Door magazine in the post
2. Letters in the post
3. Email
4. In person at residents' meetings
5. Via Social Media (i.e. Facebook)
Tenant and leaseholders awareness of tenant/leaseholder representatives already involved with the Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hear enough about this - 36.71% • I'd like to hear more about this - 54.43% • I'm not interested - 8.86%
Tenant & Leaseholder top three Resident Involvement services
1. Surveys to gather tenants' and leaseholders' views
2. Tenants and leaseholders inspecting housing services
3. Elected tenants and leaseholders on Housing Scrutiny Committee

3.10 The survey was conducted by post and online to a sample of 400 tenants and leaseholders. The response rate was 20%.

Resident Involvement Strategy: 2017-2020

3.11 The completed strategy document (appendix I) was developed with the support and input of the elected tenants and leaseholders on Housing Scrutiny Committee. It uses information from all of the above resources and is set out into 6 chapters:

- 1. Housing service priorities**
- 2. Resources**
- 3. Communication & Insight**
- 4. Influence & Scrutiny**
- 5. Community Engagement**
- 6. Value for money**

3.12 The strategy also includes an outcome table which can be used to measure the performance and effectiveness of the Resident Involvement service during the lifespan of the strategy (2017-2020).

3.13 It is planned that updates on the strategy will be brought to committee annually.

4. Implications

(a/b) Financial/staffing Implications

The Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020 is designed to be delivered with existing resources and staffing.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Some areas of resident involvement cross into social, financial and digital inclusion. Where appropriate, these be linked to/delivered in conjunction with wider anti-poverty strategies.

(d) Environmental Implications

N/A

(e) Procurement

N/A

(f) Consultation and communication

A survey of tenants and leaseholder was conducted, asking for their views on key areas related to resident Involvement. Headline results are included above in section 3.9, more detailed results can be found in appendix II.

(g) Community Safety

N/A

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

HCA Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422709/Tenant I and E Standard 2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422709/Tenant_I_and_E_Standard_2015.pdf)

TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards:

https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_tpas_national_tenant_engagement_standards.pdf

6. Appendices

- I. Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020
- II. Resident Involvement Survey Results 2017

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020

Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020

Page 3	Introduction
Page 4	1. Housing service priorities Linking tenant Resident Involvement directly to business plan objectives
Page 5	2. Resources Identifying support for effective Resident Involvement
Page 6	3. Communication and Insight Providing information to residents in ways they choose and gathering/using customer insight effectively
Page 7	4. Influence and Scrutiny Ensuring residents and communities can influence services appropriately
Page 8	5. Community Engagement Using a range of methods for effective wider community engagement
Page 9	6. Value for money Measuring the effects of Resident Involvement to add value for stakeholders, communities and individuals
Page 10	outcome table

Introduction

Cambridge City Council is proud to involve tenants and leaseholders in the delivery and management of the housing services they receive.

Involved tenant and leaseholder inspectors, panel and committee members have direct input and scrutiny of key decisions around their housing. The wider tenant community also participates via surveys, tenant newsletters/magazines, social media channels and local residents' groups/associations.

But with scarcer resources in the housing service, Resident Involvement must provide a targeted service that responds to the needs of tenants, the priorities of the housing service and satisfies regulatory requirements.

This Resident Involvement Strategy offers a clear outcome-based method of ensuring that Resident Involvement continues to provide an effective, value-for-money service that answers the needs of today's social housing climate.

Councillor Kevin Price

Executive Councillor for Housing

1. Housing service priorities

Linking Resident Involvement directly to business plan objectives

Involvement priorities must link to business plan objectives. In turn, tenants must be empowered and enabled to influence business plans. This circular connection is fundamental to the success of both resident involvement and housing services.

1.1 Ensure that tenant and leaseholder priorities are recognised when developing involvement projects or improving housing services:

Tenant and Leaseholder top three priorities for housing services*

1. Building new council homes
2. Repairing council homes
3. Tackling anti-social behaviour

1.2 Link involvement directly to the organisation's management structure. Priorities highlighted through involvement are reflected in business plans, strategies and operational plans for customer facing services.

1.3 Get agreement between staff, residents and councillors as to the reasons for planned tenant, leaseholder involvement across the organisation.

1.4 Make sure that involvement is planned, monitored and reviewed regularly with tenants and leaseholders. Involvement methods should reflect the profile of residents, communities and housing types.

1.5 Successful and effective resident involvement is recognised and valued by staff, councillors and other stakeholders.

**Sources - 2014 tenant/leaseholder satisfaction survey, 2017 RI Survey*

2. Resources

Identifying support for effective Resident Involvement

We will identify the right support to put in place to enable effective involvement of tenants and leaseholders. Where appropriate, we will 'invest to gain', to provide long-term, sustainable involvement outcomes.

2.1 Allocate sufficient resources for Resident Involvement, reviewing annually to ensure it is effective in delivering planned outcomes.

2.2 Train and develop staff across the housing service, equipping them with the skills needed to promote resident involvement opportunities

2.3 Provide appropriate levels of support for involved tenants and leaseholders so they can be effective in their roles.

2.4 Promote opportunities for tenant and leaseholder involvement opportunities, using a variety of media channels, including print, web, social media and events.

2.5 Monitor and measure the success of projects in becoming sustainable and in increasing take up of involvement opportunities.

3. Communication & Insight

Providing information to residents in ways they choose and gathering/using customer insight effectively

To ensure resident involvement is fully maximised, we will provide information to residents in ways they choose, gather their views and use them to inform the direction of their services.

3.1 Use a range of appropriate involvement methods to communicate with residents and gather their opinions, needs and wants.

3.2 Use new technologies (web, Email lists, social media, text sms, mobile apps etc.) to increase access to information and to allow feedback, ideas and information to be shared.

3.3 Information gathered through involvement is used to gain insight and influence services so that they reflects tenant, leaseholder and community profiles and preferences.

3.4 Work with involved tenants, leaseholders and communities to look outward, benchmark, learn and gain inspiration from others.

3.5 Evaluate and promote the changes brought about through Resident Involvement and share them with staff, tenants, leaseholders, communities and stakeholder organisations.

3.6 Understand resident's preferred channels of engagement and link their priorities to a digital inclusion strategy.

Tenant and Leaseholder preferred methods for receiving information

1. Open Door magazine
2. Letters
3. Email
4. Residents' meetings
5. Social Media

4. Influence & Scrutiny

Ensuring residents and communities can influence services appropriately

We will always seek to enable tenant and leaseholder scrutiny and influence at both a strategic and operational level. This ensures that residents have real power in holding the council to account for decisions, performance and conduct - and that residents also hold an accountable role in their landlord's decisions, performance and conduct.

4.1 Allow tenants and leaseholders to have direct influence over housing strategy, policy, standards, approaches and performance targets.

4.2 Give all council tenants and leaseholders the opportunity to stand as and vote for representatives on the Housing Scrutiny Committee, with elections happening every 4 years.

4.3 Ensure that tenants and leaseholders are involved in performance monitoring, learning from performance information and improving performance through effective challenge.

4.4 Provide a framework that allows residents to hold the organisation to account through collaborative yet independent resident-led scrutiny.

4.5 Have a robust method for allowing residents to play a role in understanding, resolving and learning from complaints.

4.6 Ensure clarity about the role of tenant and leaseholder influence and scrutiny within the organisation amongst councilors, staff and senior management.

5. Community Engagement

Using a range of methods for effective wider community engagement

Our principles for working with communities rely on understanding their priorities and finding solutions within the community itself for long term sustainability. Our goal is to empower and support communities to develop their capacity and address their issues.

5.1 Ensure that community engagement is planned, monitored and measured to achieve social, environmental and economic outcomes and clearly links to the organisations business plan objectives.

5.2 Work with local stakeholders to deliver community engagement projects that are designed to meet jointly identified needs.

5.3 Develop and utilise the strengths and resources of communities / community members by developing confidence, skills and knowledge.

5.4 Promote financial, social and digital inclusion amongst communities and provide appropriate access to council resources to enable this.

5.5 Support and work in partnership with other agencies to deliver community initiatives

6. Value for money

Measuring the effects of Resident Involvement to add value for stakeholders, communities and individuals

We will always seek to demonstrate the value of Resident Involvement so we can arrive at cost-effective solutions and ensure that communities continue to support our future work.

6.1 Ensure that involvement is planned, monitored and measured and has clear aims, objectives and outcomes.

6.2 Monitor progress and measures of success with stakeholders throughout and in advance of projects commencing.

6.3 Report the value and successes of Resident Involvement across the organisation, ensuring that any changes for the benefit of the organisation are well publicised to all key stakeholders.

6.4 Review involvement approaches regularly, using information on the value created through that involvement . Reviews consider methods of involvement , types of projects and whether successful outcomes have resulted.

6.5 Learn from reviews and share results with tenants, leaseholders and other stakeholders to improve effectiveness of involvement .

Outcome Table	
Heading	Outcome at annual review
1. Housing service priorities	
Residents' priorities recognised when developing projects or services	
Involvement objectives link directly to management structure	
Agreement between staff, residents and councillors as to the reasons for RI	
Involvement is planned, monitored and reviewed with resident reps	
Successful involvement is recognised and valued by key stakeholders	
2. Resources	
Allocate sufficient resources for RI (reviewing annually)	
Train and develop staff to promote RI opportunities	
Provide support for involved tenants and leaseholders	
Promote RI opportunities using a variety of media	
Monitor and measure the success of RI projects	
3. Communication & Insight	
Use a range of appropriate involvement methods	
Use new technology to increase access to information and feedback	
Gain insight and influence services using Information gathered	



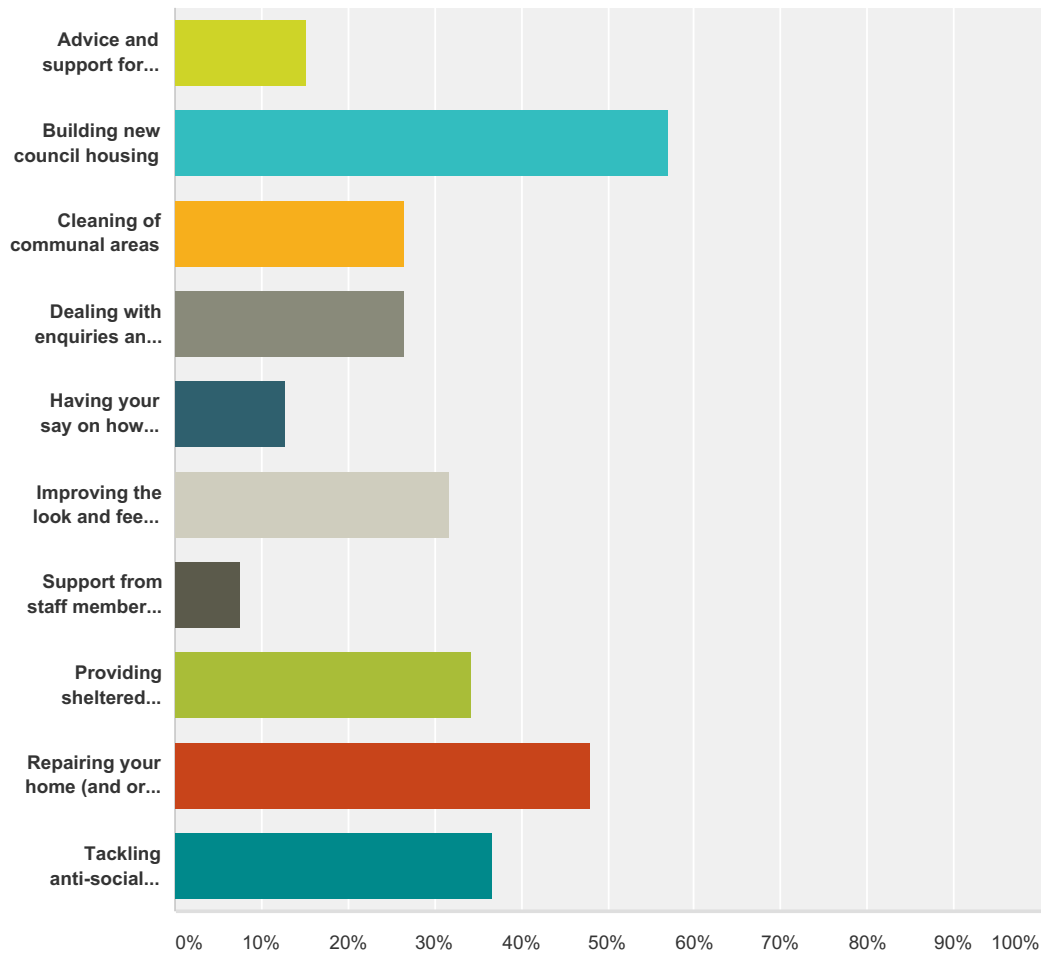
Benchmark, learn and gain inspiration from others	
Evaluate and promote the changes brought about through involvement	
Link resident’s preferred engagement priorities to a digital inclusion strategy	
4. Influence & Scrutiny	
Run Housing Scrutiny Committee resident elections every 4 years.	
Ensure that residents are involved in performance monitoring.	
Provide a framework for collaborative yet independent resident-led scrutiny.	
Residents involved in understanding, resolving, learning from complaints.	
Ensure clarity about residents’ influence/scrutiny within organisation.	
5. Community Engagement	
Ensure that community engagement is planned, monitored and measured.	
Engagement projects must meet jointly identified community needs.	
Develop resources, confidence, skills and knowledge in communities	
Promote financial, social and digital inclusion in communities	
Provide access to financial, social and digital inclusion resources	
Work in partnership with other agencies in the community	
6. Value for money	
Ensure that involvement is planned,	



monitored and measured with clear aims, objectives and outcomes.	
Monitor progress and measures of success with stakeholders.	
Publicise the value and successes of Involvement across the organisation.	
Review involvement approaches regularly	
Learn from reviews and share results with stakeholders	

Q1 What are your priorities for your housing service in the coming years? (tick top 3)

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0

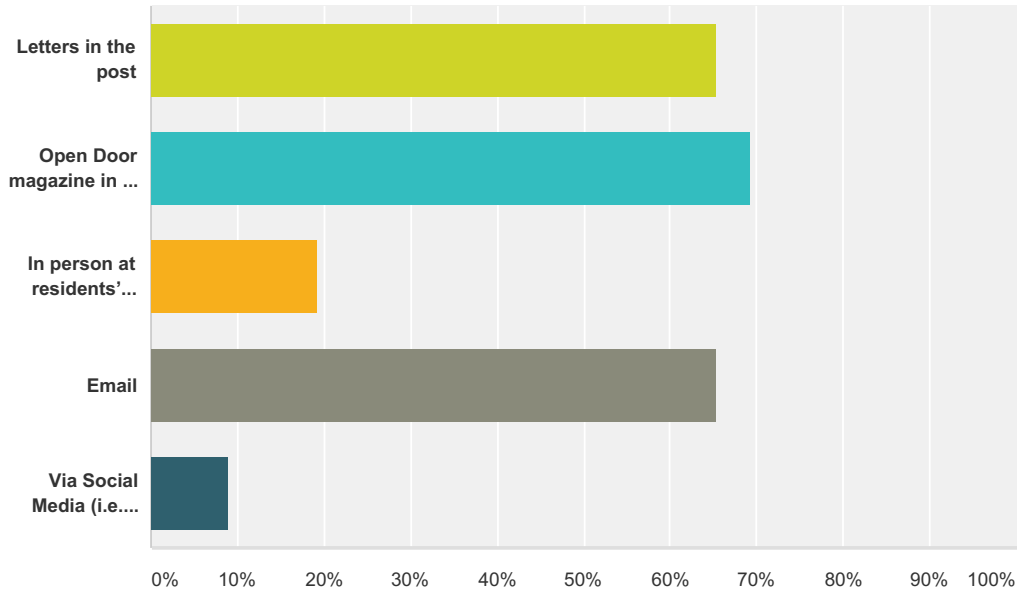


Answer Choices	Responses
Advice and support for those seeking a home	15.19% 12
Building new council housing	56.96% 45
Cleaning of communal areas	26.58% 21
Dealing with enquiries and providing support to tenants by phone, person, etc.	26.58% 21
Having your say on how housing in the city is managed	12.66% 10
Improving the look and feel of your neighbourhood	31.65% 25
Support from staff members to manage you tenancy	7.59% 6
Providing sheltered accommodation for elderly or vulnerable tenants	34.18% 27
Repairing your home (and or communal/block repairs)	48.10% 38
Tackling anti-social behaviour	36.71% 29
Total Respondents: 79	



Q2 How do you like to receive information about your housing service (tick top 3)?

Answered: 78 Skipped: 1

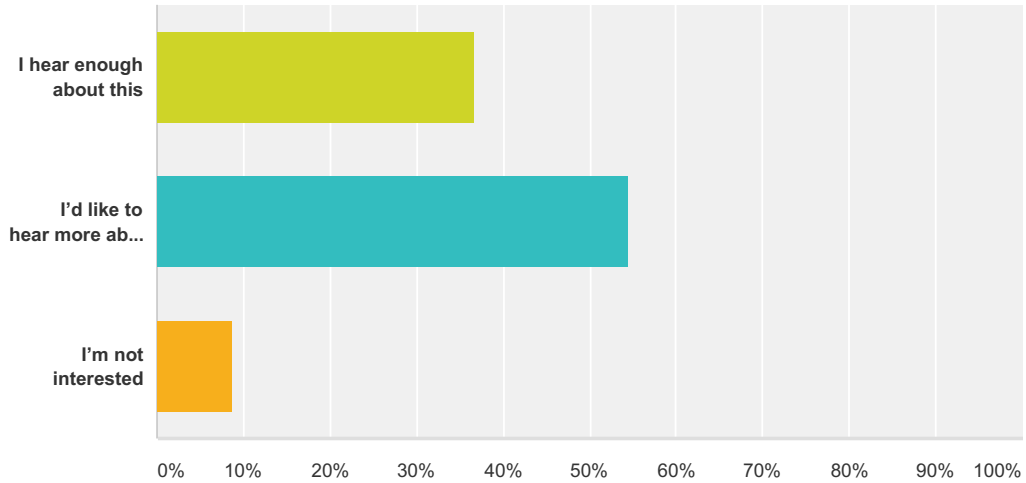


Answer Choices	Responses
Letters in the post	65.38% 51
Open Door magazine in the post	69.23% 54
In person at residents' meetings	19.23% 15
Email	65.38% 51
Via Social Media (i.e. Facebook)	8.97% 7
Total Respondents: 78	



Q3 Tenant and leaseholder representatives are already involved with the Council in various ways. Do you feel you hear enough about their activities in Open Door magazine, on social media and via email newsletters?

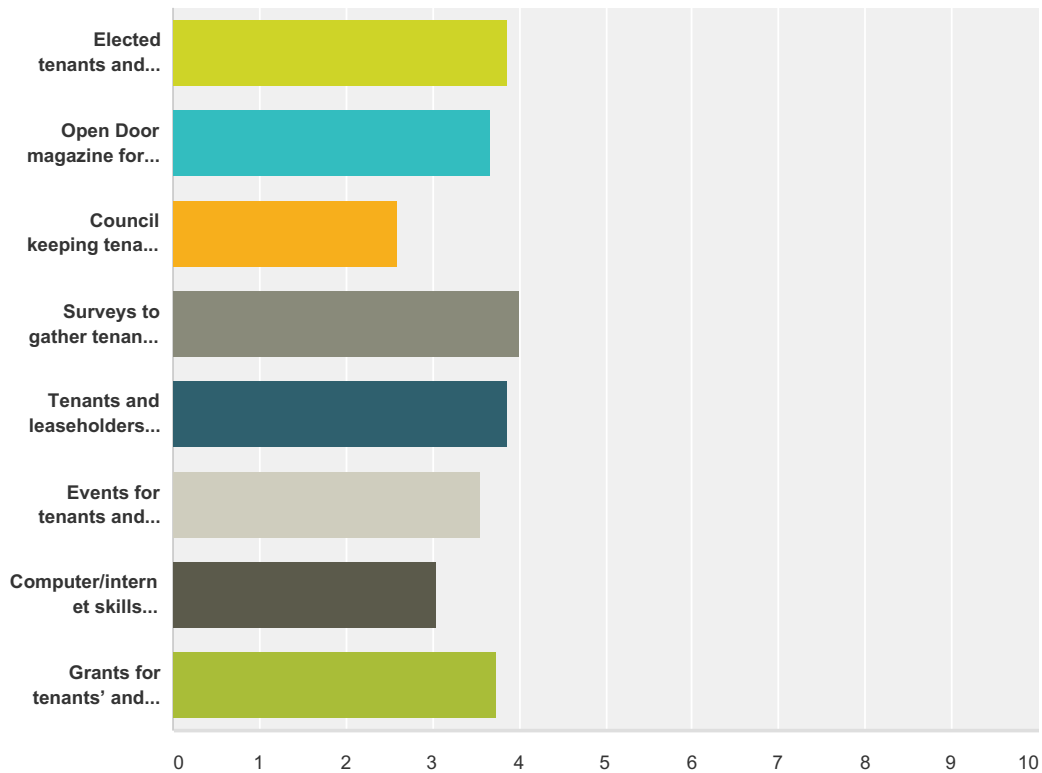
Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
I hear enough about this	36.71% 29
I'd like to hear more about this	54.43% 43
I'm not interested	8.86% 7
Total	79

Q4 Which Resident Involvement services are most important?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0

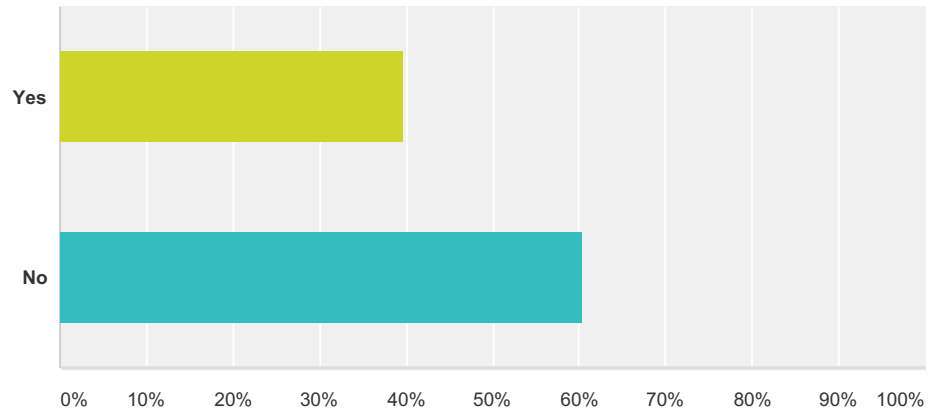


	Not at all important0	1	2	3	4	Very important5	Total	Weighted Average
Elected tenants and leaseholders on the Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee	2.63% 2	2.63% 2	10.53% 8	19.74% 15	19.74% 15	44.74% 34	76	3.86
Open Door magazine for tenants and leaseholders	2.60% 2	7.79% 6	11.69% 9	15.58% 12	22.08% 17	40.26% 31	77	3.68
Council keeping tenants and leaseholders informed via social media	14.47% 11	11.84% 9	21.05% 16	23.68% 18	11.84% 9	17.11% 13	76	2.58
Surveys to gather tenants' and leaseholders' views	2.67% 2	0.00% 0	6.67% 5	20.00% 15	26.67% 20	44.00% 33	75	4.00
Tenants and leaseholders inspecting housing services	1.32% 1	5.26% 4	9.21% 7	14.47% 11	28.95% 22	40.79% 31	76	3.87
Events for tenants and leaseholders about their housing	0.00% 0	1.33% 1	14.67% 11	34.67% 26	26.67% 20	22.67% 17	75	3.55
Computer/internet skills training for tenants and leaseholders	6.67% 5	9.33% 7	20.00% 15	25.33% 19	14.67% 11	24.00% 18	75	3.04
Grants for tenants' and leaseholders' projects	0.00% 0	9.46% 7	6.76% 5	20.27% 15	28.38% 21	35.14% 26	74	3.73



Q5 Would you like to find out more about getting involved with the Council as a tenant or leaseholder representative?

Answered: 78 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	39.74% 31
No	60.26% 47
Total	78



Q6 Please provide your contact details to enter the prize draw and/or so we can send you more information about getting involved:

Answered: 73 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses	
Name	100.00%	73
Company	0.00%	0
Address	98.63%	72
Address 2	20.55%	15
City/Town	94.52%	69
State/Province	0.00%	0
Post Code	91.78%	67
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	86.30%	63
Phone Number	93.15%	68



To: Councillor Kevin Price Executive Councillor for Housing

Report by: Suzanne McBride, Strategic Director

Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing 7/3/2017 Scrutiny Committee

Wards affected: Abbey Arbury Castle Cherry Hinton Coleridge East Chesterton King's Hedges Market Newnham Petersfield Queen Edith's Romsey Trumpington West Chesterton

INTERIM HOUSING STRATEGY STATEMENT 2017

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 This report seeks approval for an Interim Housing Strategy Statement for Cambridge, prior to development of a proposed joint Housing Strategy for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils.

1.2 In particular it seeks approval for a vision for housing in the City, and a set of strategic aims to help achieve the proposed vision, under the following themes:

1.2.1 Increasing housing supply& tackling affordability;

1.2.2 Existing homes and communities; and

1.2.3 Homelessness, housing advice and rough sleeping.

1.3 It outlines the changing policy context against which the interim Statement is set, and the council's current approach and emerging actions aimed at achieving the vision and objectives within that context.

1.4 The proposed Interim Housing Strategy Statement is at Appendix A to this report.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended:

2.1.1 To approve the aspirational vision laid out in the draft Interim Housing Strategy Statement 2017 (attached as Appendix A to this report), for Cambridge to be a City where:

- a) The housing market functions effectively, providing homes which are as affordable as possible; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy;
- b) There is a wide and varied choice of good quality, sustainable homes of different sizes, types and tenures, to meet the needs of a wide range of different households;
- c) Homes are located in high quality sustainable environments, served by jobs and neighbourhood facilities, appropriate green space, effective transport links and other necessary infrastructure;
- d) Everyone has access to a suitable home, and residents are able to live as healthily, safely, independently as possible;
- e) People from all walks of life live in harmony, within mixed and balanced communities; and homes and communities continue to meet the needs of residents into the future;
- f) We have strong relationships with residents, developers and partners that enable us to deliver housing and services effectively, and to innovate where appropriate.

2.1.2 To approve the strategic aims laid out in the draft Interim Housing Strategy Statement 2017 (attached as Appendix A to this report) as follows:

- a) Work with stakeholders to accelerate the delivery of housing and infrastructure in and around Cambridge as set out in the Greater Cambridge City Deal and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution Deal;
- b) Provide, and promote provision of, good quality, energy and water efficient homes, in high quality, sustainable environments, alongside appropriate infrastructure;
- c) Ensure that new homes: are as affordable as possible; are available in a range of sizes, types and tenures, to meet a range of needs; and can support mixed, balanced and sustainable communities;

- d) Make the best use of council land to maximise the supply of housing for those who cannot afford to access the private market;
- e) Make and promote the best use of existing homes;
- f) Enable people to live settled lives, within safe and healthy homes and communities;
- g) Manage and maintain the council's homes and estates in a cost-effective way, protecting core services, balancing the budget, and operating within our means;
- h) Promote a well-regulated, fair, good quality private rented sector, and support the provision of longer and more settled tenancies;
- i) Recognise links between health, social care & housing, and work positively with partner organisations to promote and improve quality of life and health and well-being for those most in need;
- j) Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping;
- k) Minimise use of temporary accommodation and maximise access to longer term housing solutions;
- l) Enable people to make informed choices about their housing;
- m) Promote sustained and settled lifestyles and minimise social exclusion.

2.1.3 To note the ongoing and emerging actions being pursued with partners to achieve the vision and strategic aims proposed in the Interim Housing Strategy Statement, attached as Appendix A to this report.

3. Background

3.1 Housing has an essential role to play in everyone's lives. Ideally, everybody should have access to a choice of good quality housing which they can afford, and which meets their particular needs. But housing is not just about bricks and mortar. Quality of environment, community, appropriate infrastructure, and availability of advice and support where needed are also key. The council, working in partnership, has a central role to play across a whole range of housing activities, to help to enable people to access appropriate housing and live healthy, safe and settled lives.

3.2 Cambridge is experiencing significant housing growth, and is recognised as a major contributor to the national economy. But with economic success comes considerable housing pressure. Cambridge is recognised as having some of the highest house prices and private rents in the country – higher indeed than in some parts of London. It is essential that the council works closely with partners to increase housing supply and tackle housing affordability, within high quality, mixed and sustainable communities.

3.3 The council, in retaining its own housing stock, is the largest single landlord in the City, with responsibility for managing and maintaining its homes and estates in a cost-effective way.

3.4 Over a quarter of households in the City live in the private rented sector, and the size of the sector is growing. It is important that the council works with landlords and letting agencies to ensure that tenants can live in good quality, well-managed homes.

3.5 Everyone's housing needs are different, and some people need additional advice and/or support to live independently. The council, with partners, has an important part to play in promoting and improving quality of life and health & well-being for those most in need.

3.6 Homelessness and rough sleeping are on the rise, and the council plays a central role in working with partners to tackle these issues, with a strong focus on prevention.

3.7 Dealing with these issues is often far from straightforward, and there are some major challenges to be overcome, as well as opportunities to be grasped. It is therefore important that the council has a clear vision and strategic aims in relation to housing and housing services, which can be communicated to residents, partners, developers, and others with an interest in dealing with the City's housing issues.

3.8 The council has close strategic links with South Cambridgeshire District Council, and many common issues to deal with. There are plans for a joint Housing Strategy to be developed between the two districts, to tie in with the development of a new joint Local Plan covering the two districts. Discussions are also starting to be had around having a Housing Strategy for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

3.9 This draft Interim Housing Strategy Statement aims to: outline the context within which the council, together with its partners, is operating; clarify and communicate the council's vision and strategic aims; and summarise ongoing and emerging actions to achieve the proposed vision and aims; prior to a joint Strategy or Strategies being developed.

3.10 South Cambridgeshire District Council is also planning its own Statement for its March 2017 decision-making cycle. The aim is for the two Statements to help form the basis of the proposed joint Housing Strategy across the two districts.

3.11 Cambridge City Council's previous Housing Strategy ran from 2012 to 2015. Consultation was carried out on a proposed new Strategy in 2015, but that was put on hold following a number of significant national policy announcements, which cast doubt on whether the proposed Strategy could be implemented. For example: a 1% annual rent cut for social housing; a proposed levy on councils based on notional sales of 'higher value' homes; phasing out of lifetime tenancies for social housing tenants; requirements for starter homes on new developments; etc.

3.12 Since then, new opportunities have begun to emerge – not least plans for increasing housing delivery through the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution deal. Government intentions have started to become a little clearer, although detailed guidance on some of the proposals is yet to be issued.

3.13 Setting a vision and achieving our aims and objectives in a period of such significant change is challenging, and further change may mean that we need to rethink some of our approach. However, in some ways this makes it even more important that we have our own strategic framework within which we aim to operate and implement change. The Statement aims to try and be flexible enough to deal with national policy change as it emerges, and to explore and embrace new opportunities.

3.14 The Statement is based around three main themes:

3.14.1 Increasing housing supply & tackling affordability;

3.14.2 Existing homes and communities; and

3.14.3 Homelessness, housing advice and rough sleeping.

3.15 It is set within the context of the council's corporate objectives and a number of other strategies and policies. It also draws on responses to the Housing Strategy consultation carried out in 2015.

3.16 The Homelessness, Housing Advice & Rough Sleeping chapter also aims to meet the council's statutory duty to have a homelessness strategy. The proposed strategic approach to homelessness has been incorporated into this Statement, instead of having a separate homelessness strategy

document. This ensures that how we deal with homelessness issues is set firmly within the wider housing context.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The Interim Housing Strategy Statement will form part of the framework within which decisions are made on the allocation of council resources – eg through the Medium Term Financial Statement and annual budget rounds.

(b) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

The Statement is aimed at meeting the housing and housing-related service needs of a wide range of people with differing needs. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, and the drafting of the Housing Strategy Statement has taken into account many of the issues raised.

(d) Environmental Implications

Nil net climate change impact.

Although the Housing Strategy Statement outlines plans for new housing development, it does not in itself propose any new plans which have not already been agreed, or where agreement or approval will not be sought through other channels.

The Statement proposes a housing vision for Cambridge, including good quality, sustainable homes in high quality, sustainable environments, served by appropriate green space.

To help achieve this, one of the strategic aims includes providing good quality, energy and water efficient homes.

Reference to the council's ongoing approach includes: seeking to promote high quality design across all tenures; and an ongoing programme through the council's Carbon Management Plan, to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in sheltered and temporary housing schemes.

Emerging actions include: implementing a new Sustainable Housing Design Guide, setting out quality standards for homes to be built through the Housing Development Agency.

(e) **Procurement**

There are no procurement implications.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

Consultation

Consultation was carried out on a new draft Housing Strategy for Cambridge in the summer of 2015. The proposed Strategy was subsequently put on hold, but the results of that consultation have been used to inform this proposed Interim Housing Strategy Statement.

Partners were involved in carrying out a review of homelessness in 2015, through the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group, to inform the homelessness and rough sleeping elements of the proposed Strategy. A Homelessness and Rough Sleeping action plan was then developed with partners during 2016.

The results of these consultations have been used to draw up this Housing Strategy Statement.

Other elements of the Statement are based around strategies, policies and approaches already agreed/approved, or being developed through separate channels.

Communication

The Interim Housing Strategy Statement, if approved, will be communicated: through a news release; by email to key partners; through Cambridge Matters; and via Twitter. It will also be published on the Housing Strategy pages of the council's website.

(g) **Community Safety**

Community Safety issues are taken into account in the Interim Housing Strategy Statement.

Included in the vision is that: residents are able to live as healthily, safely, independently as possible; and that people from all walks of life live in harmony, within mixed and balanced communities.

The strategic aims include: enabling people to live settled lives, within safe and healthy homes and communities; preventing homelessness and rough sleeping; and promoting sustained and settled lifestyles & minimising social exclusion.

The council's current approach and emerging actions include: treating anti-social behaviour and hate crime seriously, and being an active member of the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership; improving our approach to dealing with domestic abuse; and measures to prevent and tackle rough sleeping.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Equality Impact Assessment
- Housing Strategy Consultation 2015 - Analysis of Results
- Homelessness Review 2015

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Housing Strategy Statement 2017

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Cambridge City Council

Interim Housing Strategy Statement 2017

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OUR VISION

Our vision is for Cambridge to be a City where:

- The housing market functions effectively, providing homes which are as affordable as possible; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy.
- There is a wide and varied choice of good quality, sustainable homes of different sizes, types and tenures, to meet the needs of a wide range of different households.
- Homes are located in high quality sustainable environments, served by jobs and neighbourhood facilities, appropriate green space, effective transport links and other necessary infrastructure.
- Everyone has access to a suitable home, and residents are able to live as healthily, safely, independently as possible.
- People from all walks of life live in harmony, within mixed and balanced communities; and homes and communities continue to meet the needs of residents into the future.
- We have strong relationships with residents, developers and partners that enable us to deliver housing and services effectively, and to innovate where appropriate.

We recognise that this is an aspirational vision. We will do all we can to work towards achieving it together with our partners, within the national policy framework and the resources available.

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

Increasing housing supply & tackling affordability

- Work with stakeholders to accelerate the delivery of housing and infrastructure in and around Cambridge as set out in the Greater Cambridge City Deal and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution Deal.
- Provide, and promote provision of, good quality, energy and water efficient homes, in high quality, sustainable environments, alongside appropriate infrastructure.

- Ensure that new homes: are as affordable as possible; are available in a range of sizes, types and tenures, to meet a range of needs; and can support mixed, balanced and sustainable communities.
- Make the best use of council land to maximise the supply of housing for those who cannot afford to access the private market.

Existing homes & communities

- Make and promote the best use of existing homes.
- Enable people to live settled lives, within safe and healthy homes and communities.
- Manage and maintain the council's homes and estates in a cost-effective way, protecting core services, balancing the budget, and operating within our means.
- Promote a well-regulated, fair, good quality private rented sector, and support the provision of longer and more settled tenancies.
- Recognise links between health, social care & housing, and work positively with partner organisations to promote and improve quality of life and health and well-being for those most in need.

Homelessness, housing advice & rough sleeping

- Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Minimise use of temporary accommodation and maximise access to longer term housing solutions.
- Enable people to make informed choices about their housing.
- Promote sustained and settled lifestyles and minimise social exclusion.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

In working towards achieving our vision and strategic aims we will:

- Work in partnership to maximise resources and achieve required outcomes.
- Deliver efficient and effective services, and operate within our means.
- Target scarce resources to those who are most in need.
- Prioritise the protection of essential services.
- Seek out opportunities to influence government policy to meet Cambridge's needs.

Statement from Councillor Kevin Price, Executive Councillor for Housing

Good quality, affordable housing, whatever the tenure, is the key to delivering the opportunity for all our city's residents to thrive and live in mixed communities of their own choice. This Interim Housing Strategy Statement lays out our vision for Cambridge alongside the challenging national and local context in which it is set.

It is a strategy which is being delivered in a rapidly changing landscape and we will need to be flexible and responsive in our approach. The new and ongoing policy and legislative changes from national government will present significant challenges to the delivery of services and to Cambridge's residents over the period up to 2019. There will almost certainly continue to be a shortage of affordable housing for low and median income residents, although the promise of significant funding for new council and housing association homes through the proposed Devolution Deal is one we must build on to prioritise the delivery of new truly affordable social housing.

The rise in homelessness of all forms since 2010 presents a major challenge for all local authorities and is driven by housing affordability pressures and national welfare changes. Our work in homelessness prevention will continue to grow in importance along with the need to work with all partners to support and encourage entrenched rough sleepers into sustainable tenancies.

Improving housing and management standards in Cambridge's private rented stock is another key element along with ensuring that people are given good information, advice and support on their housing options, whether that is in the social or private rented sector or low cost home ownership such as shared ownership.

This Interim Housing Strategy Statement is a framework setting the direction for everyone involved in housing in Cambridge - our local authorities, residents, housing associations, developers, investors, private landlords, the voluntary sector - to work together to provide the homes we need and ensure that housing in and around Cambridge delivers a clear social dividend, supporting everyone to reach their potential by creating successful communities in which to live and work.

Introduction

Cambridge is a world-renowned historic city with a strong economy and a growing population. However, housing pressure is significant, and for Cambridge to continue to thrive, we need to build new homes and communities to satisfy demand, whilst at the same time enabling the needs of existing residents and communities to be met.

We have close strategic links with South Cambridgeshire District Council, and many common issues to deal with. Although there will be some differences in priorities and how we approach certain issues, both districts consider there would be real benefits from having a joint strategic approach. We are planning to work with South Cambridgeshire on a joint Housing Strategy, to link with our long-standing commitment for delivery of a joint Local Plan once our emerging Local Plans have been adopted. There have also been discussions around the potential for a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Housing Strategy in the context of devolution. This Interim Housing Strategy Statement outlines Cambridge City Council's strategic vision for housing, and demonstrates how we are working in partnership to deal with housing issues in the City, prior to a joint City & South Cambridgeshire Strategy being developed.

We made significant progress against our previous Housing Strategy 2012-2015.ⁱ We consulted on an ambitious revised Strategy in summer 2015, but a number of major national policy changes emerged at around the same time, which meant we needed to rethink some of our proposals. This Interim Housing Strategy Statement draws on our 2015 draft, the results of the consultation, and new opportunities which have since emerged.

Key messages coming through from responses to the 2015 consultation included: the need for more housing of all types and tenures which is affordable to local people; the importance of associated infrastructure; the need for a good quality, well-managed, affordable private rented sector; and the importance of working in partnership.

This interim Statement is set within the context of national policy, the council's wider vision,ⁱⁱ and a number of other established strategies and plans.

Housing – The Challenge for Cambridge

Cambridge and the surrounding area has undergone significant growth over recent years, and is a major net contributor to the national economy. The business sector is growing, and more people are wanting to live here and benefit from what Cambridge has to offer.

However, with this growth has come a significant worsening in housing affordability, making it difficult for local people to remain living locally, and pushing many workers out of the City and further afield. There are also major concerns amongst business leaders about the impact of house prices and rental costs on their ability to continue to operate effectively in the local market.

For example:

- The average price of a home in Cambridge is now over £500,000, with median prices standing at over 13 times median local incomes. The cheapest 25% (ie lower quartile) of homes are more than 19 times higher than lower quartile incomes.ⁱⁱⁱ In South Cambridgeshire also, median prices are nearly 9 times median incomes, with lower quartile rents more than 12 times more than lower quartile incomes.
- Private rents in the City are also some of the highest in the country. For example the rent on an average two bedroom home in Cambridge is £265 per week, which is over 40% of the median weekly income for a full time worker in Cambridge earning £31,778k per year.^{iv}
- For those claiming benefits, Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Rates are set well below local rents. Eg the LHA rate of £126 per week for a one bedroom home falls well short of the lower quartile rent of around £196 per week.^{v vi}
- Although Cambridge is a thriving and prosperous area, a significant proportion of residents are on low incomes, are struggling to make ends meet, and are at risk of being left behind. Links between poverty and ill health, poorer educational outcomes and social isolation are well documented. A good supply of decent affordable housing is essential, as well as supporting people who need it, to reduce their living costs, maximise incomes, and improve life chances.^{vii}

- High housing costs are not only affecting those on low incomes. Even those on median incomes are finding it increasingly difficult to afford to live in Cambridge or the surrounding area.
- Homelessness and rough sleeping are increasing, both nationally and locally, and major cuts in welfare benefits are making it extremely difficult for people on low incomes to maintain tenancies.

There are inevitably a number of barriers and challenges which make it more difficult to tackle Cambridge's housing issues. For example:

- Housing delivery being largely a market-led activity, over which the council may only have limited influence. For example, rates of build, timing of delivery of infrastructure, affordability of housing, who buys new homes, etc are areas where developers tend to have more control. Construction costs are also rising, stemming from shortage of skills and materials.
- Delays in getting our emerging Local Plan adopted, some of which are linked to changes in national planning policy which have been either proposed or implemented since the process began.
- A national 1% annual reduction in social rents for four years from April 2016; combined with a proposed requirement for local authorities to pay a levy to government, based on the value of higher value council homes which become empty. These two measures alone are likely to have a severe impact on the money available for council housing services funded through our Housing Revenue Account, and the building of new homes.
- Other elements of national social housing policy, including: a cap on the amount councils can borrow against their Housing Revenue Account; regulations governing council housing management responsibilities and how rental income can be spent; Right to Buy policy and proposals to extend the right to housing association tenants; proposals to end the provision of lifetime tenancies; etc.
- Cuts in welfare, including: a four year freeze on working age benefits; social housing tenants receiving lower benefits if they are deemed to have 'spare bedrooms' (aka the 'bedroom tax'); reducing the overall amount of certain benefits that a household can receive; limiting housing benefit for tenants in

social housing to Local Housing Allowance Rates; limiting Local Housing Allowance for single people under 35 to the shared accommodation rate; the rolling out of Universal Credit as a single benefit payment made direct to tenants; etc. One of the aims of such reforms is to encourage more people into work, but with increasing numbers of claimants already working, many are likely to find it more difficult to make ends meet, leading to higher risk of rent arrears, evictions, and a further increase in homelessness.

- Major cuts in public funding, and changes in how wider public services are funded. Major reforms are needed, (some already under way), to ensure that essential services are available, including services for those who need care or support to help them live their daily lives.
- Changes in the national economy, including some uncertainty arising from the UK's decision to leave the European Union, which some developers are saying is starting to impact on their appetite for building.

However, despite these challenges, some major new opportunities are emerging for tackling the local housing crisis. For example:

- The new devolution deal for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which promises to give a significant boost in terms of infrastructure and affordable housing delivery. ^{viii}
- The Greater Cambridge City Deal is enabling us to work in partnership to accelerate housing growth and provision of transport infrastructure, as well as promoting jobs growth, training opportunities and innovation. ^{ix}
- The council, together with key partners, have set up a Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency. Working in partnership the aim is to be involved in schemes that deliver around 250 new homes a year, primarily affordable housing. The aspiration is to be involved directly in contributing approximately 4,000 new homes up to 2031.
- The recently published national housing white paper sets out plans to increase the number of new homes built, through a range of measures aimed at: planning for homes in the right places; building homes faster; diversifying the housing market; and 'helping people now' ^x The council is keen to work with

partners to make the most of opportunities arising from the government's proposals.

- We will continue to identify and promote solutions to challenges, and to proactively lobby government where national policy is likely to be detrimental to meeting local housing needs.

Although we are committed to seizing new opportunities to increase housing delivery, we are also very mindful of the need to balance housing growth with other issues such as: protecting the unique character of Cambridge; promoting environmental protection and sustainability; the quality and sustainability of new homes; protecting and enhancing existing communities; and the need for transport links and other infrastructure. These key elements are being addressed through policies in our emerging Local Plan.^{xi}

This Interim Housing Strategy Statement outlines our vision and our proposed approach within the context of both the opportunities and constraints which we face.

We cannot achieve anything alone. We have a strong track record of partnership working, and engaging and working closely with partners is becoming ever more critical in working towards our vision.

Increasing housing supply & tackling affordability

Key issues

- Housing has a critical part to play in enabling people to live settled lives, and in supporting both the national and local economy. Need has been identified for 14,000 new homes in Cambridge by 2031. A further 19,500 have been assessed as required in South Cambridgeshire. ^{xii xiii}
- Local house prices and rent levels are at all-time record levels and are continuing to rise. Homelessness is on the rise, and there are around 2,000 households on the council's social housing register (Home-Link) ^{xiv}
- There is a strong need for homes of a wide range of types and tenures, and some employers are telling us that shortage of housing is making it increasingly difficult for them to recruit and retain staff. Social housing is imperative for those on lower incomes, but there is also a growing need for lower cost housing for sale and rent for the growing number of people who can neither access social housing for rent, nor afford open market rents or house prices. There are around 500 households on the Help to Buy intermediate housing register either living or working in Cambridge, and Registered Providers also report strong local demand.
- The short-term nature of most private rented tenancies means that households who cannot afford to buy but who want to settle are finding it difficult to put down roots. This is disruptive for the households concerned and can also affect stability of communities.
- Nationally imposed financial restrictions on our Housing Revenue Account have limited the council's ability to contribute significantly towards delivering the homes needed. However, new opportunities for partnership delivery are emerging, including the funding allocated through devolution.
- Much of the government's agenda has been focused on working households, but the population as a whole is ageing. We need to plan carefully to meet the current and future housing needs of older people, as well as those with other specialist needs. The emerging Local Plan addresses the provision of specialist housing, where need arises. Needs assessment is being undertaken at a county-wide level.

- Development needs to be carried out in a sustainable way. The challenge is to provide the number of homes that are needed whilst ensuring that Cambridge remains a compact city, located within the landscape setting of the Cambridge Green Belt. Mitigation of climate change and bio-diversity need to be planned into new developments from the outset.
- It is also important that new homes are well designed, and served by high quality and sustainable transport links. Communities need to be well-served by services and infrastructure, and sustainable in the long term.

Ongoing approach to achieving vision and aims

- We remain committed to using the powers and resources we have to work in partnership to meet the City's housing needs.
- We are in the process of supporting our emerging Local Plan through the planning examination process towards adoption. This aims to achieve development of a balanced mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures; and a minimum 40% affordable housing on larger sites of fifteen or more units. It also outlines the council's approach towards: the location of new homes; provision of transport links and other infrastructure; quality of housing; sustainability and environmental protection; and balancing the need for growth with the importance of Cambridge remaining a compact city and promoting quality of life and place. We remain committed to proactively identifying and bringing appropriate sites forward.^{xv}
- Major housing development is already well under-way, with a number of new communities completed or under construction. Much of this is taking place jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council on the urban fringes of the City.^{xvi} A five year supply of land has been identified through our Local Plan process.^{xvii}
- We are working with partners as part of a new Housing Development Agency to pool land and resources, and seek further opportunities to deliver the housing agreed as part of the Greater Cambridge City Deal.^{xviii}
- We work closely with Registered Providers to try to maximise the amount of good quality affordable housing provided on new developments through

section 106 agreements. We also work to maintain a mix of tenures overall to meet a range of needs and to support mixed and sustainable communities. We have a particular focus on providing new social housing for rent, although we also recognise the need for all types and tenures, including intermediate tenures and specialist forms of housing. Our proposed requirements for new affordable housing are set out in our emerging Local Plan and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document. These will be reviewed in the context of the outcome of the Local Plan examination and any further changes in national planning policy.^{xix}

- We are working with South Cambridgeshire District Council to develop a joint approach to viability challenges from developers, particularly in relation to affordable housing contributions.
- In terms of the council's own development, we will continue to prioritise provision of new council homes for those on low incomes, aiming for rents to be at or below Local Housing Allowance rates. However, we are also seeking opportunities to provide homes for low cost purchase and intermediate rent – particularly where these can be used to subsidise the provision of more social housing for rent. We have set up a Housing Company to purchase the market sale properties on our own developments, to enable them to be let as intermediate housing at sub-market rents.
- We recognise that the market for private rent and intermediate tenures has been growing, and are working with partners in Cambridge and the surrounding area to identify in more detail the need for intermediate tenure housing, so that we can understand, and support delivery of, the sorts of tenure models that would best serve the needs of the area. However, it remains important that as far as possible, increasing provision for these groups is not at the expense of providing a supply of social housing for rent for those most in need.
- Recognising that the local housing market extends beyond the Cambridge area we have carried out a number of projects jointly with councils in the wider housing sub-region. For example, we have a shared Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and a shared memorandum of co-operation, and work closely with them on local research, promoting housing delivery and sharing best practice.^{xx}

- We seek to promote high quality design across all tenures through: our emerging Local Plan, in the context of the new optional national housing standards for accessible housing and internal space; through the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth,^{xxi} and through use of Design Codes on the fringe developments.
- We are working on county-wide projects to identify the need for homes for older people and people with a range of disabilities; and the Council's emerging Local Plan seeks to secure accessible homes for the future, including wheelchair accessible housing. We have also been working with partners on the development of an Older People's Accommodation Strategy and an Extra Care Market Position Statement for Cambridgeshire.
- Although our Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment has identified no need for pitches within the City itself, we will, with regional partners, keep this under review.
- We have also recently assessed the need for and supply of student housing, and the extent to which provision of purpose built student accommodation is likely to free up existing housing. The research indicates that students form a significant part of the city's population, and that the delivery of purpose built student accommodation, alongside the delivery of other forms of residential accommodation, could help meet the identified needs of higher education institutions, which are important to the city's economy.
- Although our powers are limited, we work proactively with developers to promote early provision of facilities and infrastructure on new developments. We also support existing, as well as newly emerging communities, to ensure that as many people as possible can benefit from the opportunities arising from new development. For example, initiatives introduced as part of the southern fringe development have included: use of local volunteers to welcome new residents; close working with the existing Residents' Association; and use of Community Forums to give residents the opportunity to raise concerns about the new development and influence developers' thinking.

Emerging actions

In addition to our current approach we will:

- Work with partners to deliver the landmark devolution deal agreed for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This will help unlock barriers to construction and includes unprecedented provision for affordable housing together with significant funding for transport infrastructure. £70m will be available to deliver up to 500 council homes in Cambridge City over the next five years; plus a further £100m for other affordable housing across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. There will be another £20m a year over the next 30 years to support economic growth, development of local infrastructure, and jobs. We will work to deliver the new council homes through the Housing Development Agency, and support partners in delivering the other affordable homes and infrastructure.
- Review our approach to planning and meeting the needs of those ineligible for social housing but unable to buy on the open market, using the results of some research on local housing affordability which has been commissioned for the Greater Cambridge area.
- Implement our new Sustainable Housing Design Guide, setting out quality standards for homes to be built through the Housing Development Agency. This covers factors such as: addressing fuel and water poverty issues and adaptability to climate change; and building homes which have a positive impact on health and wellbeing, and which can be easily adapted where necessary.
- Work proactively with potential developers and investors to try to increase the amount of well-managed, high quality privately rented housing available in Cambridge, promoting longer tenancies and homes at a range of prices.
- Promote and support delivery of specialist forms of housing, including homes for older people and those with disabilities; and continue to support provision of other forms of specialist housing where needs can be evidenced.
- Implement a revised River Moorings Policy following recent public consultation; and programme in, with sub-regional partners, an assessment of housing need in relation to houseboats and moorings.
- Seek out and respond to any future opportunities which may arise to increase housing supply, improve affordability, promote longer term tenancies, and meet identified housing needs.

- Ensure that, through the implementation of the Local Plan, new developments in Cambridge are of the highest quality in terms of design excellence and innovation, embracing the principles of sustainable design and construction.
- Work proactively with Anglia Ruskin University, the University of Cambridge and its Colleges, and other educational institutions to maintain an up-to-date understanding of needs and to ensure that student accommodation that is delivered is affordable and suitable for the students it seeks to serve.
- Work with the city's large institutions and companies to understand the needs of key workers.
- Start work on a new joint Local Plan with South Cambridgeshire District Council, once the emerging Local Plans have been adopted.
- Work on a new joint Housing Strategy with South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- Respond to the government's consultation on the housing white paper, and work with partners to take advantage of opportunities which arise from it to increase housing supply and tackle housing affordability.^{xxii}

Existing homes & communities

Key issues

The council has a central role to play in ensuring that the residents of Cambridge can live settled lives in homes that are well managed and maintained.

Council housing

- The council currently owns around 8,000 homes, including around 7,000 for rent 1,000 leasehold, and 80 shared ownership. Management and maintenance of the rented homes is funded through the council's Housing Revenue Account, based on a 30-year business plan.
- Council housing numbers have been falling since the early 1980s due to Right to Buy sales (over which the council has no control), and are likely to be further affected by the proposed government levy on councils which is expected to be paid for through the sale of higher value homes. There is some light at the end of the tunnel though – the council already has a healthy new-build programme, and around 500 additional new council homes are now planned for the City through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution Deal. ^{xxiii}
- The council has some big decisions to make around the future of the council housing service. National policies such as the annual 1% rent cut and the 'higher value homes levy' mean that the council will have to made significant savings to keep the business afloat. The role of council housing is also changing. With the proposed phasing out of lifetime tenancies, and the growing gap between the 'offer' that the council is able to provide compared with options available to housing associations, council housing could move increasingly towards becoming a shorter term housing solution for those in greatest need. This is likely to have significant implications for tenants, and will present new challenges in terms of ensuring that communities can remain sustainable in the long-term. We need to adapt to the changing landscape in order to continue: to manage and maintain the council's homes for the benefit of residents; to meet our statutory responsibilities; to mitigate, as far as possible, the negative impact of national policy changes; and to retain the value of the council's asset. ^{xxiv}

- Major welfare reforms taking place mean that council tenants who are unable to work, or to earn enough to keep themselves out of the benefit system, are already finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet. As well as the impact on the tenants themselves, any increase in rent arrears as a result will put increasing pressure on local authorities as landlords and could impact further on the level and quality of services we are able to provide.
- Tackling climate change is a key policy priority for the council, with an aspiration to achieve zero carbon status for Cambridge by 2050.^{xxv} During 2014/15, the council's sheltered and temporary accommodation accounted for 12.5% of carbon emissions from the council's buildings and operations.
- Residents from low income households in the north of the city who attended a survey workshop in 2016, whilst generally supportive of council services, raised concerns about levels of antisocial behaviour in their neighbourhoods, the cleaning of council housing communal areas and the collection of waste and recycling from communal areas. (Although it is not clear the extent to which this reflected the views of residents actually living in council owned neighbourhoods).^{xxvi}
- We are committed to supporting people to remain living independently at home as long as possible. However, we need to be mindful of the need to operate cost-effectively and make best use of existing homes, and that for some people – eg those who need home adaptations or adversely affected by welfare reforms - remaining in their existing home may not always be the best solution.
- The move towards reliance on the internet for a whole range of products and services, including the need to claim Universal Credit electronically, means that many tenants without access to the internet, or without the skills to use it effectively, are at risk of being left behind.

Private sector housing

- Census figures suggest around 26% of households in the City lived in private rented housing in 2011. It is the second largest tenure in the City, accounting for more than 85% of the growth in households between the two censuses. Since then the sector is thought to have grown even further.

- Welfare issues and reforms are also having an impact on private tenants on low incomes. For example, Local Housing Allowance rates are nowhere near sufficient to cover rents in the City for even the cheapest rental properties in the City, and fewer and fewer households on benefits can afford to remain living in Cambridge. Over the last three years the number of LHA claimants in the City has fallen by a fifth, at least some of which is thought to be due to people no longer able to afford to rent privately in the City.
- A relatively high proportion of private rented homes in Cambridge are Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). These are an important part of the Cambridge housing market, and most landlords provide a good service. However, a minority do not, and we need to ensure that private rented homes – and HMOs in particular - are well managed and maintained, for the benefit of occupants and those in the wider community.

Support to live safely and independently – all tenures

- With an ageing population, the number of older people is rising, and with it the numbers of people with chronic health conditions and disabilities, including dementia. National data and local experience suggest also a steady increase in recent years in the numbers of people with mental health problems, many of whom are in need of support. At the same time, funding for services for vulnerable people is being squeezed, making it more and more difficult to ensure that people receive the help and support they need.
- As a result, significant changes are taking place, both nationally and locally, in how health and social care services are commissioned and delivered. It is important that we continue to work closely with, and support partners in, developing and delivering current and future plans and in provision of more integrated services.

Ongoing approach to achieving vision and aims

- Owing to recently announced reductions in funding available we are having to fundamentally review our council housing spending and activity, with the aim of transforming services and saving at least £1m per year. A set of principles

have been agreed, which include protecting core services and focusing resources on the most vulnerable. This will shape our approach to council housing issues going forward^{xxvii}

- We take a proactive approach to maintaining the condition of the council's housing stock, investing in planned maintenance to help minimise the cost of ongoing repairs and maintenance; with restricted budgets this will become increasingly challenging.
- Our Carbon Management Plan includes an ongoing programme to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in our sheltered and temporary housing schemes, including improvements to heating and lighting systems and insulation.^{xxviii}
- Our Anti-Poverty Strategy^{xxix} contains a significant number of actions around tackling poverty and social exclusion. Areas include: supporting debt advice services; supporting people into work and training; offering apprenticeships across a range of services; promoting energy efficiency measures to residents in lower income areas of the City; increasing internet access points in community buildings; etc. We have created a financial inclusion officer post to work with financially disadvantaged people in priority wards. We also have a Fuel and Water Poverty Action Plan,^{xxx} targeting residents in lower income areas, supporting them to take up energy and/or water saving measures.
- We have a strong track record in involving council tenants and leaseholders in decision making and improving services. For example we have resident representation on the council's Housing Scrutiny Committee; volunteer residents carry out inspections of work carried out on estates; and resident Digital Champions support others to get on-line. The wider tenant and leaseholder community also participate via surveys, social media channels, tenant newsletters/magazines and local residents' groups/associations.^{xxxi}
- We have been reviewing instances where council neighbourhoods have experienced problems with communal recycling areas, and working with residents to find solutions to prevent further problems and flytipping. In some cases this may involve closing the area and providing individual recycling bins instead.

- We periodically review our choice based lettings (Home-Link) policy to ensure that the limited supply of social housing is available to those most in need.
- We have carried out a comprehensive Private Sector House Condition Survey which other Cambridgeshire districts are now considering using as a model for their own areas. We are in the process of analysing the results to assess where our priorities for investment should lie.
- We will continue to support private landlords to deliver good standard, energy efficient housing, and to use enforcement to tackle those who do not. We have a property accreditation scheme, and welcome, in principle, the government's proposals to extend the scope of mandatory licensing of HMOs and introduce minimum room sizes.^{xxxii}
- We recognise that affordability of the private rented sector is a major issue for residents. We have no powers to control rents generally, but are expanding the role of our sub-regional social lettings agency, Town Hall Lettings, to make more good quality private rented homes available at below market rents.^{xxxiii}
- Residents are able to report empty homes through our website. We actively support owners of long-term empty homes to bring them back into use, and have set up a loan fund to enable such homes to be improved for use as affordable housing. Again, we will use formal enforcement where necessary.
^{xxxiv}
- We treat anti-social behaviour and hate crime seriously, engaging proactively with the community in terms of prevention, as well as dealing with complaints and issues as they arise.^{xxxv} We are also an active member of the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership.^{xxxvi}
- We work closely with partners to provide support to those who need it, through: joint prevention initiatives; supporting implementation of the Care Act and Cambridgeshire County Council's Transforming Lives programme; addressing health inequalities; and supporting hospital discharge. For example: by providing, on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, a visiting support service for older people across all tenures; a tenancy sustainment service to support residents whose tenancies may be at risk; working with partners to support the transformation of mental health commissioning and services, through implementation of the Cambridgeshire Mental Health Crisis

Concordat; and supporting a number of partnership initiatives around falls prevention.

- We have worked with partners on a county-wide review around the use of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) aimed at providing a more joined up approach, and better use of resources, to improve health care and housing outcomes. Our existing policy of providing grants and loans to private sector residents includes topping up Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs); helping people to move if their property is unsuitable for adaptation; and repairs and improvements to make homes safer. These all help to contribute towards Cambridgeshire's Better Care Fund vision, which includes: diverting resources away from acute health services and ongoing social care; focusing rather on helping people to help themselves; and returning people to independence wherever possible.
- We are also reviewing how our shared Home Improvement Agency operates, with a view to improving efficiency.
- The council is working with partners to provide housing and support for refugees under the government's Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme.^{xxxvii}

Emerging actions

In addition to the above we plan to:

- Implement the agreed proposals arising from our major 'Housing Transformation Programme', to transform the way we provide services to council tenants.
- Plan for and implement the required phasing out of lifetime tenancies for council tenants, once government guidelines are in place.
- Implement our recently agreed revised disabled adaptation policy for council tenants, bringing it more in line with Disabled Facilities Grant policy used for private sector residents, and supporting people to move to more suitable accommodation where that is more appropriate to meet their long term housing needs.^{xxxviii}

- Review the building cleaning contract, in relation to council housing communal areas.
- Plan for and implement the government's proposals around widening the scope of mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation once more details are available; and review the impact of changes once implemented.
- Review our private rented sector standard, establishing an agreed set of advisory standards between the council and landlords, to help ensure the health and safety of occupiers and minimise the need for council intervention.
- Promote use of longer term private rented tenancies, and support the sector in doing so.
- Review the range of home improvement grants and loans offered to private sector residents on low incomes; and work with partners to agree how DFG funding can be used more effectively to meet Better Care Fund objectives, through development of a county-wide DFG policy.

Homelessness, housing advice & rough sleeping

Key issues

- Homelessness has always been an issue in Cambridge but, as is the case nationally, it has become more acute over the last couple of years. A combination of rising rent levels fuelled by high demand, together with welfare reforms, have contributed towards increased pressure in relation to both statutory and non-statutory homelessness.
- The number of decisions based on applications from households presenting as homeless has more than doubled in the last two years, from 189 in 2013/14 to 418 in 2015/16. 294 decisions were made in the first three quarters of 2016/17.^{xxxix}
- The number of households accepted as homeless and in priority need of accommodation also increased, albeit less dramatically, by 35% between 2013/14 and 2015/16 (from 127 to 172). So far there have been 94 acceptances in the first three quarters of 2016/17.
- Homelessness is also rising amongst households whom the council has no statutory duty to rehouse. In 2015/16, 787 cases of homelessness were prevented or relieved, with 630 in the first three quarters up to December 2016. This compares with 470 cases during 2014/15.
- Anyone can become homeless, but some groups are more at risk than others. For example, more than 60% of homeless applicants over the last nine months or so have been aged 35 and under, and over half those are under 25. The main reasons for people losing their settled home include: family or friends no longer willing to accommodate; loss of private tenancy; and violence, including domestic violence. Instances of homelessness involving all of these are on the rise.
- Use of temporary and Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation for households to whom the council owes a statutory interim or permanent duty, is expensive - and for households it is far from ideal. Where households are reliant on housing benefit, the council can only recover about one third of the cost of B&B provision. Also, because of the difficulty in securing B&B from hoteliers, it is often located outside of the City.

- There has been a sharp rise in the number of rough sleepers recorded in the City, from 135 individuals in 2014/15, to 152 in 2015/16. There has been a long-standing target of keeping rough sleeping numbers at or below 10 on any single night, which has been broadly met for a number of years. However, this rose sharply to 18 in autumn 2015, and annual figures also rose from 135 in 2014/15 to 152 in 2015/16.^{xi} The number of rough sleepers with no resource to public finance have also increased over the last year. During the last six months of 2015-16, numbers in each month were more or less double those for the first six months.
- Partners have reported a significant increase over the last few years in the number of rough sleepers with mental health problems, many of whom also have alcohol or substance misuse issues. Some engage in street-based anti-social behaviour and begging. Not all rough sleepers are homeless, but have tenancies, and such behaviours can put tenancies at risk.
- A Homelessness Reduction Bill is on its way through parliament.^{xii} We welcome the focus that this gives on the importance of homelessness prevention. However, turning much of what we already do into a statutory duty means we will need to review some of our processes once more detail is known. There will be costs involved, and all local authorities will need to be awarded additional resources to implement the changes.
- Of those on the housing register, around 63% are single people or couples, and around one third are households with children or with a pregnant primary applicant.

Ongoing approach to achieving vision and aims

- The council works closely with a range of partner agencies, including providing funding where appropriate, to provide a number of prevention initiatives and accommodation & support services.
- We have, over recent years, focused closely on preventing homelessness, shifting resources more towards enabling and supporting people threatened with homelessness to remain where they are or access appropriate alternative

housing. Financial advice and support; and a home visiting service, providing conciliation and advocacy to prevent evictions from the homes of family and friends; are just two examples of interventions which have proved particularly effective in terms of helping households to stay put.

- Our focus has been moving away from short term hostel accommodation for single homeless people, towards supporting partner agencies in the provision of one-to one support and re-ablement services, including development of skills and employment. We also operate a re-connections policy to reconnect rough sleepers to where they came from.
- We have been working to improve access to the private rented sector. For example, we have an access scheme, providing rent guarantees and rent deposits for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- We have set up, with partners: a single homelessness service to provide accommodation for people who are homeless, and either rough sleeping or at risk of doing so;^{xliii} and a social lettings agency – Town Hall Lettings – aimed initially at securing private rented accommodation for single people, but which is now expanding the range of rented homes available.^{xliiii} We have also developed, in partnership with a registered provider, a small number of training flats in the City.
- We have been working to reduce our reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation, and length of stay in temporary accommodation. Measures include: speeding up the time taken to complete investigations and making homelessness decisions; making direct lets to those for whom the council owes a full homelessness duty, rather than requiring them to bid for housing through our Home-Link choice based lettings scheme; and increasing the amount of alternative temporary and emergency accommodation available as an alternative to B&B. For example, average homelessness decision times have been reduced from 45 working days in 2014-15, to 30 working days to date during 2016-17. In the current financial year to January 2017, 60 households have been in B&B or temporary accommodation, compared with 184 during 2015-16, with the average stay reduced from 17 nights to 5.
- As already outlined, we are committed to maximising the supply of genuinely affordable housing for those who need it, aiming for a mix of property sizes to meet a range of needs. This is both through our own development programme

and through supporting appropriate development by other registered providers.

- Access to social housing is dealt with through our sub-regional choice based lettings scheme, Home-Link.^{xliv} We keep our lettings policy under review to ensure that priority continues to be given to those most in need, and take a robust approach to housing related fraud.
- For those not immediately threatened with homelessness, we continue to provide general advice on housing options, supporting people to apply for social housing where appropriate, and sign-posting to other agencies.
- We have, over recent years, been improving our approach to capturing and monitoring client data. We need to continue with this, to ensure that we have a good sense of the profile of our customers and how this might be changing over time, and whether particular equalities groups might be being disadvantaged.

Emerging actions

We have worked closely with partners to identify the key issues and develop a three-year action plan to deal with these issues.^{xlv, xlvi}

Examples of areas for action, working with partners, include:

- Improving our approach to domestic abuse, including better information for victims and survivors; and reviewing policies, procedures and practices, with the aim of working with housing providers to develop a joint framework to tackle domestic abuse issues.
- Improving access to the private rented sector, including strengthening the effectiveness of the single homelessness service and Town Hall Lettings
- Preventing and tackling rough sleeping, including: developing more targeted work with young people to prevent homelessness – especially those not in employment, education or training (NEET) or those in Pupil Referral Units; and exploring options for a more effective joined up approach towards supporting single homeless people and rough sleepers into independent living.

- Improving support services for those with mental health issues or a dual diagnosis with mental health as a primary issue.
- Exploring new homelessness prevention measures, including: investigating the reasons for repeat homelessness, and seeking appropriate solutions; and continuing to pursue shared housing models with Registered Providers.
- Minimising use of temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast; eg through further improving the speed at which homelessness decisions are made, and regularly reviewing temporary accommodation requirements.
- Developing a multi-agency approach to mitigating the impact of welfare reforms, to reduce the risk of homelessness amongst those affected.
- Bringing empty homes back into use.

In addition, we will:

- With funding recently secured through the government's Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer fund, work with sub-regional partners to develop a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to preventing homelessness. This will include: training for professionals; setting up a landlord resolution service to help maintain tenancies and reduce evictions; improving access to private rented housing; and improving web-based information on the range of services available. ^{xlvi}
- Implement the changes required by the proposed Homelessness Reduction Act. ^{xlvi}

Monitoring of delivery

This Interim Housing Strategy Statement will be publicly available on the housing strategy page of the council's website.^{xlix}

Ongoing and emerging actions are being delivered and monitored through a range of other agreed projects and action plans.

In terms of issues relating to council housing, tenant and leasehold representatives scrutinise both services and key decisions: as service inspectors; through a Housing Regulation Panel; and as members of the council's Housing Management Board.^l

Annex 1

Web links

- ⁱ Progress against Housing Strategy 2012-2015: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/content/housing-and-related-strategies>
- ⁱⁱ Cambridge City Council vision statement: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/vision-statement>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Cambridge sub-regional Housing Market Bulletin. Ed 31: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/Housingmarketbulletin>
- ^{iv} Cambridge sub-regional Housing Market Bulletin, Ed 31: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/Housingmarketbulletin>
- ^v Cambridge sub-regional Housing Market Bulletins, Ed 31: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/Housingmarketbulletin>
- ^{vi} Strategic Housing Key Facts, December 2016, private rent data, pp 13-16: https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/15_key_facts_december_2016_-_final.pdf
- ^{vii} Anti-Poverty Strategy 2014-17 : <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/antipoverty-strategy>
- ^{viii} Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/devolution>
- ^{ix} Greater Cambridge City Deal: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/citydeal/>
- ^x Housing white paper, Fixing our Broken Housing Market, DCLG, February 2017: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market>
- ^{xi} Local Plan review: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-review>
- ^{xii} Local Plan review: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-review>
- ^{xiii} Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Examination – Objectively Assessed Housing Need: Further Evidence (November 2015) see RD/MC/140: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-core-documents-library>
- ^{xiv} Strategic Housing Key Facts, December 2016, Home-Link applicant data, page 24: https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/15_key_facts_december_2016_-_final.pdf
- ^{xv} Local Plan review: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-review>
- ^{xvi} Cambridge City Council growth web pages: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/urban-growth>
- ^{xvii} Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/content/strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment>
- ^{xviii} Greater Cambridge City Deal: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/citydeal/>
- ^{xix} Local Plan review: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-review>
- ^{xx} Cambridgeshire Insight Housing pages: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing>
- ^{xxi} Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth: https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/cambridgeshire_quality_charter_2010.pdf
- ^{xxii} Housing white paper, Fixing our Broken Housing Market, DCLG, February 2017: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market>
- ^{xxiii} Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/devolution>
- ^{xxiv} Report to Executive Councillor & Housing Scrutiny January 2018, see item 7 - Housing Transformation Programme 2017/18: <http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=414&MId=3065&Ver=4>
- ^{xxv} Climate Change Strategy 2016-2021: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change-strategy>
- ^{xxvi} Citizens' Survey 2016 press release: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/news/2016/11/16/more-residents-satisfied-with-council-services>

- ^{xxvii} Report to Executive Councillor & Housing Scrutiny January 2018, see item 7 - Housing Transformation Programme 2017/18:
<http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=414&MId=3065&Ver=4>
- ^{xxviii} Carbon Management Plan 2016-2021:
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/carbon_management_plan_2016-21_1.pdf
- ^{xxix} Anti-Poverty Strategy 2014-17 : <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/antipoverty-strategy>
- ^{xxx} Fuel & Water Poverty Action Plan 2015-2017:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Fuel%20%20Water%20Poverty%20Action%20Plan%202015-2017.pdf>
- ^{xxxi} Resident involvement web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/resident-involvement>
- ^{xxxii} Property Accreditation Scheme: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/property-accreditation>
- ^{xxxiii} Town Hall Lettings web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/town-hall-lettings>
- ^{xxxiv} Empty Homes web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/empty-homes>
- ^{xxxv} Community Safety Communication Strategy: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/community-safety-communication-strategy>
- ^{xxxvi} Anti-social behaviour web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/what-is-antisocial-behaviour>
- ^{xxxvii} Syrian Refugees web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/syrian-refugees>
- ^{xxxviii} Adaptations Policy for HRA Property, Housing Scrutiny Committee January 2017, agenda item 6: <http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=414&MId=3065&Ver=4>
- ^{xxxix} Strategic Housing Key Facts, December 2016, homelessness data, page 38:
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/15_key_facts_december_2016_-_final.pdf
- ^{xl} Strategic Housing Key Facts, December 2016, rough sleeping data, pages 43-45:
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/15_key_facts_december_2016_-_final.pdf
- ^{xli} Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/homelessnessreduction.html>
- ^{xlii} Single Homelessness Service web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/the-single-homelessness-service>
- ^{xliii} Town Hall Lettings web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/town-hall-lettings>
- ^{xliv} Looking for a council or housing association home web page:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/council-and-housing-association-properties>
- ^{xlv} Homelessness action plan 2016-19:
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/homelessness_strategy_action_plan_-_names_redacted_0.pdf
- ^{xlvi} Homelessness review 2015: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/content/housing-and-related-strategies>
- ^{xlvii} Cambridgeshire Insight web page on Homelessness Trailblazer bid:
<http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/trailblazer>
- ^{xlviii} Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016/17: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/homelessnessreduction.html>
- ^{xlix} Housing strategy web pages: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/content/housing-and-related-strategies>
- ^l Resident involvement web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/resident-involvement>

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Annex 2

Glossary

Term	Definition
<p>Affordable Housing / Social Housing</p>	<p>Affordable Housing (aka social housing) includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable Housing should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices • Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative Affordable Housing provision. <p>(See National Planning Policy Framework for full definition)</p> <p>The Housing & Planning Act 2016 provided for Starter Homes to be included as a form of Affordable Housing. Details are still to emerge.</p>
<p>Affordable Rent</p>	<p>Rented housing provided by Local Authorities and Private Registered Providers of social housing to households that are eligible for Social Rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).</p> <p>New homes for rent funded by government grant have to be offered at Affordable Rents. Some existing Social Rent homes may also be converted to Affordable Rents in agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency.</p>

<p>Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</p>	<p>Our draft Affordable Housing SPD supports the council's proposed submission Local Plan. It give guidance to partners on the council's expectations around the delivery of new Affordable Housing, including the type and mix of housing required, how Affordable Housing should be located on sites, the council's approach to viability, etc. It will be reviewed prior to adoption, to reflect any changes to the proposed submission Local Plan which is currently being examined by the Planning Inspectorate.</p>
<p>Bedroom standard</p>	<p>Under the Housing (Overcrowding) Bill 2003, a recommended notional number of bedrooms for each household, based on the size of the household, age, sex, marital status and relationship among members of the household.</p>
<p>Bedroom tax</p>	<p>Sometime referred to as 'removal of spare room subsidy'. Government policy whereby working age social housing tenants receive reduced benefit where they are deemed to have more bedrooms than their household requires, as measured by the 'bedroom standard' (see above).</p>
<p>Better Care Fund</p>	<p>A local, single pooled budget set up to fund ways that the NHS and local government throughout England can work more closely together.</p>
<p>Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA)</p>	<p>A geographical area defined by government for the purposes of setting Local Housing Allowance rates. The Cambridge BRMA covers a wide area, including Ely & Littleport, Newmarket, Haverhill, Huntingdon, St Neots, etc and surrounding areas. The result is that Local Housing Allowance rates for Cambridge are significantly lower than private rents in the City.</p>
<p>Cambridge Housing Sub-</p>	<p>An alliance of local authorities around the Cambridge area, working in partnership to address the housing needs of the area. The local authorities are:</p>

Region	Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury District Councils. The partnership is also increasingly working more closely with Peterborough City Council. Activity is co-ordinated through the Cambridge sub-Regional Housing Board (CRHB)
Cambs HIA	The Home Improvement Agency (see below) set up as a shared service, currently covering Cambridge City, South Cambs and Huntingdonshire district councils.
Choice Based Lettings (CBL)	The scheme under which Council and Housing Association homes for rent are let. Applicants (including existing tenants who want a transfer) are able to bid for properties which become available. Cambridge City Council is part of a sub-regional CBL scheme – Home Link.
City Deal	The Greater Cambridge City Deal is a partnership agreement made with central government, signed by Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, The University of Cambridge and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership. It includes provision of government funding, in return for delivering new transport infrastructure, accelerating delivery of new homes, and delivering new jobs and training opportunities to the area.
Combined Authority	A legal structure set up by two or more local authorities in England. They may take on statutory functions transferred to them by an Order made by the Secretary of State, plus any functions that the constituent authorities agree to share. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough combined authority has been set up to deliver the

	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution Deal.
Devolution	<p>The passing down of powers and funding from central to local government. For this to happen, government requires the setting up of a local Combined Authority chaired by a Directly Elected Mayor.</p> <p>Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution Deal is a deal between central government and: Cambridge City & the four other districts in Cambridgeshire; Peterborough City Council; Cambridgeshire County Council; and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership. The current deal includes the devolution of funding for: transport infrastructure; up to 500 new council homes in the City plus other affordable housing across the combined authority area; and to support economic growth, development of local infrastructure and jobs.</p>
Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	Grants provided by the Council for adaptation works in the home for disabled people. The government allocates a sum to each local authority each year, but Councils may choose to top up the amount payable.
Equality Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessments are carried out on the Council's policies and services to assess whether they may have a different or adverse effect on some communities or groups compared to others, and whether the policy or service actively promotes good relations between different groups.
Extra care	Specialist accommodation designed to maximise the independence of older people, in which residents live in their own home with their own front door, but can benefit from around the clock social care and

	<p>housing support.</p> <p>Some of the services provided in extra care housing can also be extended to people living in non-specialist accommodation in the wider community.</p>
Fixed Term Tenancy	<p>A tenancy which runs for a fixed period of time and is reviewed, and either renewed or terminated, at the end of the fixed term. Councils and Housing Associations currently have the option to offer fixed term instead of lifetime tenancies. Under the Housing & Planning Act 2016, lifetime tenancies for council tenants are to be phased out, and future tenancies only offered on a fixed term basis. (Details awaited).</p>
Fuel Poverty	<p>Fuel Poverty arises when more than 10% of a household's income would need to be spent on heating the home to a comfortable level. (This definition is currently being reviewed nationally).</p>
General Fund	<p>The local authority account which deals with income and expenditure other than for the council's own HRA housing stock.</p>
Handyperson Service	<p>Aimed mainly at older people. Provides minor works, repairs and other interventions to help people to live independently at home, together with a home assessment to pick up any additional issues and/or signpost people to other services.</p>
Help to Buy register	<p>Register of applicants for intermediate housing. Applicants in Cambridgeshire apply through the Help to Buy East & South East website.</p>
Higher value homes levy	<p>Annual levy which local stock holding authorities will be required to pay to government to fund extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants. The value of the levy will represent an estimate of:</p>

	<p>the market value of the authority's interest in any higher value housing that is likely to become vacant during the year, less costs or other deductions. Details, including meaning of meaning of 'higher' & 'market' values, how costs and deductions are to be calculated, etc are still to be determined. (Housing & Planning Act 2016)</p>
Home Improvement Agency	<p>An agency which provides disabled adaptations and home improvements for vulnerable people living in private homes, and signposts people to other services. CambsHIA is the agency provided as a joint service across Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Councils.</p>
Home Link	<p>Home Link is the choice based lettings scheme (see above) through which Council and Housing Association homes are let across the Cambridge sub-region.</p>
Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	<p>The HCA is the national housing and regeneration agency for England. It provides grant funding for new Affordable Housing and to improve existing social housing, and provides advice and support to partners in delivering new housing and new communities. It is currently also the regulator for social housing providers.</p>
Housing Associations	<p>Independent societies, bodies of trustees or companies established for the purpose of providing low-cost social housing for people in housing need on a non-profit-making basis. Any trading surplus is used to maintain existing homes and to help finance new ones.</p>
Housing Benefit	<p>Welfare payments made to cover housing costs. Starting to be phased out for working age claimants as contributions towards housing costs become part</p>

	of Universal credit.
Housing Development Agency	The Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency is a housing investment partnership set up as part of the Greater Cambridge City Deal (see above). It brings together skills, land and finance to build new homes, including Affordable Housing, on public sector land.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	The account which deals with the rent and service charge money paid by council tenants and leaseholders, and pays for management, maintenance and improvement of the council's homes and surrounding areas.
Housing Transformation Programme	The council's 2016/17 review of services provided for council tenants and leaseholders and funded through the Housing Revenue Account.
House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	A property rented out by at least three people who are not from one 'household' (eg a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. Sometimes called a 'house share'.
Intermediate Housing	Homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above Social Rent, but below market levels, and which meet the criteria for Affordable Housing (above). Can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent (including Rent to Buy), but not Affordable Rent housing.
Lifetime tenancy	A tenancy whose length is limited to the life of the tenant.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	LHA rates are set by government, and used to assess the level of housing benefit (or housing

rates	<p>element of Universal Credit) to be paid to tenants renting from private landlords, depending on the area in which they live and the size of their household. This arrangement is to be extended to social housing tenants from 2018 (2019 for those in supported housing) depending on when their tenancy started.</p> <p>LHA rates are set at the 30th percentile of rents in the local Broad Market Rental Area (BRMA) – see above.</p>
Local Plan	<p>Local Planning Authorities, including District Councils, must provide a Local Plan which sets planning policies in the local authority area. Cambridge’s current Plan dates from 2006. The council’s emerging Local Plan is currently being examined by the Planning Inspectorate.</p>
Low Cost Home Ownership	<p>A form of Intermediate Affordable Housing, providing home ownership at below market prices.</p>
Mandatory licensing of HMOs	<p>Large HMOs must be licensed by the local authority. Currently these are HMOs which are: rented to five or more people who form more than one household; are at least three storeys high; and tenants share toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities.</p> <p>Government recently consulted on extending the range of properties requiring to be licensed.</p>
Memorandum of Co-operation	<p>An agreement between partners made under the statutory duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. Cambridge City, the other Cambridgeshire District and Peterborough City Councils are signatories to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Memorandum of Co-Operation.</p>
National	<p>The national framework introduced from April 2012</p>

Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	to replace all the existing Planning Policy Statements. It sets out the government's policies around new developments, including the development of Affordable Housing.
Priority need (homelessness)	<p>Under homelessness legislation, certain categories of household - such as families with children and households that include someone who is vulnerable (for example because of pregnancy, old age, or physical or mental disability) have a priority need for accommodation.</p> <p>Housing authorities must, in most cases, ensure that suitable accommodation is available for people who have priority need, provided they are eligible for assistance and unintentionally homeless.</p>
Private Registered Providers	Social housing providers (other than local authorities) registered with the Homes & Communities Agency. May be non-profit or profit making organisations.
Property Accreditation	Landlords and letting agents signing their homes up to the Council's Property Accreditation scheme agree that their home/ homes will adhere to a Code of Standards relating to the management and condition of those homes. The council will work with participants to provide information and support, and a range of benefits are offered.
Registered Providers	Providers of social housing registered with the Homes & Communities Agency. Includes Private Registered Providers (see above) and councils who still have their own housing stock.
Rent to Buy	Homes are let to eligible households at an intermediate rent to give them the opportunity to save for a deposit to buy a home. If the landlord wishes to sell the property at a later date, the existing tenants should have right of first refusal.

<p>Right to Buy (RTB)/ Voluntary Right to Buy</p>	<p>Right to Buy: Scheme introduced by the Housing Act 1980 which enables secure Local Authority tenants (and some assured Housing Association tenants) to buy their rented home at a discount.</p> <p>Voluntary Right to Buy: Under the Housing & Planning Act 2016 and the National Housing Federations' Voluntary Right to Buy Agreement , the scheme is to be extended to Housing Association tenants, with discounts to be funded by stock-holding authorities. The presumption is that eligible tenants will buy the home in which they live, although in some cases they may instead be given the opportunity to use their discount to buy an alternative housing association home.</p>
<p>Section 106 Agreement</p>	<p>Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally binding agreement with a developer. Such agreements can be used to require developers to provide Affordable Housing and/or community facilities on a site. Alternatively, financial contributions (commuted sums) can be agreed in place of delivering new homes on site. The council will normally only accept financial contributions in place of Affordable Housing in exceptional circumstances.</p>
<p>Shared Ownership</p>	<p>A form of Intermediate Tenure Low Cost Home Ownership housing. Homes in which the occupier owns a share of the equity and pays rent on the remaining share.</p>
<p>Social Housing</p>	<p>See 'Affordable Housing' above.</p>
<p>Social Rented Housing</p>	<p>Rented housing owned by local authorities and Private Registered Providers, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent</p>

	regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.
Social Rent	The rent charged for social rented housing. (Differs from Affordable Rent).
Starter Homes	<p>Introduced by the Housing & Planning Act 2016. Starter homes are aimed at first time buyers aged over 23 and under 40 with no income restrictions. Properties to be sold to purchasers at a discount of at least 20% of market value, with a discounted price cap of £250k (£450k in London).</p> <p>The Act provides for Starter Homes to count as Affordable Housing, and allows for government to set regulations requiring starter homes to be included on residential sites as a condition of securing planning permission. Government has also consulted on a proposal that 20% of all new homes on new developments over a certain size should be starter homes.</p> <p>Regulations – once published - may allow for different levels of provision, and different price caps to apply, in different areas.</p> <p>Further detail expected in the Housing White Paper due early 2017.</p>
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	A collection of data and survey information about all parts of the local housing market. The Cambridge SHMA covers the Cambridge housing sub-region, and helps in planning for housing and related services in the area.
Town Hall Lettings	Residential lettings agency set up between the council and other Cambridgeshire partners, which

	sources private rented accommodation to let at sub-market rents.
Universal Credit	A means-tested welfare benefit for working age claimants. Being phased in nationally as a single payment to replace a number of existing separate benefits, including housing benefit. Paid direct to claimants unless there are grounds for alternative arrangements to be made.



To: Executive Councillor for Housing
Report by: Alan Carter
Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing 7 March 2017
Wards affected: All

New Housing by the Council

Key Decision

NOT FOR PUBLICATION: **Appendix 1** of the report relates to an item during which the public is likely to be excluded from the meeting by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

1. Executive summary

The advent of the Devolution Agreement means that the Council can consider building new Council housing again. This report seeks endorsement of the housing dimension of the Devolution Agreement and sets out the development framework within which the Council will provide new housing itself. It also provides details of the current delivery programme for using Devolution Housing Grant over the next two years. The Council's approach to the involvement of residents in the process is refreshed as is the Council's Home Loss Policy.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- a. Endorse the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution New Homes Business Case 20.1.17 at Appendix 1.
- b. Approve the Council's approach to the development of new Council housing as shown in the paper at Appendix 2.
- c. Approve the 'Commitment to Resident Involvement'.
- d. Note the current delivery programme for using Devolution Housing Grant over the next two years.
- e. Reapprove the Home Loss Policy at Appendix 5.

3. Background

In the year to the end of March 2017 the Council will have completed 113 new Council homes. 84 to rent or for shared ownership through City Homes and 29 to rent at sub-market levels through the Cambridge City Housing Company.

In July 2015, the Council had to put any new schemes on hold as a consequence of the potentially major detrimental impact of national housing policy on the Council's housing finances.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution Agreement has meant that the Council can resurrect its programme to build more new Council homes. Through the Devolution Agreement process, the Council has negotiated £70m capital grant from the Government specifically for the Council to provide at least 500 new Council homes over a five year period from April 2017. To qualify for the grant the Council must start building the homes within the five year period. The overarching Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution New Homes Business Case 20.1.17 is shown as Appendix 1. The Business Case includes further details on the £70m programmed for the city (see Appendix 1 to the Business Case).

Now that the Council can start building again, it was felt appropriate to set out afresh how the Council goes about building new Council homes. Appendix 2 is a paper entitled "New Housing by the Council : Our Approach to Development" and provides the development framework for the Council's new housing building programme. The paper sets the scene for other reports that are being brought forward to the Committee requesting specific approval to develop sites for new Council homes and re-approval of the Home Loss Policy.

Importantly, the paper reaffirms the Council's commitment to involve residents and how it will support those who are directly affected by the programme. This commitment is summarised in the consultation section below.

In the context of the Council's overall vision for Cambridge and in line with the Interim Housing Strategy Statement considered as an earlier committee agenda item the paper explains;

1. Why the Council has a new house-building programme
2. What is built and why
3. The location of new housing
4. When it gets built and why
5. The process behind how it is built including how residents are involved
6. Who organises the programme

Appendix 3 is a list of new schemes being progressed during 2017.18, the first year of the Devolution Housing Grant programme.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The financial plans that underpin the new build programme will be detailed in the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Annual Budgets and Mid Year Reviews.

The financial implications for 2017.18 have been approved as part of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Annual Budgets for 2017.18. In summary, £20m per annum has been built into the HRA budget for five years from April 2017 for building new Council homes.

Where new Council homes are to be provided on General Fund sites the HRA or the Cambridge City Housing Company will in effect 'buy' the land and housing from the General Fund.

(b) Staffing Implications

The Council has set up a shared housing development team with South Cambridgeshire District Council and the County Council called the Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency (H DA).

The H DA will manage the programme and projects to deliver the new homes for the Council. Appendix 2 includes further details. Nicola Hillier, Housing Development Manager, will oversee new homes being built through the HRA and will project manage some schemes direct. Mark Wilson and Amelia Norman (Housing Development Officers) will also project manage schemes and David Goddard-Gill (Construction and Technical) will take the lead in ensuring that new homes are built to required standards

The H DA will work closely with the Cambridge Investment Partnership to ensure that the overall programme of Council investments generate both the financial and social outcomes expected.

The H DA team will work closely with City Homes and the Estates and Facilities throughout the development process.

There will be staffing implications for the Council's corporate body. Consideration is being given to the Cambridge Investment Partnership funding a post in the Planning team to provide the capacity to process planning applications. There may be additional 'section 106' legal work and

land conveyancing, although the latter is likely to be repetitive work using similar legal contracts. For the finance team there may not be any new work, just more of the same.

The impact on the corporate body is currently being assessed for the first year of the programme.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

An EQIA for the Council's new build programme was last approved in January 2013. The EQIA has been reviewed and up-date and is shown as Appendix 4.

(d) Environmental Implications

The new house-building programme has been given a 'High Positive Impact' rating. The new homes will be built within the Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide. This looks to promote the delivery of high quality new development, seeking to:

- 1) Address issues such as fuel and water poverty amongst our residents;
- 2) Build homes that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents;
- 3) Build homes that are designed and built to high design and sustainability standards;
- 4) Ensure new homes are easy to maintain and are adaptable, both for residents and to future climate change.

(e) Procurement

There are no procurement implications associated with this report. Any procurement implications will be outlined when scheme specific approval is requested for individual schemes.

(f) Consultation and communication

How the Council will engage with residents in building new Council homes is detailed in Appendix 2. The following is a summary of the Council's commitment to involving residents directly affected by any development.

COMMITMENT TO RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

The Council is committed to ensuring that there is the least possible disturbance to residents who are required to move from their homes.

For tenants:

- Support will be available for those in who need that support to organise the move.
- Tenants required to move will be consulted on the new scheme as it evolves and will be given priority to return to new housing that meets their needs provided there is sufficient new accommodation of the type required available. The Council's Lettings Policy will be used to determine a match between the household and property type and size.
- If a tenant does not wish to move back every effort will be made to re-house them in the area of their choice.
- Statutory 'Home Loss Payments' will be made to tenants as will reasonable 'Disturbance Payments' to the expenses involve in moving.

For leaseholders:

- When a leaseholder's property is to be redeveloped, and if they are not able to afford to buy a suitable alternative home on the open market, the Council will offer advice and assistance to secure shared ownership, equity share or another form of intermediate housing option in the city. Where the property is to be refurbished the leaseholder will be able to return to the property.
 - Home Loss Payment and Disturbance Payments are also payable to leaseholders however the legislation is different in respect of Home Loss Payment.
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Appendix 5 shows an up-dated Home Loss Policy for approval with amendments that bring it line with the Council's 'Commitment to Resident Involvement'.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no specific community safety implications of this report. The Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide has as a key objective that all development should create places that are active, inclusive, safe and fair to everyone.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

None.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution New Homes Business Case 20.1.17 (Not for Publication)

Appendix 2 – “New Housing by the Council: Our Approach to Development”.

Appendix 3 – Current delivery programme for use of the Devolution Housing Grant over the next two years.

Appendix 4 – EQIA Housing Development

Appendix 5 – Home Loss Policy

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Appendix 2

NEW HOUSING BY THE COUNCIL : OUR APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT – MARCH 2017

INTRODUCTION

More housing of all types is needed in Cambridge if the city is to continue to grow for the benefit of all residents. This is reflected in the Council's vision and annual statements' extracts of which are set out below.

This paper explains what the Council is doing directly itself to provide new housing and provides a 'development framework' describing how it will go about it.

The Council's housing vision is for Cambridge to be a City where:

- The housing market functions effectively, providing homes which are as affordable as possible; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy.
- There is a wide and varied choice of good quality, sustainable homes of different sizes, types and tenures, to meet the needs of a wide range of different households.
- Homes are located in high quality sustainable environments, served by jobs & neighbourhood facilities, appropriate green space, effective transport links, and other necessary infrastructure.
- Everyone has access to a suitable home, and residents are able to live as healthily, safely, independently as possible.
- People from all walks of life live in harmony, within mixed and balanced communities; and homes and communities continue to meet the needs of residents into the future.
- We have strong relationships with residents, developers and partners that enable us to deliver housing and services effectively, and to innovate where appropriate.

The relevant strategic aims of the Interim Housing Strategy Statement are:

- Work with stakeholders to accelerate the delivery of housing and infrastructure in and around Cambridge as set out in the Greater Cambridge City Deal and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution Deal.
- Provide, and promote provision of, good quality, energy and water efficient homes, in high quality, sustainable environments, alongside appropriate infrastructure.
- Ensure that new homes: are as affordable as possible; are available in a range of sizes, types and tenures, to meet a range of needs; and can support mixed, balanced and sustainable communities.
- Make the best use of council land to maximise the supply of housing for those who cannot afford to access the private market

1. WHY DO WE HAVE A NEW HOUSE-BUILDING PROGRAMME?

The Council is the main provider of housing in Cambridge.

In this context the aims of the Council in providing new housing itself are as follows;

1. Provide additional social housing to help meet the shortfall in Cambridge and to replace the loss of social housing through the Right to Buy.
2. Replace some of the Council's existing housing that no longer meets current day standards and is becoming less popular with residents.
3. Build new house types that will better meet the overall mix of social housing needed in the future.
4. Improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing, reducing the cost of utility bills for residents and improving the environmental sustainability of the housing.

2. WHAT DO WE BUILD?

Mixed and Balanced Communities - mix of property type; size and tenure

The starting point to decide what to build is the Council's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (AHSPD) that indicates the mix of sizes of new Affordable Housing that is needed in the future. This draws on population and employment growth statistics captured in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The current AHSPD is waiting to be formally up-dated as part of the process to review the Local Plan however, the current revised draft provides the following as a starting point for any new development;

- No more than 20% one bedroom
- At least 40% two bedroom
- 30% three bedroom
- 10% four bedroom

Each site will be assessed in terms of the density of housing that is appropriate considering its location and surrounding land uses and therefore the numbers of new housing that could be accommodated. This assessment will also start to indicate whether a new development should be of flats or houses or a mixture of both or other property types.

An analysis of existing housing in the local area will also be undertaken as far as is possible to assess whether there is a shortfall of any particular type; size or tenure of housing or any particular local housing need that could be addressed through a new development.

When considering what to build, regard will be given to the current mix of housing for the Council and the extent it fits with longer term need projections. The Council currently manages a disproportionate number of one bedroom properties in relation to long term needs and has less three and four bedroom houses.

Together an analysis of these factors – indicative numbers; mix of sizes; property types; site specific factors; local needs; and longer term needs

– come together to form the brief to the architect as to what we should be building.

In view of the ageing population and the need to provide a better range of options attractive for older people release family housing, a percentage of the smaller properties will be provided for older people, or as other forms of specialist housing to meet the needs of disabled or vulnerable people.

Guidance provided in the national HAPPI report (Housing Our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation, DCLG, Dec 2009) will be considered in respect of new housing for older people.

Housing Standards

All new housing for the Council will meet the following key standards;

- As a minimum standards required by planning policy
- Across the Council's new build programme, as a minimum 2% of new housing will be to fully wheelchair accessible standards. In line with draft planning policy, in developments over 20 homes 5% will meet Wheelchair Housing Design Standards or be able to be easily adaptable to meet Wheelchair Housing Design Standards.

Regard will be had to the following documents:

Habinteg – Wheelchair Housing Design Guide (2006)

Habinteg - Mind the Step: An estimation of housing need among wheelchair users in England (2010)

- Including the above up to 10% of the Council's new build programme will be other forms of specialist or supported housing, for example for people with medium to severe multiple disabilities, provided there is evidence of the need and a commitment to fund and care and support from County and/or health agency partners.
- Where housing for older people is to be provided, the former Homes and Communities Agency standards for housing for older people will apply as a minimum which amongst other things

requires higher space and accessibility standards than general housing.

The Council has produced the 'Cambridge Housing Sustainable Design Guide'. The objective of the Guide is captured in the following text.

“The quality of new housing can play a significant role in helping residents out of fuel and water poverty, improving their health and wellbeing, as well as contributing to sustainable development and addressing the issue of affordability of housing in Cambridge. High quality development also contributes to place making, continuing the tradition of high quality architecture in Cambridge. The Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide looks to promote the delivery of high quality new development, seeking to:

- 1) Address issues such as fuel and water poverty amongst our residents;*
- 2) Build homes that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents;*
- 3) Build homes that are designed and built to high design and sustainability standards;*
- 4) Ensure new homes are easy to maintain and are adaptable, both for residents and to future climate change.”*

The Guide has five principles for successful new housing as shown in the diagram below. These principles will be applied to all new developments.



The Council has a Construction Specification that sets the building requirements for all of its new housing to deliver sustainable new housing. The Specification is agreed with the Council’s Estates and Facilities Service that delivers the day-to-day repairs and planned maintenance service for Council residents. The Specification is continually reviewed as new schemes are designed and completed.

Redevelopment

Generally, where existing housing is being replaced small, mainly flats for one person, will be replaced with a range of one and two bedroom flats and two and three bedroom family houses. The type of new housing will also be planned to make sure it fits with the local community and adds to the range of housing available locally. Assuming each Council property has a useful life of 60 years, approximately 120 homes a year would need to be redeveloped and replaced if the Council’s stock is to remain current.

3. LOCATION OF NEW HOUSING FOR THE COUNCIL.

We will provide new housing for the Council on:

- Small in-fill sites in the Council's ownership.
- Garage sites in the Council's ownership where there is a low demand for the garages from local residents.
- Redevelopment sites in the Council's ownership where existing housing has become difficult to let or is no longer being let in line with its original purpose. Currently sites considered and brought forward for redevelopment contain housing that is well below current day standards and residents' expectations.

Subject to the availability of funding, new housing for the Council will also be provided on land held by the General Fund. In these instances the market value of the land for Affordable Housing will be payable. Similarly, the Council will work with other public authority landowners that may be looking to dispose of their land for new housing.

Also, subject to funding, the Council will work with developers and house-builders to provide Affordable Housing on section 106 planning sites and will negotiate the purchase of private land for new housing.

It is anticipated that most new housing for the Council will be developed within the City Council boundaries but sites outside of the city will be considered on a scheme by scheme basis.

4. WHEN DO WE BUILD?

The delivery of new housing can take at least three years and therefore the programme of schemes will be reviewed using one, three and five year timescales. A main factor that will influence when we build will be the availability of funding. This can change regularly often dependent on national housing policy.

Currently there are five sources of funding for new build by the Council;

- Devolution Housing Grant

- Capital grant from the Homes and Communities Agency and the Department of Communities and Local Government.
- Council borrowing
- Capital receipts from property sales under the Right to Buy
- Surpluses generated on the Council's Housing Revenue Account

These funding sources are explained in more detail in section 5 below.

The financial plans that underpin the new build programme will be detailed in General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Annual Budgets and Mid Year Reviews.

Rolling Programme - The Council will maintain a rolling programme of housing sites that it will consider for development, redevelopment or disposal. Progress on schemes in the Rolling Programme will be reported every year to the Housing Scrutiny Committee to ensure Members are kept up-to-date.

General Fund sites - These Council sites will not normally have any housing on them currently and will be considered and approved for development under a separate process with scrutiny by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

5. HOW DO WE BUILD AND HOW DO WE INVOLVE RESIDENTS?

The Housing Development and Approval Process

Generally the Housing Development Process has the following key stages.

Site Identification – Housing sites agreed for development for housing are shown in the Local Plan. The Local Plan is currently being reviewed and the new sites earmarked for future development will be subject to consultation as part of the Local Plan review process. Over time other sites may be identified as having the potential for development as housing. The Council owns sites that may fall into this category of

'windfall' sites. Council owned Housing Revenue Account sites that may have the potential to develop as housing will be included in the Rolling Programme.

Feasibility of site development – Once a site has been identified, its suitability for development for housing will be assessed. This entails a review of potential site constraints eg highway access; restrictions on legal title; planning constraints etc.

Financial viability of development – An outline sketch of a housing scheme that may be possible is then appraised in terms of its financial viability.

Once a site has been assessed as feasible and viable, approval of the Executive Councillor for Housing is required to proceed with the development and a budget is set. The Executive Councillor approval will be requested following a report to the Housing Scrutiny Committee. As mentioned above, any General Fund sites will be approved by the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources following scrutiny by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

Detailed Design – A detailed design is then drawn up and a planning application is prepared.

Planning Approval – Once planning approval is given a final budget for the scheme can be assessed and a building contract signed.

Resident Involvement

The City Homes elected residents representatives will be formally consulted and kept up-to-date with the progress of the new Council build programme on at least a quarterly basis. The resident representatives will have an important role to play in commenting all aspects of new housing from property mix; design; quality of new housing etc. and generally to act as a voice for all current residents and prospective future residents.

Stage 1 : Rolling Programme - When a new site that contains existing housing is identified for appraisal for redevelopment the Executive

Councillor for Housing, Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee and the Opposition Spokespersons will be informed. Current residents will be advised as soon as possible in the appraisal process but at the very least four weeks prior to a scheme being submitted to committee for approval. It is always difficult to decide when and how best to inform existing residents at this stage. Generally the approach that will be taken is to invite residents to a meeting once an indicative scheme has been drawn up that has been assessed as feasible to develop. In this way, any anxieties amongst current residents are not raised unnecessarily before a proposal has been developed that residents have something 'concrete' to comment on. Residents will be invited to a first meeting by letter at least and the letter will include a named housing officer contact. Letters will be delivered by hand so that there is an opportunity to immediately discuss the redevelopment proposal.

Our aim in involving current residents is not only to explain the reasons why the Council is looking to redevelop their current homes, but also to explore with them their individual circumstances; connections with the local community; and future housing aspirations; and thereby see whether the rehousing needs of residents can best be met elsewhere or by returning to the new scheme, if this is possible.

Local Ward Members will be contacted immediately prior to communication with residents to alert them that they may therefore be approached by local residents and to invite them to the meeting. The Resident Representatives will be contacted in the same way.

Stage 2 : Scheme Approval - Once a scheme has been appraised for development and any current residents consulted, a report will be submitted to the Housing Scrutiny Committee and approval will be sought from the Executive Councillor for Housing to an indicative scheme in terms of property number, type and mix that can be progressed for planning approval and a budget for the scheme.

If the site does not have any existing housing immediate neighbours will be written to advise that the site is being considered for new housing in advance of the Committee. The views of existing residents and immediate neighbours will form part of the committee report.

Stage 3 : Post Approval - Once a scheme specific approval has been given for a new development current residents will have to be rehoused. In engaging with tenants and leaseholders who are being required to

move from their home, the Council's guiding principles for undertaking consultation of openness; accessibility and inclusiveness; and transparency and accountability will apply.

COMMITMENT TO RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

The Council is committed to ensuring that there is the least possible disturbance to residents who are required to move from their homes.

For tenants:

- Support will be available for those in who need that support to organise the move.
- Tenants required to move will be consulted on the new scheme as it evolves and will be given priority to return to new housing that meets their needs provided there is sufficient new accommodation of the type required available. The Council's Lettings Policy will be used to determine a match between the household and property type and size.
- If a tenant does not wish to move back every effort will be made to re-house them in the area of their choice.
- Statutory 'Home Loss Payments' will be made to tenants as will reasonable 'Disturbance Payments' to the expenses involve in moving.

For leaseholders:

- When a leaseholder's property is to be redeveloped, and if they are not able to afford to buy a suitable alternative home on the open market, the Council will offer advice and assistance to secure shared ownership, equity share or another form of intermediate housing option in the city. Where the property is to be refurbished the leaseholder will be able to return to the property.
 - Home Loss Payment and Disturbance Payments are also payable to leaseholders however the legislation is different in respect of Home Loss Payment.
-

The Council's aim will be to negotiate alternative accommodation with tenants and leaseholders who are required to move. If it is not possible to agree a move by negotiation the Council has at its disposal legal remedies to require a move. The remedies are different for tenants and leaseholders.

Further detail on how the Council will work with residents who are required to move are contained within the Home Loss Policy 2017.

Financial Viability and Benchmarking

The financial viability of a new housing scheme is assessed by considering the time it would take to repay any capital loan required to cover the cost of the scheme using the rents of the new housing after deducting day-to-day management and maintenance costs.

Generally the Affordable Housing sector uses 30 years as the period within which to repay any loan. The Council uses pay-back over 30 years as the benchmark when considering whether to proceed with a scheme or not.

The Council will monitor the overall financial viability of the programme of schemes that make up the new build programme. This will enable some schemes that provide a better than 30 year pay-back to balance some schemes that do not produce such a good return in financial terms but nevertheless generate other good outcomes such as the replacement of housing that no longer meets current day standards.

Funding

Generally there are five sources of funding for new Council new build.

a. Housing Devolution Grant (HDG)

This is the grant that has recently been negotiated as part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution Agreement. £70m has been agreed to be allocated to the City Council via the new Combined Authority to spend on the completion of 500 new Council homes. The money must be spent on schemes starting within a five year period

commencing April 2017. The intention is for the HDG to be topped up with approximately £20m Right to Buy receipts to pay for the 500 new homes.

b. Capital Grant from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

The Council has bid successfully in the past for capital grant to build new Council homes. Grants for new housing and infrastructure are also available from the DCLG. The HCA and DCLG grant programmes change to reflect national government policy. The current programmes in the main prioritise the promotion of home ownership and aim to stimulate the construction sector to build more homes. When relevant however, the Council will continue to apply for government grants to build new Council homes.

c. Capital receipts from property sales under the Right to Buy (RTB)

The Council is able to retain some of the money resulting from the sale of Council homes through the RTB programme. Specific conditions apply as follows;

- The Council can retain 25% of receipts from the first 10 to 17 sales each year (depending upon the year) and after allowable deductions. The rest is returned to the DCLG.
- The Council can retain 100% of receipts from sales over and above the 10 to 17 and can choose whether to spend the money for debt repayment or for capital purposes such as building new Council homes.
- The Council can only fund up to 30% of the cost of a new Council home using RTB receipts. The balance must be funded from the Council's own resources or through borrowing. There is a 3-year time limit on delivery of the new unit, with the receipt having to be paid to central government, with interest (at 4% above the base rate) if not spent appropriately.
- It is not possible to use RTB receipts to fund a new Council home that replaces an existing home nor to match the RTB receipt with another form of public subsidy, e.g. HCA grant.

d. Borrowing

The Council can only borrow so much within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The cap on borrowing was agreed with the DCLG as part of the HRA Self-Financing Settlement in 2013. The debt cap is fixed at £230,839,000. With existing HRA debt of £214,748,250, the Council authority currently retains borrowing headroom of £16,090,750 which can be used with RTB receipts to provide new Council homes.

e. Surpluses generated on the Housing Revenue Account

The Council can choose to use any surpluses it generates in the HRA to build new Council homes.

The decisions the Council makes in terms of allocating funding available to build new Council homes are detailed in the Annual Budget Report and the Mid Year Financial Review.

Delivery Models

Different new housing schemes will require different delivery models. The following are examples of some of the current ways the Council is building new homes.

Framework Procurement – Keepmoat Homes Ltd.

The Council has been working with the house-builder, Keepmoat, over the last few years. Keepmoat were selected through a European Union compliant procurement process and the framework agreement with them runs until March 2016.

Clay Farm – Hill Partnerships Ltd.

As the Council's scheme at Clay Farm is provided on General Fund land and was the subject of exemplar design and environmental requirements and 50% Affordable Housing, it was subject to a separate procurement process won by Hill Partnerships Limited.

HCA Delivery Partner Panel - Kier

The Council has used HCA Delivery Partner Panel in the past as a cost-efficient route to procure the delivery of new homes. Kier was selected using this Panel to deliver the Jane's Court scheme.

Buying Homes on Section 106 Sites – Homerton College

Housebuilders are required to build 40% of new homes as Affordable Housing on schemes of 15 homes or more. These sites are known as 'section 106' sites. The Council completed the purchase of 39 new Council homes from Hill on a site next to Homerton College in December 2016. The homes were bought by the Council under an agreement known as 'sale and purchase'.

The Cambridge Investment Partnership

The Council has just signed an Investment Partnership with Hill Investment Partnerships Ltd. This will be the main delivery model for most of the Council's housing schemes over the next few years and will be the way in which we spend the Housing Devolution Grant to deliver the 500 new Council homes. In simple terms, the Council will invest its land into the partnership and Hill will invest development funding and its expertise in development. Although in practice the Council may also invest funding.

6. WHO ORGANISES ALL THIS?

The Council has set up a shared housing development team with South Cambridgeshire District Council and the County Council called the Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency (H DA).

The H DA will manage the programme and projects to deliver the new homes for the Council. The following diagram shows the structure of the H DA. Nicola Hillier will oversee new homes being built through the HRA and will project manage some schemes direct. Mark Wilson and Amelia Norman will also project manage schemes and David Goddard-Gill will take the lead in ensuring that new homes are built to required standards.

The H DA will work closely with the Cambridge Investment Partnership to ensure that the overall programme of Council investments generate both the financial and social outcomes expected.

The H DA team will work closely with City Homes and the Estates and Facilities throughout the development process. City Homes will lead on many aspects of Resident Involvement including liaison with the elected Resident Representatives. City Homes will provide support for those tenants who have to move and cannot manage all of the move themselves. The Estates and Facilities team will be involved in the building specification for new housing and how the new homes are built so that they can take over future repair and maintenance.

End

Appendix 3 - Current List of Schemes Using Devolution Housing Grant							
Scheme name	Ownership	Location (Ward)	Anticipated start on site	Total existing CCC rented units	Total New Homes	Net additional rented homes	Comments
Anstey Way	HRA	Trumpington	2017/18	23	50	27	Redevelopment. Most residents relocated. 2 tenants and one leaseholder remain. Revised scheme to be submitted to 7 March 2017 Housing Committee. Prospective SoS Jan 2018
Akeman Street	HRA	Arbury	2017/18	2	22	20	Redevelopment. Current scheme includes hard-to-let commercial units. Commercial leaseholders are holding over. Residents and commercial tenants engaged in consultation.
52 Wulfstan Way (Land to Rear)	HRA	Queen Edith	2017/18	0	4	4	In-fill site. Small scale land assembly including some back gardens. Working with the local Chapel who want to have a single unit for minister. CCC has covenant on church land. Scheme to Housing Committee 20 June 2017. Prospective SOS March 2018.
Garden/Infill (Queen's Meadow & Hills Avenue)	HRA	Queen Edith / Cherry Hinton	2017/18	0	3	3	Garage and in-fill. Scheme to Housing Committee 20 June 2017. Prospective SoS March 2018.
Tedder Way	HRA	Arbury	2017/18	0	2	2	In-fill site. Planning application to be submitted shortly. Prospective SOS March 2018.
Wiles Close	HRA	King's Hedges	2017/18	0	3	3	In-fill site. To Planning Committee on 1 February 2017. Prospective SoS March 2018.
Kendal Way	HRA	East Chesterton	2017/18	0	2	2	In-fill site. To Planning Committee 1 February. Prospective SOS March 2018.
Nunns Way	HRA	King's Hedges	2017/18	0	7	7	In-fill site. Still at pre-app stage. Prospective SOS March 2018.
Mill Road	GF	Petersfield	2017/18	0	84	84	Waiting for confirmation of vacant possession. 67 homes is 40% Affordable Housing. Potential to increase - 50% is 84. Aiming to submit final scheme to S&R October 2017. Prospective SOS by end March 2018.
Park Street Car Park	GF	Market	2017/18	0	24	24	Start on site programmed for February 2018. 19 homes is 40% Affordable Housing. Potential to increase - 50% is 24. Aiming to submit final scheme to S&R 25 May 2017.
Walpole Road	HRA	Cherry Hinton	2018/19	0	2	2	In-fill. Early stages of investigation.
Colville Road Ph.2 (66-80b)	HRA	Cherry Hinton	2018/19	20	55	35	Phase 2 of a redevelopment scheme. Opportunity to include car park and to rationalise local community facilities. CIP to reappraise. Resident relocation not started.
Aylesborough Close Ph.2 (69-75 Verulam Way + 15-34 Aylesborough Close + 2-24 Fordwich Close)	HRA	Arbury	2018/19	35	62	27	Phase 2 of a redevelopment scheme. CIP to reappraise. Resident relocation not started.
Ventress Close (9-10a and adjacent land)	HRA	Queen Edith	2018/19	2	19	17	Redevelopment of four flats and backland gardens. Residents engaged. Scheme to Housing Committee 7 March 2017.
QEW GW 61 - 67	HRA	Queen Edith	2018/19	0	2	2	In-fill. Early stages of investigation.
Hawkins Road (Garages - 1-20 & 81-91)	HRA	King's Hedges	2018/19	0	6	6	Garage site. Early stages
Davy Road Garages	HRA	Coleridge	2018/19	0	4	4	Garage site. Early stages of investigation.
Colville Road Garages	HRA	Cherry Hinton	2018/19	0	3	3	Garage site. Early stages of investigation.
TOTALS						272	

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Appendix 4

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment



1. New Housing by the Council

This Equalities Impact Assessment up-dates an assessment last approved by the Council in January 2013.

2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

Provision of new Council homes.

The aims of the Council in providing new housing directly itself are as follows;

1. Provide additional social housing to help meet the shortfall in Cambridge and to replace the loss of social housing through the Right to Buy.
2. Replace some of the Council's existing housing that no longer meets current day standards and is becoming less popular with residents.
3. Build new house types that will better meet the overall mix of social housing needed in the future.
4. Improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing, reducing the cost of utility bills for residents and improving the environmental sustainability of the housing.

The type of new housing will be planned to ensure that it fits with the local community and adds to the range of housing available locally, including any specialist housing.

The programme will consider new build on a range of sites; vacant sites such as small infill plots, garage sites; existing housing where this is considered to be of a poor standard; and on 'section 106' planning sites.

3. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

- Residents
 Visitors
 Staff

The programme addresses the strategic need for affordable housing in the city and as such impacts on:

- Housing applicants registered on Home-Link (the Council's choice-based lettings system) i.e. households who need to find somewhere to live
- Transfer applicants registered on Home-Link whose circumstances have changed and who may need to find somewhere alternative to live (a single person under-occupying a three bedroom family house for example).

Where proposed new development is on sites with existing Council housing it will impact on those who live there:

- Resident leaseholders and tenants of schemes that are proposed for redevelopment
- Non-resident leaseholders of schemes that are proposed for redevelopment
- Sub-tenants of non-resident leaseholders of schemes that are proposed for redevelopment

In considering the equalities impact it is worth noting that both these groups require consideration. Many of those who are on the housing register, particularly those who are given the highest banding for need, will have a level of vulnerability. Although not all vulnerabilities are captured under the Equalities Act, many will be such as disability including mental health, age, pregnancy and maternity, and gender relating to domestic violence. For those residents who are existing tenants or leaseholders, many of them will also have a protected characteristic as it will be the reason they are able to access social housing. This will be considered in more detail under the following sections which look at each of protected characteristics.

4. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)

- New
 Revised
 Existing

The strategic need for the Council to play a role itself in providing housing is articulated in its current housing strategy statement in the section on **INCREASING HOUSING SUPPLY & TACKLING AFFORDABILITY**.

The Council currently has an oversupply of one bedroom properties, making up 27% of its general housing stock, and an undersupply of larger family accommodation. Future projections of housing need show that 80% of demand will be for two or more bedroom properties – see the draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (AHSPD).

This draws on population and employment growth statistics captured in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The current AHSPD is waiting to be formally up-dated as part of the process to review the Local Plan however, the current revised draft provides the following as a starting point for any new development;

- No more than 20% one bedroom general needs
- At least 40% two bedroom general needs
- 30% three bedroom
- 10% four bedroom

In percentage terms the City Home general housing is made up as follows:

	%
1 bed	27
2 bed	36
3 bed or more	37

It can be seen that in terms of meeting future housing needs as defined in the AHSPD , the City Homes stock has an over-supply of one bedroom dwellings and an under-supply of two bedroom and 3 bedroom dwellings. The AHSPD has therefore been used as the starting point for the consideration of the mix of new Council housing by size in the AHDP.

Generally where existing housing is being replaced small, mainly flats for one person, will be replaced with a range of energy efficient one and two bedroom flats and two and three bedroom family houses.

Redevelopment of existing stock

It should be noted that if the Council did not pursue a new Council house building programme it could result in some of the most vulnerable people in the city being sustained in some of the poorest housing.

It is recognised that where existing stock is proposed for redevelopment there is a need to understand and take into account the profile of existing residents, the impact of the proposed change on them, and to put in place measures to mitigate any adverse consequences of the policy.

The Council offers both practical and individualised support to all tenants and leaseholders who will be rehoused as a result of this policy. The assistance offered is tailored to individual need and circumstances. Housing officers keep records of discussions with each tenant, and this allows senior managers to track progress. Tenants choose to take up offers of support, for example assistance to bid on home-link. Support can also involve working with other agencies with the permission of the residents themselves. In 2011 the Council approved a Home Loss Policy that consolidated the practice employed to that date to compensate and support residents, both tenants and leaseholders, who are required to move from their home for whatever reason.

The Council has undertaken a number of refurbishment schemes in the past that has required tenants to move out of their homes to enable the works to be carried. Officers have developed experience and knowledge in providing support tenants who have been required to move; and compensation payments have been made in line with legislation and best practice.

The Council's approach to involving residents directly affected by any development is captured in its documents "New Housing by the Council – March 2017" and its "Home Loss Policy - March 2017" and is summarised by the following statement;

COMMITMENT TO RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

The Council is committed to ensuring that there is the least possible disturbance to residents who are required to move from their homes.

For tenants:

- Support will be available for those in who need that support to organise the move.

- Tenants required to move will be consulted on the new scheme as it evolves and will be given priority to return to new housing that meets their needs provided there is sufficient new accommodation of the type required available. The Council's Lettings Policy will be used to determine a match between the household and property type and size
- If a tenant does not wish to move back every effort will be made to re-house them in the area of their choice.
- Statutory 'Home Loss Payments' will be made to tenants as will reasonable 'Disturbance Payments' to the expenses involve in moving.

For leaseholders:

- When a leaseholder's property is to be redeveloped, and if they are not able to afford to buy a suitable alternative home on the open market, the Council will offer advice and assistance to secure shared ownership, equity share or another form of intermediate housing option in the city. Where the property is to be refurbished the leaseholder will be able to return to the property.
- Home Loss Payment and Disturbance Payments are also payable to leaseholders however the legislation is different in respect of Home Loss Payment.

5. Responsible directorate and service

Directorate: Housing

Service: Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency

6. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

No

Yes (please give details):

The Council has set up a shared housing development team with South Cambridgeshire District Council and the County Council called the Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency (H DA).

The H DA will manage the programme and projects to deliver the new homes for the Council.

The H DA will work closely with the Cambridge Investment Partnership to ensure that the overall programme of Council investments generate both the financial and social outcomes expected.

The H DA team will work closely with City Homes and the Estates and Facilities throughout the development process. City Homes will lead on many aspects of Resident Involvement including liaison with the elected Resident Representatives. City Homes will provide support for those tenants who have to move and cannot manage all of the move themselves. The Estates and Facilities team will be involved in the building specification for new housing and how the new homes are built so that they can take over future repair and maintenance.

The H DA will also liaise with the the Housing Advice team to ensure appropriate process on alternative housing options for those required to move. Finance officers are involved in the assessment of the financial viability of schemes and that they fit with the HRA Business Plan.

At a strategic level we liaise with various sections of the County Council as they are organised to support older people, adults with learning disability, and adults with physical disability and sight impairment. Some services including many for people experiencing mental health issues are jointly commissioned and delivered by the County Council and NHS Trusts. The strategy for the provision of 'Extra Care Housing' for older people is an example where a strategy has been developed between the County Council; the NHS and district housing authorities across the County.

The strategic planning of the inter-relationship between housing; care and health services is currently the managed through the Health and Well-being Board; Local Health Partnerships; public health becoming a function of the County Council; and general practitioners leading on the commissioning of local health services.

At an operational level we liaise with social workers, social care and older peoples services, Community Psychiatric Nurses for those open to the Mental Health Services and a whole range of other statutory social care, NHS, and voluntary organisations involved in supporting people to sustain independent lives.

7. Potential Impact

(a) Age (any group of people of a particular age, including younger and older people)

Older People

Although Cambridge has a relatively young population, the number of older people is growing. Between 2013 and 2031, the population aged 65 and over is expected to rise by around 8,600 people (a 57% increase). With an ageing population there are likely to be increasing numbers of people with complex health problems and disabilities, who may have different housing and service needs to other age groups.

Good quality housing is well-recognised as a key factor in promoting health and wellbeing and supporting independent living, and moving towards more integrated services to prevent ill health and reduce dependence on health and social care services is high on the national and local agenda

We also know that people wish to stay in their homes, and people who are getting older now are demanding better quality accommodation and services than previous generations. The increase in the frail-elderly population people means that we should plan accommodation specifically to meet their needs, whilst assuming that the majority of younger-older people (aged 60-65 or 70), will choose to remain in their own homes."

The Council's Housing Strategy Statement 2016-2019 states that the Council will

“.....promote and support delivery of specialist forms of housing, including homes for older people.....”

As a housing authority our intention is to develop a range of housing for older people in Cambridge that at one end of the spectrum provides accessible accommodation with good space standards well-located in terms of local service and amenities through more traditional forms of sheltered housing for older people to Extra Care Schemes for frail elderly people who nevertheless want to stay as independent as possible.

The provision of housing for older people in the city is generally good. The city has is just completing a comprehensive upgrading of all sheltered and extra care housing, as have other social housing providers. Housing for older people is not generally in short supply. Older applicant on the housing needs register can apply both for specialist housing, which excludes other types of applicant, and for general needs housing as not all older people want to live in specialist housing. They therefore have a wider choice than many others.

In April 2016 there were 510 Council rented sheltered units available in Cambridge, the majority of which were one bedroom flats. The Council's sheltered housing modernisation programme is virtually complete and the sheltered dwellings are all now at a good modern day standard.

There are two Extra Care Schemes for Older People in Cambridge one at the newly opened Richard Newcombe Court provided by Cambridge Housing Society on land provided by the Council and one at the Ditchburn Place scheme owned and managed by the Council (City Homes). Another Extra Care Scheme is proposed on the Bell School site – part of the Southern Fringe growth site.

King Street Housing Society and 100 Houses have within their housing stock a general scheme targeted at people aged over 55 years. Other similar groups of apartments have been delivered on the strategic growth sites.

The Council has recently completed schemes in Colville Road and Water Lane that in part replace small one bedroom one person bungalows with modern day one and two bedroom flats for older people that meet current day aspirations in terms of space; accessibility; warmth and energy efficiency.

Housing Register (Older People)

There are 318 applicants on the Housing Register over the age of 55.

The impact of the development on current residents

It is recognised that moving can be traumatic for older people. City Homes which provides housing management and support have led the support to re-house 248 tenants as a consequence of the programme to modernise our sheltered stock and more recently to support older people to move on from the Colville Road and Water Lane schemes, and are therefore very experienced in working sensitively with older people. The package of support provided is described in the Council's Home Loss

Policy, and we would expect a high proportion of older people to take up the individualised support.

Considerations

This above shows that whilst we have a good supply of housing for older people, and most specialist housing has been upgraded, there remains a need to continue to upgrade general needs housing to meet the needs of older people, in order to offer a range of options. Where redevelopment of existing schemes impacts on existing older tenants, it is acknowledged that they may require a higher level of support. Thus we are addressing the issues raised by:

- by ensuring that the brief for new schemes ensure accessibility requirements;
- by considering the mix of stock when drawing up plans,
- by ensuring that alternative accommodation offered is suitable for tenants' needs,
- by consulting tenants regarding their individual circumstances and calling on specialist help, when appropriate, to ensure that the impact of having to move is minimised.

Younger people – positive impact

Cambridge has a relatively young population compared to the rest of Cambridgeshire and many other parts of the country. Around 35% of the population is aged 20-34.

Younger people are finding it increasingly difficult to get on the housing ladder, having to remain longer with parents or in expensive private rented accommodation. For example, England as a whole has seen a significant increase in the proportion of younger households in the private rented sector over the last ten years. In 2004/05, 24% of those aged 25-34 lived in the private rented sector; by 2014-15 this had increased to 46%. (English Housing Survey 2014-15)

Affordability issues are particularly acute in Cambridge, with the price of even the cheapest 25% (the lowest quartile) of homes now standing at over £300k – more than nineteen times lower quartile lower earnings. Private rents are also significantly higher than most other parts of the country, with the average rent for just a one bedroom currently around £770 a month.

In our Housing Strategy consultation in 2015 the most common concerns raised amongst younger people were in relation affordability and condition of the private rented sector, homelessness issues and the need to support vulnerable people.

Rough sleeping tends to be more prevalent amongst younger people; partner records suggest that over the last year, around 30% of referrals to supported housing were aged 16-25.

(b) Disability (including people with a physical impairment, sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health problem or other condition which has an impact on their daily life)

Almost one in five people in the UK have a disability, with mobility being the most common impairment. At the same time there is a nationally recognised shortage of housing for people with disabilities. For example: around 2% of the UK population are wheelchair users, yet 84% of homes in England do not allow someone using a wheelchair to get to and through the front door without difficulty. Around 15% of households containing at least one wheelchair user feel that their current home is not suitable for their needs, and needs adaptations.¹

Around 22% of individuals living in social housing in Cambridge have a long-term health problem or disability.²

Disabled people – with a range of disabilities – tend to have lower incomes, and are twice as likely as non-disabled people to be social housing tenants.

Around 16% of the national population has a common mental health disorder, and professionals nationally and locally are reporting an increase in the number of service users with mental health issues. For example: increasing numbers of rough sleepers with mental health problems, many of whom also have alcohol and substance misuse issues; and an increase in numbers of older people with dementia.

The draft Housing Strategy Statement 2016-19 includes provision for:

- Tackling housing affordability, including: prioritising delivery of new council homes; and working with partners to promote delivery of other affordable housing for rent

Considerations

Where redevelopment of existing schemes impacts on existing tenants with physical impairment , or mental health issues it is acknowledged that they may require a higher level of support. Thus we are addressing the issues raised by:

- by ensuring that the brief for new schemes ensure accessibility requirements;
- by considering the mix of stock when drawing up plans,
- by ensuring that alternative accommodation offered is suitable for tenants' needs,
- by consulting tenants regarding their individual circumstances and calling on specialist help, when appropriate, to ensure that the impact of having to move is minimised.

(c) Gender
No specific gender issues have been identified.

¹ Disability in the United Kingdom 2016 – Papworth Trust:
² Census 2011

(d) Pregnancy and maternity

The general need for family sized housing has been covered in the earlier section looking at requirements in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (AHSPD)

The demographic and population forecasts show an ongoing need for more two and three bedroom houses and flats to accommodate new and growing families. The AHSPD mentioned in section 4 above reflects the drive to create mixed and balance communities and that there should be a balanced in the new provision of housing but that includes a majority of two and three bedroom houses.

The AHDP reflects this strategic 'direction of travel' proposing to replace a number of mainly flats for single working age adults with a range of one and two bedroom flats and two and three bedroom family houses.

(e) Transgender (including gender re-assignment)

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to the social housing development programme, but feeling safe in the home environment may be a consideration when undergoing gender reassignment.

(f) Marriage and Civil Partnership

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to the social housing development programme

(g) Race or ethnicity

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to social housing development programme.

(h) Religion or belief

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to social housing development programme.

(i) Sexual orientation

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to social housing development programme.

(j) Other factor that may lead to inequality (please state):

None, but it is worth noting that those who seek to access housing will, by and large, be those on lower incomes.

7. If you have any additional comments please add them here

None

Conclusions.

The Council's new social housing development programme seeks to develop new housing that is better aligned to need. In particular it addresses the need for more family housing; and for accommodation that is accessible in physical terms.

Redevelopment will, over time, take place on a range of different sites. In the programme. It is recognised that many of those who live in these properties will have protected characteristics. An EQIA will be brought forward for each new scheme prior to a final decision, showing the potential impact on those with protected characteristics. An intensive support package is in place for all residents affected but particularly in recognition that those who are vulnerable will need additional support. The specific wants and needs of each individual resident will be taken into account in exploring options for rehousing.

Positive Impacts

- The new housing planned will better reflect need and demand
- The new housing planned will improve the balance of housing in the local community
- The mix of new housing planned will increase the provision of much needed family housing
- The programme will increase the provision of fully wheelchair accessible housing
- The new housing planned will improve the quality of housing for older people

- The new housing planned will be to better space standards than the housing proposed for redevelopment
- The new housing planned will be to improved energy efficiency standards helping to keep utility bills low for the residents
- All residents required to move will be re-housed in better standard accommodation

Negative Impacts

- A number of residents who are rehoused as a consequence of any redevelopment scheme will be vulnerable, and support is provided in recognition of this.
- If residents who are required to move have very particularly requirements it may be challenging to meet their requirements. The experience of the modernisation of our sheltered housing is that the vast majority of residents move to accommodation of their choice.
- For some the disturbance and uncertainty caused by the implementation of the programme will be unsettling.
- Some residents may choose not to reveal all of their support needs to officers and therefore appropriate support cannot be made available.

<p>8. Sign off</p> <p>Name and job title of assessment lead officer:</p> <p>Alan Carter Managing Director Greater Cambridge Housing Development Agency</p> <p>Date of completion:</p>
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Action Plan

Equality Group	Age - Older People
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of older residents will need to move from their homes. • If older residents have very specific requirements of alternative housing it may be challenging to offer everyone new homes in the area of their choice. • For some older people the disturbance and uncertainty caused by the implementation of the programme will be unsettling • Some residents may choose not to reveal all of their support needs to officers and therefore appropriate support cannot be made available
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residents are provided with a named housing officer to contact after the decision has been made to consider redeveloping a scheme. • Where possible all residents will be hand delivered the letter informing them of the decision and are offered the immediate opportunity to talk through the proposal and how they will be supported to secure alternative housing. • A scheme based meeting will be set up at least a month before a final decision to redevelop, to discuss proposals with residents. • All residents will be offered as little or as much support as they feel they need to secure alternative housing and then to move. • At the request of the resident, any formal or informal carers will be contacted and be liaised with to ensure the resident receives the appropriate support.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	City Home housing officers lead in supporting residents.
Date action to be completed by	Not applicable

Equality Group	Disability – People with Mental Health or Other Support Needs
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of vulnerable single people will need to move from their homes. • If any have very specific requirements of alternative housing it may be challenging to offer everyone new homes in the area of their choice • Some may find the disturbance and uncertainty caused by the implementation of the programme will be unsettling

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some residents may choose not to reveal all of their support needs to officers and therefore appropriate support cannot be made available
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All residents are provided with a named housing officer to contact immediately after the decision has been made to redevelop a scheme. Where possible all residents are hand delivered the letter informing them of the decision and are offered the immediate opportunity to talk through the proposal and how they will be supported to secure alternative housing. A scheme based meeting will be set up at least a month before a final decision to redevelop, to discuss proposals with residents. All residents will be offered as little or as much support as they feel they need to secure alternative housing and then to move. At the request of the resident, any formal or informal carers will be contacted and be liaised with to ensure the resident receives the appropriate support.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	City Home housing officers lead in supporting residents.
Date action to be completed by	Not applicable

Equality Group	Gender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	No actions identified
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Pregnancy and maternity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	The programme seeks to address the strategic need for more family housing in the city.
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	The profile of new build social housing is in line with predicted need.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	Alan Carter

Date action to be completed by	Not applicable
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Equality Group	Transgender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	None identified
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Marriage and Civil Partnership
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	None identified
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Race or ethnicity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	None identified but we may need to provide additional translation and interpretation support.
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	Provide translation and interpretation support as needed.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Religion or belief
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	None identified
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or	

negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Sexual orientation
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	None identified
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Other factors that may lead to inequality	
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	Generally lack of access to affordable housing for those on the home-link register, which currently stands at around 2,200 affects those who are priced out of the housing market in Cambridge because they cannot afford to rent or buy in the private sector.
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	The programme is aiming to bring our own housing stock in line with housing need in the city, including for those with protected characteristics.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	Alan Carter
Date action to be completed by	Not applicable.

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COMMITMENT TO RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

The Council is committed to ensuring that there is the least possible disturbance to residents who are required to move from their homes.

For tenants:

- Support will be available for those in who need that support to organise the move.
- Tenants required to move will be consulted on the new scheme as it evolves and will be given priority to return to new housing that meets their needs provided there is sufficient new accommodation of the type required available. The Council's Lettings Policy will be used to determine a match between the household and property type and size
- If a tenant does not wish to move back every effort will be made to re-house them in the area of their choice.
- Statutory 'Home Loss Payments' will be made to tenants as will reasonable 'Disturbance Payments' to the expenses involve in moving.

For leaseholders:

- When a leaseholder's property is to be redeveloped, and if they are not able to afford to buy a suitable alternative home on the open market, the Council will offer advice and assistance to secure shared ownership, equity share or another form of intermediate housing option in the city. Where the property is to be refurbished the leaseholder will be able to return to the property.
 - Home Loss Payment and Disturbance Payments are also payable to leaseholders however the legislation is different in respect of Home Loss Payment.
-

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Policy covers situations where City Homes tenants or leaseholders are required to move from their homes due to

- a redevelopment scheme
- a refurbishment scheme

The Council has a separate Policy in respect of the compulsory purchase of properties not in the Council's ownership.

2.0 The Council's Vision Statement and Strategic Objectives

2.1 This Policy fits with the Council's vision and annual statements' extracts of which are set out below.

The Council has a clear vision "to lead a united city, 'One Cambridge - Fair for All', in which economic dynamism and prosperity are combined with social justice and equality".

Housing is prominent feature for "a city which strives to ensure that all local households can secure a suitable, affordable local home, close to jobs and neighbourhood facilities".

Tackling the city's housing crisis and delivering our planning objectives including: working to build new homes with an emphasis on social rent housing; making the most of council-owned land to provide new housing; continuing to provide council housing and investigating ways of building new council housing

3.0 Outcomes

3.1 The Council recognises that the enforced loss of their home is one of the most difficult situations that a tenant or leaseholder can be faced with. With a housing stock of nearly 8500 properties including leasehold accommodation, it is inevitable that from time-to-time schemes will be proposed to redevelop or refurbish older housing that no longer meets current day expectations or is not cost-effective to maintain in a good state of repair. The intention is to strike a balance between mitigating the impact on individuals required to move and securing the longer term benefits from the proposed redevelopment or refurbishment.

3.2 In approving this Policy the Council aims to ensure that when engaging with tenants and leaseholders who are being required to move from their home, the Council's guiding principles for undertaking consultation of openness; accessibility and inclusiveness; and transparency and accountability will apply.

3.3 The Council is committed to ensuring that there is the least possible disturbance to residents who are required to move from their homes.

4.0 Payments to Tenants for Loss of Home

4.1 The Council will make two types of payments to tenants who lose their home

- Home Loss Payment
- Disturbance Payment

4.2 Home Loss Payment to Tenants

This is a payment that the Council must pay by law under the Land Compensation Act 1973. To be eligible, the tenant must have occupied the premises for at least one year. The payment is in recognition of the trauma and disruption of the loss of the home. It is not a payment that is designed to cover the actual costs of moving.

The amount of Home Loss Payment is reviewed periodically. The current payment is £5,800.

4.3 Disturbance Payment to Tenants

Unlike Home Loss Payments, Disturbance Payments are not fixed in law but they are required to be equal to the reasonable expenses of the tenant who is moving.

The Council will pay for or arrange the following

- All removal costs to removal contractors or cost of a van if a tenant moves themselves
- Disconnection and re-connection of cooker
- Lifting and re-fitting curtains and carpets in the new home or the cost of new curtains and carpets if the existing curtains and carpets cannot be re-fitted
- Cost of re-direction of mail and costs associated with moving telephones
- Any costs associated with cancelling a service that a tenant has contracted to pay at their current address

4.4 Home Loss Payments and Disturbance Payments will only become payable once approval has been provided by the Council to proceed with a specific redevelopment or refurbishment scheme. It is at this point too that any Right to Buy application will be halted and any new application declined.

- 4.5 In a situation where it is possible for a tenant or leaseholder to return to a refurbished or redeveloped scheme and they choose to do so, Home Loss Payment will not be payable, but Disturbance Payments to cover both moves will.
- 4.6 This Policy does not apply to tenants who have a final possession order granted to end their tenancy.

5.0 Payments to Leaseholders for Loss of Home

5.1 Home Loss Payment and Disturbance Payments are also payable to leaseholders however the legislation is different in respect of Home Loss Payment.

5.2 Home Loss Payment to Leaseholders

The amount of payment for leaseholders in law is calculated as 10% of the market value of the owner's interest in the property subject to the maximum amount which is currently £58,000. Again, to be eligible the leaseholder must have occupied the premises for at least one year.

5.3 Disturbance Payments to Leaseholders for Loss of Home

The Disturbance Payments will be the same as for tenants shown in paragraph 4.3 above.

5.4 The points covered in 4.4 and 4.5 above will also apply to leaseholders.

5.5 Leaseholders will also retain any financial equity they may have invested in the property.

5.6 Home Loss Payments and Disturbance Payments are not available for leaseholders who do not occupy the property that is the subject of the redevelopment as their primary place of residence.

5.7 The Policy does not apply to any sub-lessees.

6.0 Engagement with Tenants and Leaseholders

6.1 In engaging with tenants and leaseholders who are being required to move from their home, the Council's guiding principles for undertaking consultation of openness; accessibility

and inclusiveness; and transparency and accountability will apply.

- 6.2 **Stage 1 : Rolling Programme** - When a new site that contains existing housing is identified for appraisal for redevelopment the current residents will be advised as soon as possible in the process. It is always difficult to decide when and how best to inform existing residents at this stage. Generally the approach that will be taken is to invite residents to a meeting once an indicative scheme has been drawn up that has been assessed as feasible to develop. In this way, any anxieties amongst current residents are not raised unnecessarily before a proposal has been developed that residents have something 'concrete' to comment on. Residents will be invited to a first meeting by letter at least and the letter will include a named housing officer contact. Letters will be delivered by hand so that there is an opportunity to immediately discuss the redevelopment proposal.
- 6.3 Our aim in involving current residents is not only to explain the reasons why the Council is looking to redevelop their current homes, but also to explore with them their individual circumstances; connections with the local community; and future housing aspirations; and thereby see whether the rehousing needs of residents can best be met elsewhere or by returning to the new scheme, if this is possible.
- 6.4 Local Ward Members will be contacted immediately prior to communication with residents to alert them that they may therefore be approached by local residents and to invite them to the meeting. The Resident Representatives will be contacted in the same way.
- 6.5 **Stage 2 : Scheme Approval** - Once a scheme has been appraised for development and any current residents consulted, a report will be submitted to the Housing Scrutiny Committee and approval will be sought from the Executive Councillor for Housing to an indicative scheme in terms of property number, type and mix that can be progressed for planning approval and a budget for the scheme.
- 6.6 If the site does not have any existing housing immediate neighbours will be written to advise that the site is being considered for new housing in advance of the Committee. The views of existing residents and immediate neighbours will form part of the committee report.

- 6.7 It should be noted that tenants and leaseholders will not be eligible for Home Loss and Disturbance Payments until a specific redevelopment scheme has been approved by Council. The same principle will apply to any proposed refurbishment scheme that will require a tenant or leaseholder to move. A named contact person for further information will be provided to tenants and leaseholders and any comments made will be considered as part of the final report that will be presented to the Council for specific approval to proceed with the scheme.

7.0 Alternative Housing for Tenants

- 7.1 The criteria set out in the Council's Letting Policy will be the basis upon which alternative accommodation is deemed suitable.
- 7.2 Tenants required to move will be given a Band A priority to bid under Home-Link or will have the benefit of a direct let.
- 7.3 Every effort will be made to re-house a tenant in the area of their choice.
- 7.4 Tenants required to move will be given priority to return to suitable alternative accommodation on the redeveloped or refurbished scheme provided there is sufficient new accommodation of the type required available.
- 7.5 Should a tenant be interested in types of tenancy other than for social rent then advice and assistance will be offered to help the tenant secure such a move.

8.0 Alternative Housing for Leaseholders

- 8.1 When a leaseholder's property is to be redeveloped, and if they are not able to afford to buy a suitable alternative home on the open market, the Council will offer advice and assistance to secure shared ownership, equity share or another form of intermediate housing option in the city. Where the property is to be refurbished the leaseholder will be able to return to the property. Annex A provides more detail on the difference between shared ownership and equity share and the principles behind how a leaseholder may be able to move to an alternative Council property and occupy it on an equity share basis.

9.0 Support to Move

9.1 The Council recognises that individual tenants and leaseholders will require different degrees of support to move. In particular the Council will prioritise its assistance to

- Older people
- Tenants with physical and/or learning impairment
- Tenants for whom English is not their first language

The support required will be assessed and negotiated on a case by case basis.

9.2 The type of support to be provided to those tenants and leaseholders who need it are as follows

- Assistance with registering on Home-Link
- Assistance to view alternative accommodation
- Assistance with forms relating to change of address
- Assistance with rearranging care support if applicable
- Where no friends or family are available arranging packing and removals
- Clearance of unwanted items
- Arranging lifting and refitting of carpets and curtains refit

10.0 What happens if tenants and leaseholders do not want to move?

10.1 The Council's aim will be to negotiate alternative accommodation with tenants and leaseholders who are required to move. If it is not possible to agree a move by negotiation the Council has at its disposal legal remedies to require a move. The remedies are different for tenants and leaseholders.

10.2 If agreement cannot be reached with a tenant, the Council is able to serve Notice and seek re-possession of the home through the court. However, to be successful the Council will need to be able to demonstrate that suitable alternative accommodation is available for the tenant to move to.

10.3 If agreement cannot be reached with a leaseholder the Council is able to pursue a compulsory purchase of the property in line with policy.

Annex A

Definitions

This Annex to the policy document defines and contrasts the difference between Shared Ownership and Equity Share.

Shared Ownership – This is where a leaseholder buys a percentage of equity in the property (a ‘share’) and pays rent on the share retained by the owner (usually a social landlord). Shares can start as low as 30%. Usually leaseholders can buy extra shares to ‘staircase’ to buy outright although often schemes limit the maximum share that can be purchased and the owner has the first option to buy the shares back from the leaseholder should they wish to sell.

Equity Share – This where a leaseholder buys a percentage of equity in the property but is not required to pay rent on the remainder. Here leaseholders often start with a say, 70% share, and there is limited or no ‘staircasing’. Again the owner has the first option to buy the share back from the leaseholder should they wish to sell.

4. Principles

Equity Share will be offered only as a re-housing option for leaseholders who are required to move under the Council’s new build programme.

The principles that will apply to the offer of an Equity Share lease are as follows.

- a. Financially, the resident will be no better or no worse off after moving by taking up an Equity Share option. This is in line with the principle of ‘equivalence’ underpinning the legislation that governs compulsory purchase.
- b. Under Equity Share residents will be offered an alternative property of a similar size by bedroom (not bedspace) to the one that they currently

occupy. For example, a single person could be offered a move from a one bedroom, one bedroom flat to a one bedroom two person flat.

c. If a resident requests to move to a larger property than the one they currently occupy then consideration will be given to this but on a Shared Ownership basis not under Equity Share. Consideration will be on a case-by-case basis. Factors that will be taken into account will be, the reason for requesting a larger property; the financial impact on the Council; the income of the resident and their ability to afford the larger property (the prevailing guidance from the Home and Communities Agency will be used in this respect – for example, current guidance is that no more than 45% of net household income should be spent on mortgage and rent repayments and that the rent element should be no more than 2.75% of net income).

d. The resident will be required to reinvest the value of their current property plus 10% less £5,800 in the alternative property under an Equity Share move. This will mean that they have parity with tenants in respect of the financial package under the Council's Home Loss Policy. Residents can choose to invest more of their own capital in an alternative Equity Share property up to 100% of the equity at which point the lease would revert to the form of their current occupation (ie a long lease with the Council retaining the freehold).

e. The Equity Share lease on the alternative property will be offered for the same duration as the outstanding length of lease on the current property and will be valued on this basis. For example, if the current lease has 50 years to run the Equity Share lease will be offered for a 50 year duration and will be valued as such.

f. Alternative properties to be offered under Equity Share will only be made available on any of the schemes in the Council's new build programme or on properties that become available in the Council's Shared Ownership scheme.

g. The freehold of the property leased under Equity Share remains with the Council. If a resident chooses to move before the end of the lease, the Council will have the first option to buy back the lease.

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To: Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Kevin Price

Report by: Mark Wilson – Housing Development Officer

Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing Scrutiny Committee 7 March 2017

Wards affected: Arbury

EQIA Undertaken Yes

Council New Build Redevelopment 9-10a Ventress Close - Scheme Approval

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

This report provides details of the proposal to redevelop the existing flats at 9-10a Ventress Close to provide up to 19 new homes. The area currently consists of 4 No. 2 bedroom maisonettes and associated garden land to the rear. The initial proposal also includes some garden land from properties located on Godwin Way. Of the existing 4 No. maisonettes, two are occupied by Cambridge City Council tenants and two are leasehold, both currently vacant. Both leaseholders have been consulted on the council's wish to purchase their properties and negotiations are ongoing at this time.

The proposed redevelopment has indicative plans to deliver up to 19 No. new homes on the existing site, providing 1 and 2 bedroom apartments and 3 bedroom houses.

The report requests approval to a capital budget for the scheme based on the outlined appraisal assuming the mix stated above.

The appraisal suggests that all of the new properties can be delivered as part of the Council's social rent programme.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- Note the indicative mix of the proposed scheme.
- Approve the scheme capital budget of £4,153,000 detailed in the report to cover the construction cost of the scheme and professional fees and other costs.
- To commence Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) proceedings on the remaining 2 Leaseholders at 9 and 9a Ventress Close should they be required

3. Background

The opportunity to redevelop the site was first reported to committee in June 2012 as part of the three year rolling programme. The redevelopment area currently consists of 4 maisonettes including associated garden land. It is proposed to include part of the rear gardens of properties on Godwin Way, subject to further discussion and negotiation.

The potential to redevelop this site was first highlighted in 2012 due to the condition of the properties and large garden areas to the rear that were over grown and under used at the time.

Ventress Close residents were first contacted in July 2012 and made aware that the Council was investigating the possibility of redevelopment. Residents have received frequent updates, the most recent being June 2016.

Appendix 1 shows the indicative layout of the scheme.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The capital budget required for the scheme is £4,153,000.

The scheme can be funded by

RTB Receipts	£ 1,132,990
Devolution Grant	£ 2,643,642
Reserves for reprovision of existing units	£ 376,368

The financial appraisal shows a pay-back period of 7 years (the benchmark is for schemes to pay-back up to 35 year).

The rents used in the financial appraisal are;

1 bed @ LHA	£126.05
2 bed @ LHA	£144.96
3 bed @ LHA	£168.45

The total capital budget includes funding to acquire the leasehold properties and costs associated with supporting residents to find alternative accommodation.

As the scheme is still at the outline stage and will be subject to planning, the costs are indicative and presented as a maximum budget required to deliver the scheme. These costs have been calculated using recent build costs on similarly sized developments locally. Should fewer units be accommodated on the site due to planning guidance, the costs for delivery will be reduced accordingly.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan already allows for the spending of Right to Buy Receipts and Devolution monies on the net gain in units, therefore this scheme can be funded despite the current major national housing policy and legislative and changes.

As with all new build developments as details are finalised they will only proceed if they can be funded within borrowing and capital funding parameters in the HRA 30 Business Plan. If a final scheme cannot be delivered within the budget requested then a revised approval will need to be brought back to Committee for scrutiny.

(b) Staffing Implications

The project will be managed by the Housing Development Agency on behalf of Cambridge City Council. Liaison will be made with Property Services; City Homes; the Estates and Facilities Service and the Legal Services Team.

There are no other significant staff implications.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

An EQIA has been produced in respect of the Council's overall approach to building new social housing itself.

(d) Environmental Implications

The new house-building programme has been given a 'High Positive Impact' rating. The new homes will be built within the Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide. This looks to promote the delivery of high quality new development, seeking to:

- 1) Address issues such as fuel and water poverty amongst our residents;
- 2) Build homes that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents;
- 3) Build homes that are designed and built to high design and sustainability standards;
- 4) Ensure new homes are easy to maintain and are adaptable, both for residents and to future climate change.

(e) Procurement

This development is proposed to be delivered through the Cambridge Investment Partnership.

(f) Consultation and communication

The Council's approach to involving residents in new housing schemes is covered in the document 'New Housing by the Council'. This includes the Council's 'Commitment to Resident Involvement'. Housing service is developing a Community Charter which will lay out new principles for how we approach redevelopment sites to ensure that residents and communities benefit from redevelopment and can be fully involved in the process.

Consultations have already taken place over the past 2 years with rehousing decanting commencing from June 2015 committee approval.

(g) Community Safety

There are no particular Community Safety implications as a consequence of this scheme.

5. Background papers

None

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Indicative Scheme Layouts

Appendix 2 - Project Appraisal Ventress Close Scheme

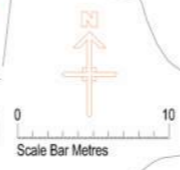
7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name:	Mark Wilson – Housing Development Officer
Author's Phone Number:	01223 – 457940
Author's Email:	Mark.wilson@cambridge.gov.uk

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Site incorporates adjoining gardens, actual ownership boundary to be advised



VENTRESS CLOSE

TILLYARD WAY

Schedule:
 6 x 1bed = 31.5%
 6 x 2bed = 31.5%
 7 x 3bed = 37%



Client:
 Hill Residential Limited
 The Courtyard, Abbey Barns,
 Ickleton, CB101SX
 Project:
 Ventress Close
 Cambridge

Drawing:
 Proposed Site Layout

Scale: 1:500@A3	Date: January 2017
Drawn By: PD	Checked By: NF
CAD Ref:	Drawing No: Sketch-09-01-2017
	Rev. No.:

PRELIMINARY

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Redevelopment of 9 to 10a Ventress Close to include Garden Land

Project Appraisal

1. Summary

This site currently consists of 2 social rent and 2 leasehold maisonettes. The proposal also includes garden space to the rear of the properties.

The existing housing is made up as follows

- 2 No. two bed council owned Maisonettes
- 2 No. two bed leaseholder Maisonettes.

2. Reason for Investigation:

The area currently consists of 4 No. 2 bedroom maisonettes and associated garden land to the rear. The proposal also includes some garden land from properties located on Godwin Way. Of the existing 4 No. maisonettes, two are occupied by Cambridge City Council tenants and two are leasehold, both currently vacant. Both leaseholders have been consulted on the council's wish to purchase their properties and negotiations are ongoing at this time.

The proposed redevelopment has indicative plans to deliver up to 19 No. new homes on the existing site, providing 1 and 2 bedroom apartments and 3 bedroom houses.

The scheme was therefore included in the Council's three year rolling programme of sites to investigate further the feasibility and viability of redevelopment in June 2011.

3. Engagement with Existing Residents

The Council's housing service is developing a Community Charter which will lay out new principles for how we approach redevelopment sites to ensure that resident communities benefit from redevelopment and can be fully involved in the process and

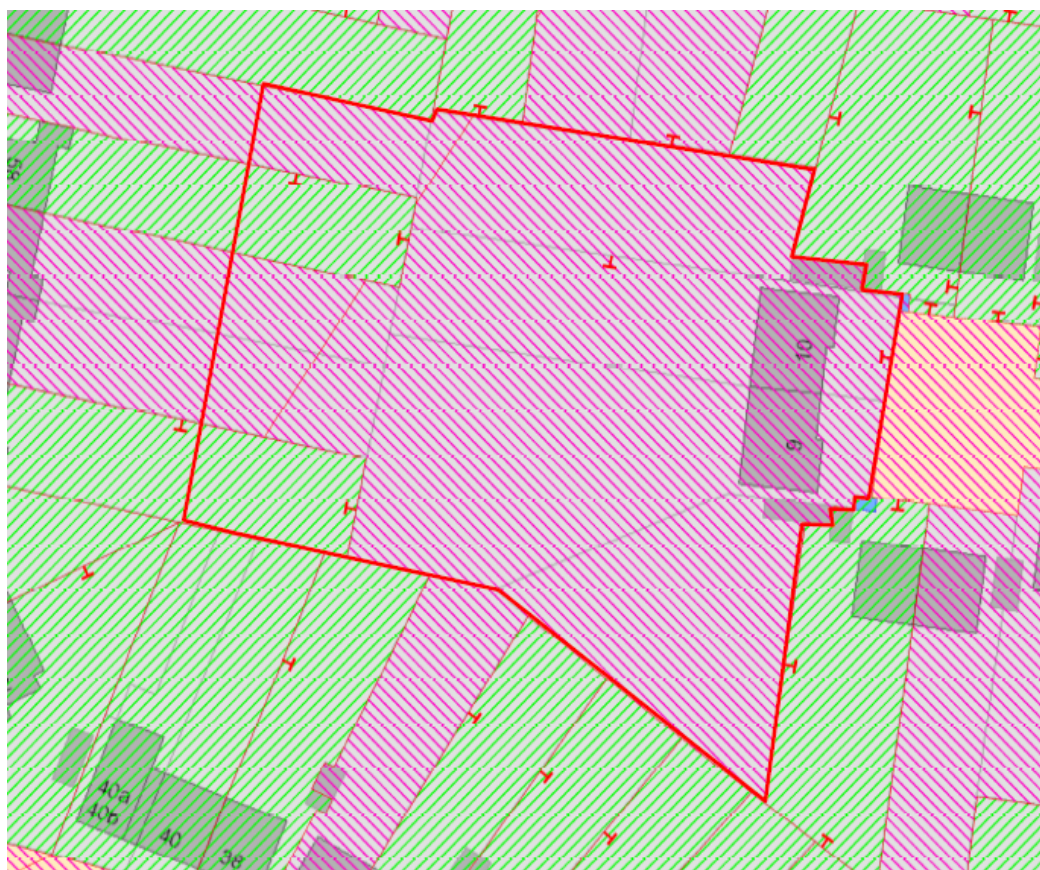
decision making, a draft charter will be considered at the next Housing Scrutiny Committee

Since approval to include into the 3 year rolling program, residents were consulted initially in June 2012 and further letters with updates were sent, in June 2013, June 2016 and Jan 2017. Since consultations the Council have acquired one of the three leasehold properties leaving two leasehold properties which are both currently vacant.

4. Feasibility:

The Site

The below plan shows the area for the proposed scheme to include two private and 3 council resident gardens subject to separate negotiations:



The table below shows the size of the current dwellings and the latest site proposed. The floor areas proposed are greater than the nationally described space standards as set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Existing	Area (m ²)	New Scheme	Area (m)
2 Bed Maisonette	64	1B2P Flat	50
2 Bed Maisonette	76	2B4P Flat	70
		3B5P House	102

The table shows that sizes of the current units fall well below the minimum government guidelines and are much smaller than the proposed new units.

Site Constraints

None identified at this stage.

Local Housing Need

There is a demonstrative housing need for Cambridge City, full details are available in the Strategic Housing Key Facts report. This report shows in excess of 2100 applicants registered for housing as at December 2016

5. Proposed scheme

An indicative redevelopment scheme has been produced for the site as follows:

6No.1 Bed 2 Person Flats

6No. 2 Bed 4 Person Flats

7No. 3 Bed 5 Person Houses

6. Costs, Funding and Viability

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan already allows for the spending of Right to Buy Receipts and funding the balance of costs to be met by Devolution grant. Both RTB receipts and Devolution grant are restricted to only being used on the net gain of units.

As with all new build developments as details are progressed they will only proceed if they can be funded within borrowing and capital funding parameters in the HRA 30 Business Plan. If a final scheme cannot be delivered within the budget requested then a revised approval will need to be brought back to Committee for scrutiny.

Capital Costs

The total capital budget required to deliver this scheme is
£4,153,000

Acquisition of leaseholder properties, decant costs	£675,000
Works costs	£2,861,400
On costs including professional fees	£616,306

Viability – A benchmark used by Registered Providers whether a new scheme is viable is when the scheme breaks even in revenue terms (typically 12 years) and when the total capital used is paid back (typically 30 years). This benchmark relates particularly to vacant sites. There is no ‘industry’ benchmark for sites where existing housing is required to be redeveloped. The viability against the benchmark is inclusive of Home Loss costs.

Pay-back period – 7 years

Rent Levels (net of Service Charge) –

1 bed £126.05 per week
2 bed £144.96 per week
3 bed £168.45 per week

VAT implications

VAT is not payable on new build construction costs. However, advice will be sought from the Council's VAT specialist to ensure that there are no adverse VAT issues affecting the project.

The Procurement

This scheme is being progressed through the Cambridge Investment Partnership.

Key Risks

- A planning application will need to be developed, submitted and approved.
- Obtaining vacant possession of the 2 leasehold properties Lease holder flat are vacant and approval is sought to commence CPO proceedings should they be required.

Other implications

An Employers Agent/Quantity Surveyor will be appointed as part of the Delivery Team to support the Housing Development Agency.

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To: Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Kevin Price

Report by: Mark Wilson – Housing Development Officer

Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing Scrutiny Committee 7 March 2017

Wards affected: Arbury

EQIA Undertaken Yes

Council New Build Redevelopment 9-28 Anstey Way - Scheme Approval

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

This report provides details of the proposed redevelopment of Anstey Way Bungalows and Flats. Originally presented to Housing Scrutiny Committee in June 2015 the proposal then was for 34 No. new units. We are now presenting a new scheme that could accommodate up to 54 No. new council properties.

The existing housing is made up of as follows:

- A block of flats consisting of 9 No. three bedroom units and 3 No. bedsits/studios
- 16 No. one bedroom one person bungalows

Of these 28 properties 23 were tenanted and 5 were owned by leaseholders. Two are still tenanted, pending suitable alternative accommodation being found and accepted, and there is one vacant leasehold property where Compulsory Purchase proceedings may be required.

We are proposing that the new development includes 12 No. apartments for the over 55s with the remaining homes being rented for general needs housing.

The report requests approval to a capital budget for the scheme based on the outlined appraisal assuming the mix of mainly 1, 2 and 3 bed properties (see Appendix 1 for indicative layout plan).

The appraisal suggests that all of the new properties can be delivered as part of the Council's social rent housing programme with rents capped at Local Housing Allowance levels.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- Note the indicative mix of the proposed scheme.
- Note the total scheme capital budget of £10,197,000 detailed in the report to cover the construction cost of the scheme and professional fees and all other associated land assembly and decant costs.
- Approval for virement of the additional £3,667,000 from the unallocated new build budget, to the budget for this scheme of £6,530,000 previously approved, recognising that this increase is expected to be funded from a mix of devolution grant and retained right to buy receipts.
- To commence Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) proceedings on the one remaining leaseholder at 12b Anstey Way.

3. Background

The scheme in this report is for the redevelopment of bungalows in Anstey Way and a block of flats facing Anstey Way incorporating the underutilised area behind. This could accommodate up to 54 new homes.

Originally presented at the June 2015 committee the previous scheme comprised of 34 units in total of which 12 No. were designated for over 55s tenancies, and 22 No. were general needs housing. This scheme is in the Council's Three Year Rolling Programme. There was a commitment, however, to deliver 100% affordable housing on this site.

Both the flats and bungalows are of an age and layout that mean that they do not meet current day expectations for housing. The bungalows in particular, were becoming increasingly unpopular across the city and have generally proven hard to let, the June 2015 report highlighted that one property had been refused by 17 applicants. Due to this fall in demand by

elderly residents, the bungalows had been let to a 'non-elderly' client group, which in itself led to some neighbour issues.

At the June 2015 committee approval was given to a budget to rehouse the residents. Over the past 12 months staff from City Homes have been working closely with residents to support them in finding suitable new homes. Two Council tenants currently remain and one leasehold property is still to be acquired, though is currently unoccupied. As the negotiations on this acquisition have become stalled we are also seeking approval to implement Compulsory Purchase Proceedings to ensure vacant possession of the site can be achieved in a timely manner to facilitate the overall delivery.

As the majority of the bungalows are now vacant, site hoarding has been erected to prevent anti-social behaviour becoming an issue in the area.

Appendix 1 shows the indicative layout of the new scheme. This scheme has been drawn up for financial modelling (shown in appendix 2) but has not yet been to planning for comments.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The total capital budget required to deliver this scheme is £10,197,000, including costs already incurred

The scheme can be funded by:

Reserves	£ 4,883,380
RTB Receipts	£ 1,931,180
Devolution funding	£ 3,382,440

The current budget of £6,530,000 is incorporated into the Housing Capital Investment Plan assuming that the HRA will need to meet this cost directly. With the budget for the revised scheme incorporated, and assuming that we will use retained right to buy receipts to meet 30% of the costs of land assembly (leasehold buy back costs), the call on the HRA directly will reduce by £1,646,490.

- The financial appraisal shows a pay-back period of 36 years (the benchmark is for schemes to pay-back in up to 35 years). Whilst £10,197,000 is the total budget required, specific approval is sought for the additional expenditure of £3,667,000 over and above the £6,530,000 already approved.

The combined rent and service charges used in the financial appraisal are;

1 bed @ LHA	£126.05
2 bed @ LHA	£144.96 (awaiting final confirmation of this rate)
3 bed @ LHA	£168.45
4 bed @ LHA	£224.70 (awaiting final confirmation of this rate)

As the scheme is still at the outline stage and will be subject to planning, the costs are indicative but are anticipated to be a maximum funding requirement. These costs have been calculated using recent build costs on similarly sized developments locally. Should fewer units be accommodated on the site due to planning guidance, the costs for delivery will be reduced accordingly.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan already allows for the spending of Right to Buy Receipts and funding the balance of costs using Devolution grant. Both RTB receipts and Devolution grant are restricted to only being used on the net gain of units. There is also an allocation of £4,600,000 included in the recently approved HRA Budget Setting Report which is specifically to cover the costs of redelivering the existing 23 council owned properties as well as a further £250,000 allocated for demolition works. This allocation will not be needed in full, as the per unit costs included in this report are lower than the average cost per new build unit assumed in the business plan.

As with all new build schemes as schemes are finalised they will only proceed if they can be funded within borrowing and capital funding parameters in the HRA 30 Business Plan. If a final scheme cannot be delivered within the budget requested then a revised approval will need to be brought back to Committee for scrutiny.

(b) Staffing Implications

The project will be managed by the Housing Development Agency through the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) on behalf of Cambridge City Council. Liaison will be made with City Homes; the Estates and Facilities Service and the Legal Services Team.

There are no other significant staff implications.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

An EQIA has been produced in respect of the Council's overall approach to building new social housing itself. .

(d) Environmental Implications

The new house-building programme has been given a 'High Positive Impact' rating. The new homes will be built within the Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide. This looks to promote the delivery of high quality new development, seeking to:

- 1) Address issues such as fuel and water poverty amongst our residents;
- 2) Build homes that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents;
- 3) Build homes that are designed and built to high design and sustainability standards;
- 4) Ensure new homes are easy to maintain and are adaptable, both for residents and to future climate change.

(e) Procurement

This development is proposed to be delivered through the Cambridge Investment Partnership.

(f) Consultation and communication

The Council's approach to involving residents in new housing schemes is covered the document 'New Housing by the Council'. This includes the Council's 'Commitment to Resident Involvement'.

Consultations have already taken place over the past 2 years with rehousing commencing from June 2015 committee approval.

(g) Community Safety

There are no particular Community Safety implications as a consequence of this scheme.

5. Background papers

Housing Scrutiny Committee Paper – June 2015

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Scheme layout plan

Appendix 2 - Project Appraisal Anstey Way Jan 2017

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: Mark Wilson – Housing Development Officer
Author's Phone Number: 01223 – 457940
Author's Email: Mark.wilson@cambridge.gov.uk



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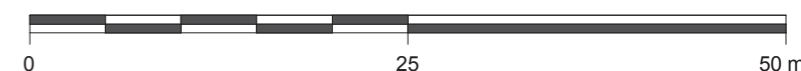
Unit No's	Description	Typical areas (sq m)	Number of units
1 to 9	2 bed terraced houses	84	9
10 to 12	3 Bed Terraced Houses	96	3
13 to 14	4 Bed Houses	107	2
15 to 18	Flat (1 bed) (ground floor)	50	4
19 to 22	2 bed upper maisonettes	70	4
23 to 28	Ground Floor Flat (1 bed)	50	6
29 to 34	2 bed upper maisonettes	70	6
35 to 46	1 bed flats	50	6
	2 bed flats	70	6
47 to 54	1 bed flats	50	4
	2 bed flats	70	4
			54

This scheme assumes less than 1:1 parking ratio and is subject to highways consultation and highways engineer input. Circa 49 spaces indicated but all subject to detailed feasibility study and design.



1:500 @ A3 apx.
Date 17.02.17
REV B

Scale 1:500



Note this is Indicative / illustrative sketch scheme and subject to site visit and full feasibility study. All subject to Legal constraints verification, Rights of light / covenants way leaves and all other legal constraint, these are all unknown and all to be confirmed by others. All subject to planning consultation (in particular offsets from active frontages and gables). Engineering input required and ground conditions unknown. Subject to detail topographical measured survey.

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Redevelopment of 9 to 28 Anstey Way (including underutilised amenity area)

Project Appraisal

1. Summary

This scheme originally consisted of 23 social rent properties and 5 leasehold flats. The scheme also includes an underutilised amenity area adjacent to the properties.

The existing housing is made up as follows

- A block of flats consisting of 9 No. three bedroom units, 3 No. bedsits/studios.
- 16 No. one bedroom one person bungalows.

2. Reason for Investigation:

The underutilised amenity area to the rear of the flats was first highlighted by housing officers and local Ward Members as an area that required investigation for potential re-use. It was noted that if this underutilised area could be coupled with the adjacent flats and bungalows, then the parcelling of the sites together would offer better value for a new scheme.

Further discussions with housing officers and local Members confirmed that the flats were not popular either in terms of the local community and/or when relets became available. The three bedroom flats are of an age and layout that mean that they do not meet current day expectations for family housing. The bungalows are also of an age, type and layout that have become increasingly unpopular across the city and have also proved hard to let, with one property being refused by 17 applicants. Due to a fall in demand by elderly residents, the bungalows were being let to a 'non-elderly' client group.

Both flats and bungalows are therefore deemed no longer fit for purpose.

The wider scheme was therefore included in the Council's three year rolling programme of sites to investigate further the feasibility and viability of redevelopment in June 2011.

3. Engagement with Existing Residents

The Council's housing service is developing a Community Charter which will lay out new principles for how we approach redevelopment sites to ensure that resident communities benefit from redevelopment and can be fully involved in the process and decision making, a draft charter will be considered at the next Housing Scrutiny Committee

Officers and the Executive Councillor for housing were keen to involve Anstey Way residents as much as possible in the proposals in this report. To date, there has been written correspondence and a number of meetings:

- Letters informing residents of the proposal to look at the possibility of redevelopment were sent in June 2012 with further correspondence in September 2013, July 2014 and April 2015
- Three meetings were held in March 2015

Two sessions were held on the 11th March at 11am and 1pm for the residents of the bungalows. 10 of the 14 household were able to attend this meeting (2 of the bungalows were unoccupied).

A further opportunity to meet officers was arranged for 17th March between 6pm – 8pm inviting the residents of the apartments, of which 4 households attended.

At the meetings it was discussed what the council was planning with an indication of key dates and approximate timescales. Plans of similar schemes were tabled for residents to view. Officers from City Homes were also present to address any concerns in relation to re-housing affected residents. One to one meetings were arranged for those who wanted to discuss their housing needs with their housing officer in private.

A summary letter was sent noting the key points raised so those who could not attend were informed of the plans. Within these letters it was also noted that one to one sessions were available for people to discuss their ongoing needs.

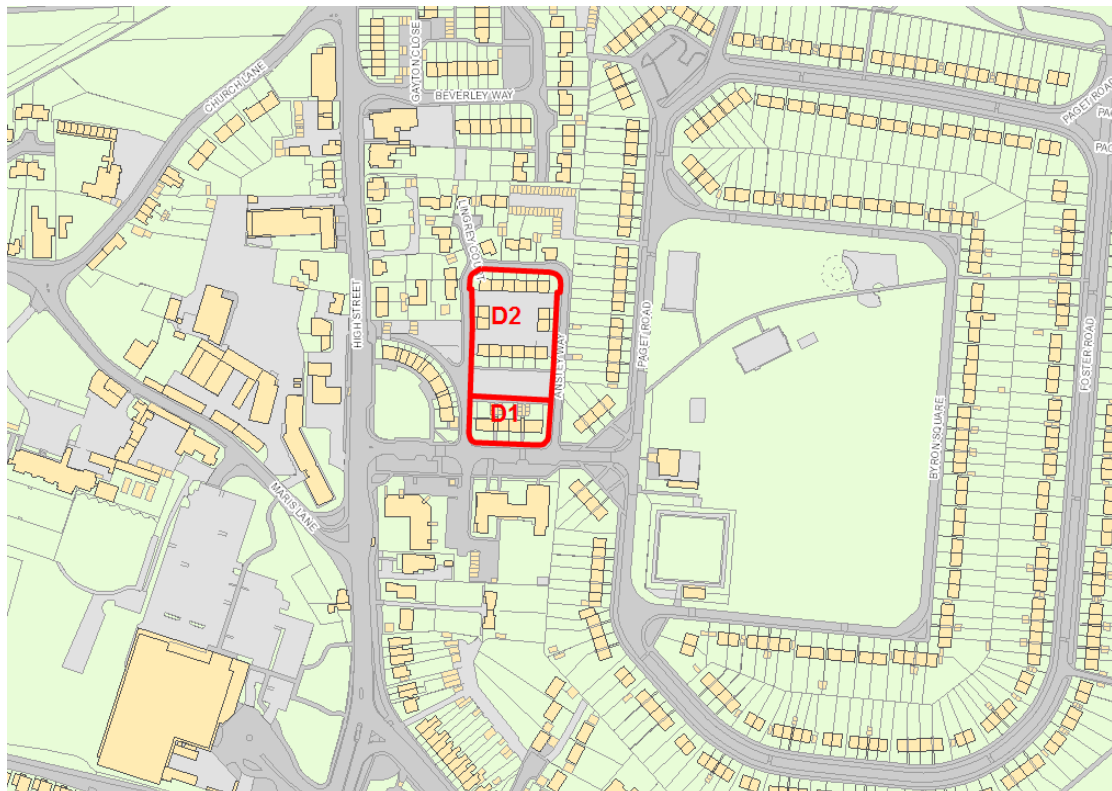
Verbal feedback from residents at the meetings was positive to the proposals and they understood the need to redevelop the area to improve the housing supply and standard. The advice offered by the housing team in relation to re-housing was also received in a positive light.

Since the meetings in March 2015, staff have been working closely with residents to support and assist in finding suitable alternative accommodation. There are currently three properties, two tenanted and one leaseholder that are not yet vacant.

4. Feasibility:

The Site

The below plan shows the area for the proposed scheme:



The table below shows the size of the current dwellings, the proposed mix approved by the June 2015 committee and the floor areas of new homes of the latest site proposed. The floor areas proposed are greater than the nationally described space standards as set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Existing	Area (m ²)	June 2015 Scheme	Area (m ²)	New Scheme	Area (m)
Bedsit	27	1 bed flat	50	1B2P Flat	50
1 bed bungalow	42	2 bed flat	70	2B4P Flat	70
3 bed flat	77.5	2 bed house	77	2B4P Maisonette	70
		3 bed house	93	2B4P House	84
				3B5P House	96
				4B6P House	107

The table shows that sizes of the current units fall well below the minimum government guidelines and are much smaller than the proposed new units.

Site Constraints

Advice was sought from the Council's Urban Design team to receive guidance on the potential density, scale and massing of any redevelopment bearing in mind the close proximity of the local Trumpington Centre and the mixed height of the current housing.

Some conclusions to this report are noted below:

The redevelopment of Site D would achieve much higher unit numbers subject to detailed design. Units should be orientated so as to address and provide increased surveillance of Anstey Way surrounding the site, and the local centre service road to the east.

The highest densities within Site D should be reserved for the main road frontage of Anstey Way to the south, the existing flats have an important relationship with the flats in Crossways Gardens to the south and the Local Centre crescent to the east, as such redevelopment of these flats should reinforce this scale and massing relationship.

The full Urban Design report is available on request.

Local Housing Need

There is a lack of social housing for older people in Trumpington. This has been exacerbated recently by the closure of the CHS scheme at Crossway Gardens. It is proposed that some specific provision for older people therefore be included in any redevelopment.

The table below shows figures taken from the Home-Link Register in February 2017, indicating the demand in Trumpington from eligible applicants with a local connection.

Trumpington	1bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	Undefined
	351	240	69	21	9	26

5. Proposed scheme

An indicative redevelopment scheme has been produced for the site as follows:

20No.1 Bed 2 Person Flats

10No. 2 Bed 4 Person Flats

10No. 2 Bed 4 Person Maisonettes

9No. 2 Bed 4 Person Houses

3No. 3 Bed 5 Person Houses

2No. 4 Bed 6 Person Houses

Although the Housing Needs Register identifies a need for 1 bed properties, a sustainable mix to include mostly 2 bedrooms as well as some three bed and larger 4 bed houses was deemed more suitable in this location.

The advice from the Urban Design team suggests there will be the opportunity for a net gain of housing on the site, currently 28 homes (of which 5 are leasehold flats) with a proposal to redevelop

up to 54 larger homes for Social Rent at Local Housing Allowance rent.

6. Costs, Funding and Viability

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan already allows for the spending of Right to Buy Receipts and funding the balance of costs to be met by Devolution grant. Both RTB receipts and Devolution grant are restricted to only being used on the net gain of units. There is also an allocation of £4,850,000 included in the recently approved HRA Budget Setting Report which is specifically to cover the costs of redelivering the existing 23 council owned properties and demolition works.

As with all new build developments as details are progressed they will only proceed if they can be funded within borrowing and capital funding parameters in the HRA 30 Business Plan. If a final scheme cannot be delivered within the budget requested then a revised approval will need to be brought back to Committee for scrutiny.

Capital Costs

The total capital budget required to deliver this scheme is
£10,197,000

Acquisition of leaseholder properties, decant costs £1,547,800

Works costs £7,728,850

On costs including professional fees £ 920,350

Viability – A benchmark used by Registered Providers whether a new scheme is viable is when the scheme breaks even in revenue terms (typically 12 years) and when the total capital used is paid back (typically 30 years). This benchmark relates particularly to vacant sites. There is no ‘industry’ benchmark for sites where existing housing is required to be redeveloped. The viability against the benchmark is inclusive of Home Loss costs.

Pay-back period – 36 years

Rent Levels (net of Service Charge) –

1 bed £126.05 per week

2 bed £144.96 per week (awaiting final confirmation)

3 bed £168.45 per week

4 bed £224.70 per week (awaiting final confirmation)

VAT implications

VAT is not payable on new build construction costs. However, advice will be sought from the Council's VAT specialist to ensure that there are no adverse VAT issues affecting the project.

The Procurement

This scheme is being progressed through the Cambridge Investment Partnership.

Key Risks

- A planning application will need to be developed, submitted and approved.
- Obtaining vacant possession of the 2 tenanted properties and 1 leaseholder flat. Lease holder flat is vacant and approval is sought to commence CPO proceedings

Other implications

An Employers Agent/Quantity Surveyor will be appointed as part of the Delivery Team to support the Housing Development Agency.

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To: Executive Councillor for Housing

Report by: Executive Councillor for Housing

Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing Scrutiny Committee

Wards affected: All

Report title: **SALE OF ROOF VOIDS IN LEASEHOLD PROPERTIES**

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

This is an update report looking at the issues that have arisen following the decision in March 2011 by the Housing Management Board to agree to the potential sale of roof voids to leaseholders. The report looks to reverse the decision to prevent the future sale of roof voids.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To continue to exclude the roof void from the Right to Buy sale of leasehold flats.
- 2.2 To no longer agree to the sale of roof voids to leaseholders.

3. Background

3.1 The report submitted in March 2011 advised that the majority of the Council's blocks of flats do not have pitched roofs, and therefore have no roof void. The Council's policy has always been to exclude the roof void in any Right to Buy sale of a top floor flat or maisonette.

3.2 The Council now manages more than 1160 Leasehold properties and under the terms of the Lease, remains responsible for the structure including the roof, ceilings, walls, floors, foundations and the roof void.

3.3 In 2011, the Council agreed to the potential sale of roof voids for those blocks that do have a pitched roof and if the property met certain criteria (Appendix 1) due to the positive benefit to leaseholders of having additional

space in their properties. At that time it was felt the additional roof storage space could provide additional storage.

3.4 In the six years since the decision was taken, there have been just eight enquiries from existing leaseholders to purchase the roof void, the majority of which did not proceed beyond the enquiry stage. Of these, only two leaseholders have proceeded to purchase the loft space and convert it into habitable space; and one application was refused as it failed to meet the criteria.

3.5 Most enquiries have been from non-resident leaseholders who wish to turn the roof void into habitable space, where the only material benefit is to increase the value of the leaseholder's property.

3.6 With hindsight, the Council are creating future leasehold management issues, including:

- Party Wall implications;
- Requirement for full Structural Engineers Reports on the condition of the original build and checks to ensure the foundations can take the additional weight of any proposed conversion;
- Complications regarding future maintenance to the shared roof, fascia's and gutters;
- Services that would no longer be able to cross the roof space, if required;
- Roof ventilation.

3.7 Whilst we also seek the views of other residents prior to any sale, we have now seen the implications for these other tenants living on a potential building site for months - where we have no control over the works.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

There has been little take-up of the sale of roof voids and in light of our experiences by reverting to our former policy we are protecting the Council's interests. The valuation of both the sold roof voids yielded less than £10,000 income. The cost to the authority in managing the process was covered by the cost of the fees charged.

By not selling the loft space, we retain the ownership and limit any future costs to us as Freehold owners.

(b) Staffing Implications

None

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

None

(d) Environmental Implications

None

(e) Procurement

There are no procurement implications.

(f) Consultation and communication

Internal departments including Estates and Facilities, Legal, and Property have been consulted regarding the report.

5. Background papers

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 – Criteria for the Sale of Roof Voids in Leasehold Properties.

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect background papers or if you have a query regarding the report please contact:

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Appendix 1

Criteria for the Sale of Roof Voids in Leasehold Properties

The following criteria to be used by officers when determining the sale of roof voids:

1. The relevant roof space must not contain any shared services;
2. The building must only have one property on the storey immediately below the roof void;
3. The entire roof space must be directly above the relevant flat/maisonette, and must not extend beyond its boundaries into common areas or other units;

4. Access to the void must be entirely within the relevant leasehold property and not in a common area and must be formed in accordance with a specification to be agreed with the Council;
5. Repairs, replacement and inspection access must be guaranteed;
6. All occupiers within the building must be fully consulted about the proposal and their views taken into account in coming to a decision;
7. There must be no detrimental effect on any other occupier of the block or to the Councils freehold or structural interest in the building;
8. There must be no immediate or future repair or replacement cost implications for the Housing Revenue Account;
9. Consent to undertake any major works or structural alterations to the roof structure could only be granted formally in writing.

This list is not an exhaustive list and may be added to.



To: Councillor Kevin Price Executive Councillor for Housing
Report by: Yvonne O'Donnell Environmental Health Manager
Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing 7/3/2017 Scrutiny Committee
Wards affected: All

INTRODUCTION OF AN EMPTY HOMES LOANS POLICY

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The introduction of the Empty Homes Loan Policy (as attached Appendix A) is needed to help combat the on-going problem with Empty Homes in Cambridge City. The City has in the region of 328 properties that are recorded to have been empty for over 6 Months. The Empty Homes Officer is currently investigating in the region of 70 of these properties that have been empty for longer than two years. Empty homes are a wasted resource in terms of housing available for people to live in and they can also have a negative impact on their surrounding communities, as well as being a financial burden for many owners. Cambridge is in a high area of demand for affordable housing. It is therefore important that the Council is committed to making the most of existing stock within the City and encourages owners to bring long-term empty homes back into use.
- 1.2 The Council has an Empty Homes Officer who through education, support and enforcement, works with empty home owners to return properties to use. The introduction of this policy will compliment this work and will not only act as valuable additional option to enforcement but will also encourage empty home owners to engage with the Council.

- 1.3 Homes returned to use through the interest free loan will be on the condition that they are rented at an affordable rent level via Town Hall or another not for profit provider and that the property is rented in this way for a minimum period of two years. This affordable rent level will be set at 80% of the median rent according to the most up to date Home track data.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To approve the Introduction of an interest free Empty Homes Loan Policy, with loans of up to £25,000 secured against each property, (attached as Appendix A).
- 2.2 To approve conditions being attached to the loan meaning that the property has to be let at an affordable rent level for the minimum of two years.
- 2.3 To approve for the property to be let through THL or another not for profit provider.

3. Background

- 3.1 Cambridge City has a high demand for housing including affordable rented accommodation for those living within the City. The demand for housing from a growing population combined with high prices, has contributed to problems of affordability and high demand for affordable rented housing.
- 3.2 Cambridge operates an Empty Homes Policy the policy is aimed at returning long term empty residential properties back into viable accommodation within the city. In order to achieve this, the Council has a dedicated Empty Homes Officer to help identify and work with owners to bring properties back into use. Many of the properties which are empty are currently not in a suitable condition to be occupied they vary between needing modernisation and total renovation.
- 3.3 Housing is a key determinant of health, and poor housing conditions continue to contribute to health inequalities, this is especially prevalent in the private rented sector. The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to

health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and applies to all residential properties in England and Wales. HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard. Each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having category 1 (serious) or category 2 (other) hazards within.

- 3.4 There is a duty on the local authority to take action when they are aware of the existence of a category one hazard. Through the loan process we can enable empty home owners to remediate category one hazards and improve the condition of the property meaning it is suitable to be let.
- 3.5 When assessing a property the Empty Homes Officer will use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to determine the works needed to bring the property up to decent homes standard ensuring there are no Category 1 Hazards and an EPC rating of D and above. Taking this into account, any loan offered would be on the condition that works specified to remediate any hazards identified under HHSRS are completed to the Councils satisfaction.
- 3.6 The introduction of the Empty Homes Loans Policy has three key objectives:
- The reduction of empty homes
 - The improvement of an area / amenity
 - The creation of affordable housing

The property will be subject to a two or five year repayment condition in line with the repayment plan, which will require the property to be managed through THL or another affordable not for profit management provider. For the duration of the loan period the property will be let an affordable rent level set at 80% of the median rent according to the most up to date Home track data. By placing this condition on the loan it will assist the Housing Advice Service (via THL or other not for profit provider) to discharge its duty to homeless applicants or offer an affordable solution to prevent homelessness. After two years the owner could at this stage offer to repay the remaining loan in full and end their agreement with THL or other relevant provider, alternatively monthly repayments would continue for the remainder of the loan term.

- 3.7 The interest free Empty Homes Loan would have a maximum value of £25,000 per unit of accommodation. In some instances properties may be able to be subdivided to form more than one unit of accommodation. For the purpose of this Scheme one unit is considered to be a fully self-contained dwelling. The creation of

Houses in Multiple Occupation will be considered on an individual basis.

- 3.8 Applications for the conversions of commercial units to residential units will be considered for commercial properties that have been vacant over one year, dependent on local housing need and planning regulations.
- 3.9 The value of £25,000 is a maximum value and is set as such, in the majority of cases it will be sufficient to do essential works such a boiler installation, wiring, kitchen and bathroom improvements to bring the property up to the required standard. In instances where the loan is not sufficient to complete all works the property owner would need to agree to pay the outstanding amount as a condition of the loan being granted. The cost of the works will be determined before the start of the loan. A comparison has been carried out with other authorities offering similar schemes in Appendix B.
- 3.10 Any financial assistance will be made on a loan basis which is required to be paid off within a two or five year period. The loan will be secured against the property until it has been fully repaid. Payment will be made on a monthly basis to the Council at a set amount detailed within the loan agreement. During the initial two year agreement with THL or another not for profit provider the loan amount will be deducted directly from the rent. A breakdown of anticipated figures can be found in Appendix C. As the principal function of the loan is to encourage empty home owners to return the property to use the loan will not attract interest. It is anticipated that the loan will be using recycled funds from an existing ring-fenced pot and there will be no additional cost to the Council. Currently Cambridge City has no financial assistance options available to owners of long term empty properties.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

- 4.1.1 Funding for the Empty Homes Loan will come from a ring fenced budget. Repayments from the loan scheme will be returned to the budget to allow for a recyclable fund.
- 4.1.2 Each empty home which is brought back to use as an 'affordable' home' currently merits payment to Cambridge City Council under the New Homes Bonus.

4.1.3 It is anticipated that empty homes which benefit from the loan are utilised by THL or another not for profit provider. This could help to reduce costs incurred by Cambridge City Council by providing a homeless prevention option and reducing the need for temporary accommodation.

4.1.4 Legal costs for securing the loan will be met by the owner as part of the agreed loan amount.

(b) Staffing Implications

The Empty Homes Loan will be administered by the Empty Homes Officer as part of the role; the management of the property will be carried out by THL or another not for profit provider. It is not envisaged any additional staff will be needed or that there should be any staffing implications created by the introduction of the loan.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

The loan policy will not lead to inequality but will have a positive effect through improving homes, reducing fuel poverty and will offer additional affordable private rented housing options to those on a lower income. (as attached Appendix D)

(d) Environmental Implications

The policy supports energy efficiency and the improvement of the SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) rating if it is E or below .The policy ensures that on completion all properties will not have any category one hazard under HHSRS for excess cold and therefore will have a fully controllable fixed heating system that is reasonable economic to run and sufficient insulation. Ensuring proper heating and insulation in all loan funded properties will help to reduce fuel poverty, reduce energy usage and contribute to a in reduction of CO2 emissions. These actions help to create a more sustainable City. Although the loan takes positive actions, due to the relatively small number of properties likely to be improved the overall impact will be +L.

(e) Procurement

Advice has been taken from Procurement and Contracts within the Councils Commercial Services. As the scheme is a loan in which the individuals 'procure' their own contractors it would be excluded from Cambridge City Councils procurement rules.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

The process has been carried out in consultation with THL to enable continuity of the process and achieve one of its aims in improving housing need within the city. We have also consulted with Jimmy's Cambridge supported housing as a provider of supported housing in Cambridge.

The Empty Homes Loan will be widely publicised, the Empty Homes Officer will make contact with empty home owners to encourage them to apply for the new loan if required.

All communication regarding the Empty Homes Loan Policy will utilise the Councillors website, social media and information points throughout Cambridge City.

(g) **Community Safety**

- i. The implementation of an Empty Home Loan will lead to the creation of safer affordable homes to be let at an affordable rent level. It will also help the Council meet its goals in tackling & preventing homelessness. The return of empty homes to occupation will also help tackle potential problems from anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and reduce the likelihood of squatters.
- ii. The policy will continue to enable the Authority to work towards achieving a reduction in category one hazards. Improvements in standards in the private rented sector will help to provide warm and safer homes.

5. Background papers

Housing Act 2004

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/1860/article/3/made>

Cambridge City Councils Empty Homes Policy 2012

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/.../empty-homes-policy-2012>

Empty Homes Bonus Scheme

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-homes-bonus-final-scheme-design--2>

Equality Impact Assessment 2017

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Empty Homes Loan Policy

Appendix B: Bench Marking Exercise

Appendix C: Example of Loan Repayment Tables

Appendix D: Equality Impact Assessment

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Cambridge City Council
Empty Homes Loan Policy

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cambridge City Council's *Draft* Housing Strategy (2016-2019) considers bringing empty homes back into use as essential. The City has in the region of 328 properties that are recorded to have been empty for over 6 Months. Without intervention it is considered that many of these properties would remain un-occupied and a wasted resource in the City.
- 1.2 There is a shortage of residential accommodation available in the City as housing demand outstrips housing supply quite significantly, in particular there is a shortage of affordable private rented accommodation available at affordable rent. The demand will continue as Cambridge's population is set to grow by around 20% over the next 10 years. Each empty home denies a household somewhere to live and returning an empty home to use has social, environmental and financial benefits.
- 1.3 Empty homes are a wasted resource and can have a detrimental impact on neighbourhoods and the environment, as they can become an eyesore that may also cause problems for neighbours. Empty homes can quickly fall into disrepair and become magnets for antisocial behaviour and vandalism.
- 1.4 With housing and land in short supply in Cambridge it is necessary to ensure that empty homes do not remain empty unnecessarily and fall into misuse and dereliction.
- 1.5 Cambridge operates an Empty Homes Policy the policy is aimed at returning long term empty residential properties back into viable accommodation within the city. The introduction of Empty Homes loans within Cambridge City is a measure to incentivise owners to voluntarily reuse their empty homes.
- 1.6 The loan will be recycled funds mitigating the need for any additional expenditure by Cambridge City Council.
- 1.7 The interest free loan will be subject to a management agreement with Town Hall Lettings (THL) or another not for profit housing provider for a minimum period of 2 years.

2.0 Legislation Context

- 2.1 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order came into force on 18 July 2002. The Order provides local authorities with greater flexibility in devising policies for dealing with poor conditions in private sector housing and the tools available.
- 2.2 The Order contains a new general power for local authorities to improve housing: *'For the purpose of improving living conditions in their area a local authority may provide, directly or indirectly, assistance to any person for the purpose of enabling them:*

- To acquire living accommodation (whether within or outside their area).
- To adapt or improve living accommodation (whether by alteration, conversion or enlargement, by installation of anything or injection of any substance or otherwise).
- To repair living accommodation.
- To demolish buildings comprising or including living accommodation.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 For the purpose of the Empty Homes Loan Policy an empty home will only be considered if it is unoccupied for more than six months and verified by the Empty Homes Officer and /or the Council Tax department.
- 3.2 Priority will be awarded to empty homes with most impact on the local amenity. These can include single-family dwellings, flats and residential accommodation above shops.
- 3.3 Applications for the conversion of commercial units to residential units will be considered for commercial properties that have been vacant over a year, dependent on local housing need & planning regulations.

4.0 Objectives

- 4.1 The following objectives will be met under the Empty Homes Loan Policy:
- The reduction of empty homes in Cambridge City.
 - Improvement of an area/amenity
 - To increase the availability of affordable accommodation in the City of Cambridge.

5.0 Outcome

- 5.1 To introduce an interest free loan with no additional costs to the Council that will incentivise empty home owners to bring their properties back into use and achieve the following outcomes:
- To enable owners to bring empty properties up to a decent homes standard prior to re-occupation which includes ensuring there are no Category 1 hazards as per the Housing Act 2004 Part I and an EPC rating of D and above where achievable.

- To increase affordable housing options available in the City of Cambridge.
- Working in conjunction with THL and the Housing Advice Service to offer homeless prevention options, including discharging its statutory homeless duty.
- The renovation of an empty property and bringing it back into use will make positive improvements to the amenity of the neighbourhood and its environment. In turn this should lead to reductions in complaints from members of the public with regards to matters such as fly-tipping, appearance of the property and community safety.

6.0 Applications for the Loan

- 6.1 No loan will be made unless an application is made to the Council in accordance with the provisions of the Policy and the application is approved by the Council.
- 6.2 The Council will require an applicant to provide such information or evidence (including information relating to his financial circumstances) as may reasonably be required for the purposes of determining an application for a loan. An application will not be valid unless it contains all such information or evidence & the declaration on the application form is signed & dated.
- 6.3 Applications for the loan will be made on the Councils prescribed application form.
- 6.4 An application is not a valid application unless all sections of the prescribed application form are completed or where they do not apply, marked appropriately.

7.0 Preliminary Conditions

- 7.1 An applicant(s) must be the registered owner(s) of the property without any restrictions.
- 7.2 The property must be within Cambridge City Council boundary.
- 7.3 The property must have been confirmed as empty for over 6 months.
- 7.4 The applicant must not be insolvent or have any outstanding debts to Cambridge City Council unless a repayment plan is in place and can be evidenced.
- 7.5 The applicant must not have been deemed 'not a fit and proper person' as per the test for fitness under s66 of the Housing Act 2004 Part II.

- 7.6 Permission must be sought and granted by the mortgage provider and any other interested party, if there is one.
- 7.7 The applicant must agree to the property being managed & let by THL or another not for profit housing provider for a minimum period of two years at an affordable rent level being set by the housing provider. For the duration of the loan period the property will be let an affordable rent level set at 80% of the median rent according to the most up to date Home track data.
- 7.8 The applicant must agree to a charge being registered on the property until loan is repaid.
- 7.9 The interest free loan offered will be a minimum level of £1500 and a maximum level of £25,000 per unit of accommodation. For the purpose of this policy a unit is defined if it is a fully self-contained dwelling. Houses in multiple occupation will be considered on an individual basis.
- 7.9.1 The applicant must agree to the loan being repaid over the maximum period of five years. With the repayment amount being deducted from the rental income received by relevant housing provider for a minimum period of two years. It will be a condition of the loan that it is repaid in full after the end of any agreement with THL or another not for profit housing provider.
- 7.10 If the owner chooses to sell the property within the agreed repayment term the outstanding loan amount will be repayable to Cambridge City Council.
- 7.11 The Loan will also be repayable:-
- If there is a breach of the terms of the loan.
 - If the property is not let at an affordable rent via THL / another approved provider for at least 2 years.

8.0 Determination of whether to award a loan

- 8.1 Where the Council has decided to approve a valid application for an empty homes loan they will be notified within 56 working days.
- 8.2 The amount offered for a loan will be determined following a survey of the property conducted by Cambridge City Council. This survey will be conducted in line with the Housing Act 2004 Part I.

- 8.3 The loan amount will be determined according to the provisions of this section.
- 8.4 If the loan application is refused, there is no right to review but the applicant will be notified and can make a complaint through Cambridge City Councils complaints procedure.

9.0 Determination and notification of amount of loan

- 9.1 Following a visit & survey conducted by the Empty Homes Officer it will be decided as to whether the works required fall within the preliminary conditions.
- 9.2 If the loan application is approved the Council will –
- (a) Specify the full works for which the loan is approved;
 - (b) Request from the owner 3 quotations {where practicable} for the full cost of works specified or agreement for the THL other agreed housing provider to arrange these quotations for them subject to an administration fee;
 - (c) Specify all contractors must hold relevant certification and valid insurance as legally required;
 - (d) The full cost of the works will be the cost of the lower of the quotes that they have provided (subject to reasonable adjustment), whether or not that contractor carries out the work. The owner will need to agree that any shortfall will be paid by them in full before the Council release the balance of funds.
 - (e) Specify the length of time the owner has to provide these quotes, this being 56 days;
 - (f) Notify the applicant which quote has been accepted and any contribution they have to make;
 - (g) Notify applicant of total amount of loan including any additional administrative or ancillary fees;
 - (h) Specify the repayment amounts for the loan over a two or five year period;
 - (i) Make a formal offer of the loan;
 - (j) If for any reason the approved works under paragraph 9.2(d) are required to be varied such variation will only be made with the consent of the Empty Homes Officer.

10.0 Conditions for repayment & payment of works by the City Council

- 10.1 The applicant will be required to sign a copy of the Empty Home Loan Agreement as well as a separate management agreement with THL or other approved housing provider, ensuring that all the said terms and conditions are understood and accepted. Including a charge being registered on the property upon completion of the works.
- 10.2 Work must then be completed within 12 months following approval and the property occupied, where practicable.
- 10.3 Once works have been completed to a satisfactory standard, (which will be determined following an inspection by the Empty Homes Officer), an invoice should be submitted by the owner. The invoice should be accompanied by relevant completion certification from the contractor(s). Staged payments will be considered on a case by case basis up to a maximum of 80% of the total loan amount.
- 10.4 Once an invoice and relevant certification have been received payment for the works will be arranged as per Cambridge City Councils current finance policy.
- 10.5 Once payment has been made to the owner the Council shall register a legal charge on the property.

11.0 Cessation of repayment conditions

- 11.1 An owner can cease the repayment conditions in the following circumstances:
 - (a) The owner of the dwelling to which the condition relates pays the amount of the loan to Cambridge City Council in full.
 - (b) A mortgagee of the interest of the owner in that dwelling being a mortgagee entitled to exercise a power of sale makes such a payment in full to repay the loan.
 - (c) Cambridge City Council exercises its right to require full repayment of outstanding monies upon breach of a condition of the loan.
 - (d) The repayment of a loan in full does not automatically end the management contract with THL/ other approved housing provider nor does it end any tenancy agreements in existence.
 - (e) The owner of the property dies within the term and the owners' estate repays the loan in full.

11.2 Cambridge City Council expects the loan to be fully repaid as per the repayment conditions. If breach of loan, or monies outstanding at the end of the agreed term Cambridge City Council has the right to enforce loan security.

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Appendices

Appendix B - Bench Marking Exercise

Local Authority	Loan	Repayable
Kent County Council (No Use Empty loan scheme)	£25,000 - £175,000 Interest free loan	Repayable 3 years when loan is to let 24 months or sale on loans to sell
South Cambridgeshire District Council	£10,000 loan up to a maximum of £15,000 on a fixed term rate of 1% above the PWLB (Public Works Loan Board) for the life of the loan (currently at approximately 3%).	Repayable on disposal
Colchester Borough Council	Up to £30,000 amount varies on how many years' nomination rights the council is offered.	Repayable
St Edmundsbury Borough Council	Up to £20,000 Interest free loan	Repayable on disposal Being left empty for 12months Breach of conditions
City of York Council	Up to £15,000(discretion of up to £30,000) Interest free loan Or Equity Release	Repayable
Mid – Suffolk District Council	Up to £20,000 Interest free loan	Repayable

Appendix C –

Table 1: 5 year repayment on a maximum £25,000 loan

No of bedrooms	1	2	3
THL rent amount*	£827.88	£920.38	£1143.59
Repayments	£416.67	£416.67	£416.67
Management fee	£44.75	£49.75	£61.82
Repairs	£89.50	£99.50	£123.63
Insurance (approx)	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00
Total cost	£575.92	£590.92	£627.11
Estimated net monthly gain	£251.96	£329.46	£516.47

Table 2: 2 year repayment on a maximum £25,000 loan

No of bedrooms	1	2	3
THL rent amount*	£827.88	£920.38	£1143.59
Repayments	£1041.67	£1041.67	£1041.67
Management fee	£44.75	£49.75	£61.82
Repairs	£89.50	£99.50	£123.63
Insurance (approx)	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00
Total cost	£1200.92	£1215.92	£1252.12
Estimated net monthly gain	-£373.04	-£295.04	-£108.53

Please note that this estimation is based on borrowing the full amount and leasing the property at an affordable rent for the full 5 years.

In relation to the two year repayment example although the net monthly gain is a minus it is important to take into consideration that the owner will no longer be liable for Council Tax / other property related liabilities.

*Affordable rent levels shown are for representative purposes. Agreed rental charges will be based on 80% of the median rent according to the most up to date Home track data.

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment

Completing an Equality Impact Assessment will help you to think about what impact your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service may have on people that live in, work in or visit Cambridge, as well as on City Council staff.



The template is easy to use. You do not need to have specialist equalities knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgements based on evidence and experience. There are guidance notes on the intranet to help you. You can also get advice from Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer on 01223 457174 or email suzanne.goff@cambridge.gov.uk or from any member of the Joint Equalities Group.

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:

Empty Homes Loans Scheme

2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change in service?

Introducing a scheme to provide interest free Loans to owner of long term empty homes in Cambridge.

Improvement

Residents who are impacted negatively by the effects of empty homes in their neighbourhood will benefit from empty homes being brought back into use through the loan scheme. Similarly people who are seeking accommodation within the City will

Benefit from the increase of affordable homes resulting from empty homes being brought back into use. This will be a valuable option to the Housing Advice Service in preventing homelessness, reducing housing need & enabling Cambridge City Council to discharge its duties to accepted homeless applicants through the private sector. The creation of empty homes will also benefit where they access incentives set out in the policy.

New loan

The Empty Homes Loan will be available to owners of empty homes in Cambridge city to enable them to bring their properties up to decent homes standard through remedying hazards which have been unidentified through the Housing Act 2004, an EPC rating of D and above and the creation of affordable homes within the city. Under the terms of the loan the property must be let as affordable housing through a non for profit organisation (for a minimum of 2 years) This is currently through Cambridge City Councils Town Hall Letting. The loan is to be repaid within the five years and a charge will be registered on the property. No interest will be charged. A breach in conditions may result in early repayment needing to be made.

The conditions and loan agreement will be predetermined and form part of the loan offer.

Reasons for change:

To incentivise owners of properties to return them to occupation. This was considered essential under the Strategy 2016-2019 to increase the supply of affordable residential accommodation in the City. Many properties have remained empty for long periods and have fallen into a state of disrepair and neglect which requires a significant financial outlay.

As well as providing additional accommodation in a growing city the loan will also help to tackle and correct long term neglected property which are a wasted resource. Empty properties can lead to problems with anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and squatting. Bringing properties back into use can both help to improve an area and for people having to live near a property which may be having a negative impact on their home.

Objectives

This policy will assist Cambridge City Council in working to address the issue of empty properties within the City, to maximise the potential of empty homes within Cambridge City and increase the availability of affordable housing to improve neighbourhoods and reduce the risk of associated crime.

In assessing the need for a loan scheme the following data was used

Data

Record of Empty Homes taken from Council Tax figures as of 01/10/2016 of homes which have been empty for over 6 months (Internal Document)

M3 Records (Internal Document)

Strategic Housing Key facts June 2016

<http://live.drupal.intranet.ccc.local/sites/default/files/documents/13%20Key%20Facts%20June%20FINAL.pdf>

2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

Communications

The empty homes loan will be widely publicised, the Empty Homes Officer will make contact with empty owners to encourage them to apply for the new loan if required.

All communication regarding the loan schemes will utilise the Councillors website, social media and information points throughout Cambridge City.

Consultations

Timetable –

Town Hall Lettings, Local Social Housing Providers

Town Hall Lettings responded positively to the loan scheme

3. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

Residents

Visitors

Staff

A specific client group or groups (please state):

4. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)

New

Revised

Existing

5. Responsible directorate and service

Directorate:

Service: Environmental Services

6. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

No

Yes (please give details):

Town Hall Letting, Jimmy's Supported Housing, Legal Services

7. Potential impact

Please list and explain how this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could **positively** or **negatively** affect individuals from the following equalities groups.

When answering this question, please think about:

- The results of relevant consultation that you or others have completed (for example with residents, people that work in or visit Cambridge, service users, staff or partner organisations).
- Complaints information.
- Performance information.
- Information about people using your service (for example whether people from certain equalities groups use the service more or less than others).
- Inspection results.
- Comparisons with other organisations.
- The implementation of your piece of work (don't just assess what you think the impact will be after you have completed your work, but also think about what steps you might have to take to make sure that the implementation of your work does not negatively impact on people from a particular equality group).
- The relevant premises involved.
- Your communications.
- National research (local information is not always available, particularly for some equalities groups, so use national research to provide evidence for your conclusions).

(a) Age (any group of people of a particular age, including younger and older people – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults)

The loan process is not restricted to any age group, the affordable homes created will not be restricted to any age group..

(b) Disability (including people with a physical impairment, sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health problem or other condition which has an impact on their daily life)

The loan scheme is not restricted; the creation of affordable homes will not be restricted and will have a positive effect on available housing.

(c) Gender

There is no gender implications created by the implementation of this loan scheme

(d) Pregnancy and maternity

There are no pregnancy or maternity implications. The Empty Homes Loan will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(e) Transgender (including gender re-assignment)

Will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(f) Marriage and Civil Partnership

Joint applications may be made for a loan when a property is in joint ownership.

(g) Race or Ethnicity

The Empty Homes Loan will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(h) Religion or Belief

No impact

(i) Sexual Orientation

Civil Partnership Joint application for loans

Will have a positive impact by increasing affordable housing options within the City.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular – please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty (please state):

The loans will not lead to inequality but will have a positive effect through improving homes..

8. If you have any additional comments please add them here

Cambridge is a diverse multi-cultural city with a growing population. The lack of affordable homes often means that even the worst properties can be let; this can be evidenced through complaints received by Environmental Services. The City contains relatively high levels of empty homes a conservative estimate is put at 328 properties although it is likely there will be further properties that are yet to be unidentified. Many of these properties are in poor condition and face little prospect of being brought back to a habitable standard without the Council's intervention. The loan scheme will help incentivise empty home owners to carry out essential works but also lead to the introduction of affordable homes within the city as a condition of borrowing. The loans will be interest free and must be repaid within a predetermined period.

9. Conclusions and Next Steps

- If you have not identified any negative impacts, please sign off this form.
- If you have identified potential negative actions, you must complete the action plan at the end of this document to set out how you propose to mitigate the impact. If you do not feel that the potential negative impact can be mitigated, you must complete question 8 to explain why that is the case.
- If there is insufficient evidence to say whether or not there is likely to be a negative impact, please complete the action plan setting out what additional information you need to gather to complete the assessment.

All completed Equality Impact Assessments must be emailed to Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer, who will arrange for it to be published on the City Council's website.
Email suzanne.goff@cambridge.gov.uk

10. Sign off

Name and job title of assessment lead officer: Danae Evans EHPO/Claire Adelizzi
Environmental Health Officer

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:
Phillip Winter-Project Officer-Environmental Services
Robin Ray-Residential Team Manager-Environmental Services
Heather Rigby- Principal Property Lawyer-3C Shared Services-Legal Practice
James McWilliams-Housing Advice Partnerships Manager-Customer & Community Services
Dominic Lamch-Landlord Liaison Officer-Customer & Community Services
Barry Griffiths-Jimmys Supported Housing Project
Cllr Kevin Price-Executive Councillor for Housing
Date of completion:

Date of next review of the assessment:

Action Plan- (Not Applicable)

Equality Impact Assessment title:

Date of completion:

Equality Group	Age
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Disability
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Gender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Pregnancy and Maternity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Transgender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Marriage and Civil Partnership
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Race or Ethnicity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Religion or Belief
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Sexual Orientation
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Other factors that may lead to inequality	
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

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