

REPORT TITLE: DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

19 JUNE 2017

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr Caroline Horrill

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

The Council's Housing Strategy sets out the Council's primary focus and key priorities for the coming 5 years.

The Strategy sets out the challenges the Council faces in working to achieve the Council's Strategy's 3rd strategic outcome 'Delivering quality housing options'.

It presents the key objectives for the service to enable those who are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances.

The objectives contained in the Strategy have been translated into specific actions in the Action Plans in supporting documents which are set out in diagram on page 26 of the Strategy - 'The Housing Strategy in Context', and it is these actions that will deliver change.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the report and make any comments to Cabinet (Housing) Committee.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 Delivering quality housing options is the 3rd strategic outcome of the Council's Strategy.
- 1.2 In addition the priorities and objectives will assist the Council to achieve the 4th Council Strategy strategic outcomes – Improve the health and happiness of our community as well as contributing to the economic stability of the district.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The HRA Budget and Business Plan and the current investment plan is already in place to ensure the key priorities for this Strategy are delivered.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 All works commissioned to meet the priorities included in this Strategy are procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are numerous workforce implications from the provisions of the strategy itself in addition to the impact of legislation around homelessness prevention, welfare reform changes and other government initiatives such as the high value sales levy; the guidance for which is yet to be released.
- 4.2 An increased new build programme will have resource implications for the service and other departments such as Legal and Estates.
- 4.3 Changes to funding such as increased disabled facilities grant provisions will impact on the teams resources to maximise the opportunities presented.
- 4.4 Establishing a Housing Company or other specialist vehicle may have an impact too.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Priority 4 of the Strategy seeks to make best use of all Housing assets and links in with the provisions of related strategies set out in Appendix 2 such as the HRA Asset Management Strategy and the Empty Homes Strategy.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 This new strategy has been developed through talking to key stakeholders as set out in Table 1.

Table 1 – Key Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholder	Method of consultation
Heads of Housing Teams	Various meetings
Heads of WCC teams	Circulation of draft document
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • circulation of draft document • workshop debate
Tenants through TACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • circulation of draft document • workshop debate
Housing providers	Presentation and Meeting
Hampshire County Council – commissioners	Presentation and Meeting
Parish Councillors	Circulation of draft document
Other statutory groups, stakeholders & voluntary and community groups such as – Nightshelter, Trinity Centre, WinACC, CAB, NHS (various), Health and Wellbeing Forum, Homelessness Forum	Circulation of draft document

6.2 Consultees endorsed the priorities. The Strategy is a high level document and most of the comments centred around the detail actions required to deliver the objectives set out under the priorities.

6.3 Appendix 2 is a table which presents the emerging themes from the consultation along with how actions will be embedded in the work of the Housing service.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The recently adopted Council Strategy sets out the Council's approach to the green agenda.

7.2 Priority 4 sets out objectives of delivering good quality housing stock and energy performance for Council owned stock (Asset Management Council Strategy further sets out the approach to energy efficient housing). Planning policy sets standards for new build. Private Sector Housing standards are covered under Priority 4.

7.3 WinACC was consulted on strategy content and priorities, their comments were considered in conjunction with the above policies and strategies.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 The impact assessment recognised that the previous strategy was focused on the most vulnerable groups however that this strategy is broader and the Primary Focus sets out the aim of reaching all groups which have barriers to accessing housing.

8.2 Through the consultation process a draft document was sent to a wide range of organisations including those that support groups which may face barriers

in accessing housing. Their feedback has helped ensure that the Strategy considers the needs of all household groups.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Property</i> Priority 1 – Not Accelerating/maximising supply of high quality housing within the district.	Addressed through The Housing Strategy itself and detailed in linked documents and action plans.	Priority 4 sets out objectives around making best use of housing.
<i>Community Support</i> Priority 2 – not improving the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households. Priority 3 – not supporting local people to access high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs	All stakeholders commit to actions required. Effective partnerships to deliver shared objectives started through engagement as part of the strategy development process.	Community organisations have had the opportunity to provide input into the document.
<i>Timescales</i>	Regular monitoring of the Strategy and actions contained within the actions plans of the strategies set out in Appendix 1.	
<i>Project capacity</i>	Impact of local and national initiatives will be monitored by the Housing Departmental Management Team. When appropriate specialist support will be commissioned.	Ensuring that new schemes include project support, as well as support costs, as part of the new business cases.
<i>Financial / VfM</i>	HRA Asset Management strategy and investment plans ensure best use of housing. insufficient General Fund reserve to meet commitments.	Rent setting Housing Company
<i>Legal</i>	Specialised legal advice has been commissioned to support the actions around establishing a specialist vehicle such as a Housing	

	Company	
<i>Innovation</i>	innovation through the Strategy alters the risk profile. In one way, there is increased risk through exploring new ways of working and new projects which have not been considered before.	This strategy proposes some innovative proposals e.g. Housing Company, modern methods of construction, and innovation is a theme which is proposed to support the delivery of the Council strategy.
<i>Reputation</i>	The risk of delivering the Strategy is mitigated through the monitoring measures contained within the strategy.	This strategy gives the Council the opportunity to enhance its reputation.
<i>Other Feedback</i>	Clear communication plans to ensure stakeholders receive meaningful and timely feedback on the outcomes of projects and remain engaged.	

10 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

10.1 Background

High quality housing and a properly operating housing market are vitally important and contribute to social, environmental and economic sustainability. It is, however, clear that the market alone will not fully meet Winchester's housing needs and this threatens sustainability. There is, therefore, a need for intervention if we are to ensure people have the homes they need. The Housing Strategy sets out what this intervention entails.

10.2 Details

The Strategy is a high level document which sets out the vision, focus and priorities for the Housing service over the coming 5 years. The objectives identified under the Priorities have been translated into specific actions in the Action Plans in supporting documents which are set out in diagram on page 26 of the Strategy - 'The Housing Strategy in Context', and it is these actions that will deliver change.

The vision of the Strategy is 'To support the creation of cohesive communities, making sure everyone in the District has a choice of high quality housing to meet their needs.'

The primary focus has been set as - 'Those who are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances'.

The Strategy sets out the key challenges and considerations which will impact on achieving the above primary focus as follows:

- Housing affordability
- Welfare Reform
- Local Plan provisions
- Inadequate housing options
- Matching supply and demand
- Meeting the needs of all household types
- Stock Condition & Energy Efficiency

The Strategy sets out 5 key priorities and the objectives that sit beneath to address these challenges as:

- Priority 1 - Accelerate/maximise supply of high quality housing within the district.
- Priority 2 – To improve the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households
- Priority 3 - To support local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs
- Priority 4 – To make best use of housing
- Priority 5 - To engage with residents and create cohesive communities

10.3 Conclusion

Households who would not traditionally have sought affordable housing are unable to access market housing and we must ensure that we meet a range of needs at a range of affordability levels that reflects the requirements of our communities.

It is vital that our residents have access to quality housing options and we recognise the importance of having the right mix of housing options within the District. We know that housing is expensive across the District and we want to be active in helping to provide different options for our residents and at the same time ensuring we increase the supply and quality of housing that we control.

11 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 11.1 The Strategy content has been continually amended to reflect the feedback received through the consultation process with the aim of strengthening the document to achieve its primary objective of addressing the local housing challenges in order that all households are able to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB2876 – DRAFT COUNCIL STRATEGY – 07.12.17

CAB2866 (HSG) - Housing Asset Management Strategy – 23.11.16

CAB2790 (HSG) – Private Sector Empty Property Strategy – 22.03.16

HRA Business Plan

Other Background Documents:-

Council Strategy 2017-20 <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/about/council-structure/council-strategy/council-strategy-2017-2020/>

Strategic Housing Market Assessment – 2012

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base/housing/winchester-district-housing-market-housing-need-as/>

Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 (2013) and Part 2 (2017)

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/>

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Draft 2017-2022 Housing Strategy

Appendix 2 – Consultation Issue Summarised and Grouped by Priority

Winchester City Council

Housing Strategy

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2017/18 – 2022/2023

Draft v2.9.1

Contents

	Page
Foreword	
1 Introduction	
2 The Challenges	
3 Housing Strategy Priorities & Objectives	
4 Implementation	
5 Monitoring and Review	
Appendix 1 – Glossary	
Appendix 2 – Housing Strategy in Context	

As separate documents:

- ~ Integrated Impact Assessment Prepared in draft

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Foreword

We believe it is vital that our residents have access to quality housing options and we recognise the importance of having the right mix of housing options within the District. We know that housing is expensive across the District and we want to be active in helping to provide different options for our residents and at the same time ensuring we increase the supply and quality of housing that we control.

High quality housing and a properly operating housing market are vitality important and contribute to social, environmental and economic sustainability. It is, however, clear that the market alone will not fully meet Winchester's housing needs and this threatens sustainability. There is, therefore, a need for intervention if we are to ensure people have the homes they need.

However, we want to do more that provide housing solutions for individuals. We want to create cohesive communities where households of differing sizes, ages, incomes and interests enjoy living together and sharing in what Winchester has to offer. Communities that support each other, accept each other and contribute towards Winchester's success.

Since the previous Housing Strategy the following significant outcomes have been achieved:

- Over 400 new affordable homes provided
- Council home building programme launched, with over 100 homes on site.
- Innovative extra care development in progress
- Regional design award for Westman Road scheme
- New Queens Head nominated for national design award
- All Winchester City Council housing stock meets Decent homes standard
- Gold Standard award for the Housing Options Team
- An active estate improvement programme providing local solutions and well received by local residents
- Action taken on all empty properties within the district under the Empty Property Strategy
- Stock condition survey of private housing informing the Private Sector Housing Strategy
- An Asset Management Strategy developed in consultation with stakeholders
- 91% Tenant Satisfaction in 2017
- Introduction of a 'City Lets' scheme helping people in housing need to find accommodation in the private rented sector
- Assisting tenants downsize to smaller homes

Despite these successes and the relative affluence and general economic prosperity of the District, the area still faces very real housing challenges. Economic prosperity should mean that everyone should have access to decent housing, a good quality of life and a fulfilling job. Sadly, not every

member of the community has these things. Homeless and vulnerable households suffer the most as a consequence. There is a proven link between housing and health and wellbeing and we hear from our colleagues in Citizens Advice that people are coming to them in significant numbers with these problems. Together with our partners in the statutory health and social care services, and those in the voluntary sector, we must tackle these problems.

Affordability of housing is the most significant concern. Over recent years a broader cross section of society has become affected by the problems of unaffordability. Many households are unable to afford suitable accommodation, including some working in lower paid jobs in health and social care, education, leisure and hospitality sectors. Not only does this impact on the health and happiness of individuals, but through its effect on the local economy, local services and transport, it impacts on the health and happiness of everyone in the District.

Households who would not traditionally have sought affordable housing are unable to access market housing and we must ensure that we meet a range of needs at a range of affordability levels that reflects the requirements of our communities. The problem of affordability must be tackled if we are to make sure that everyone in the District has the opportunity for a good quality of life now and in the future.

It is not only affordability we need to tackle, we have many other challenges. We need to plan for the 12,500 homes due to be built by 2031, both in new and existing communities. We need to plan to provide support when and where it is most effective for our vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. We need to plan to make the best use of the housing we already have.

This new strategy sets out the Council's strategic housing priorities for the next 5 years. It has been developed taking account of the evidence and through talking to those involved in local housing matters and to Winchester's communities. It complements the Winchester District Development Framework which provides a framework and policy context within which new development can take place.

The Council has announced a multi-million pound programme of new Council house building to complement new homes provided by Registered Providers. Investors are keen to invest in the District and we have a strong relationship with partners and communities that will help deliver this Strategy's ambitions. We are well placed to take up a leadership role in supporting our communities to plan for change for the better.

The Winchester District Housing Strategy Priorities

1. To accelerate and to maximise the supply of high quality affordable housing across the District.
2. To improve the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households.
3. Supporting local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs.

4. To make best use of housing.
5. To engage with residents and create cohesive communities.

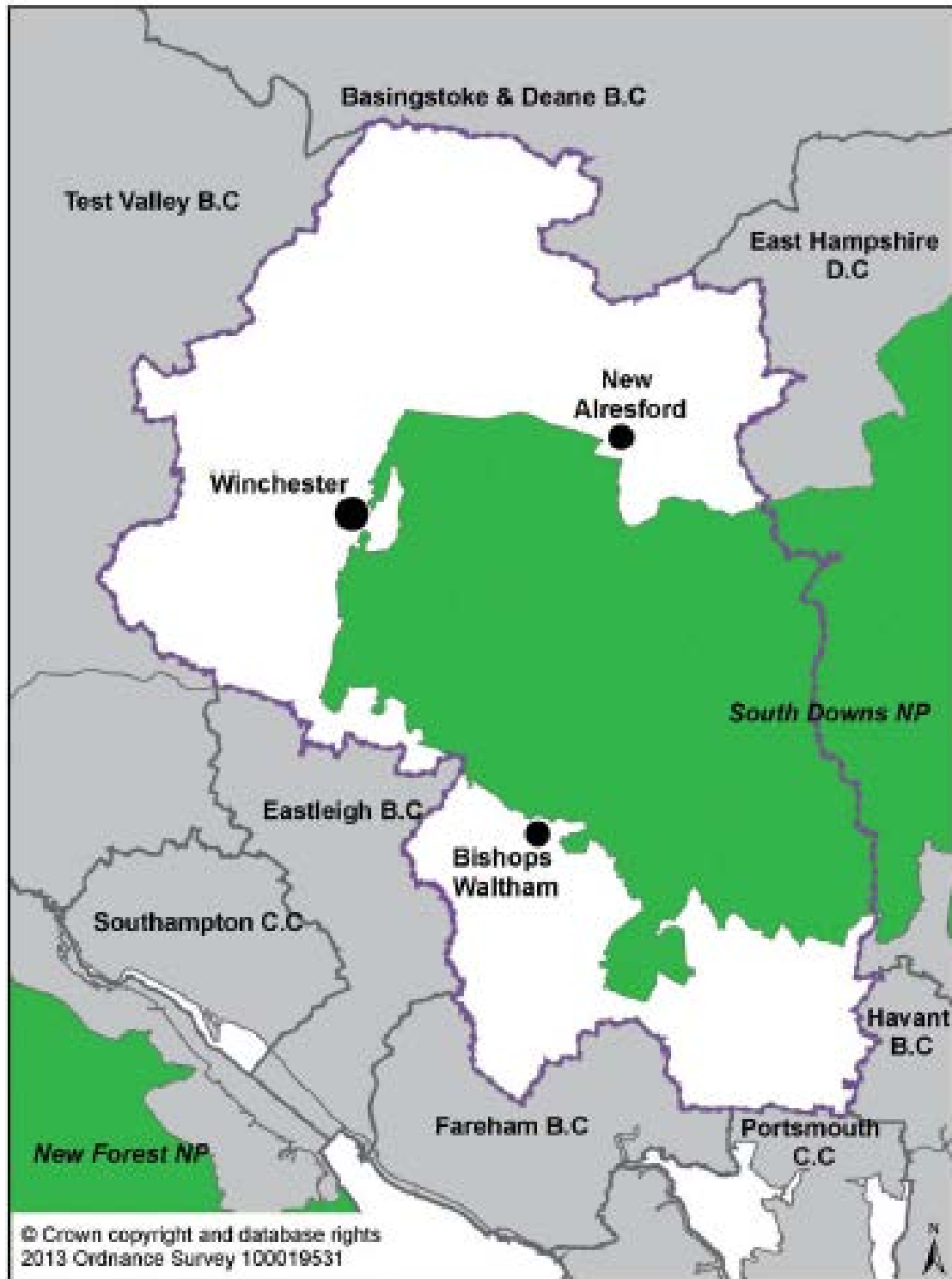
Cllr Caroline Horrill



Winchester City Council

Council Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing

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Map of Winchester District



- Key:**
-  Winchester District Boundary
 -  National Park

1. Introduction

Housing Strategy Vision

To support the creation of cohesive communities, helping everyone in the District to have a choice of high quality housing to meet their needs.

Winchester District is a large and varied District which encompasses a prosperous and historic county town and a flourishing business district at Whiteley. Surrounding these urban centres are many miles of unspoilt countryside, including parts of the South Downs National Park, punctuated by busy market towns and villages.

Although the District's population is around 122,000 people (just over 50,000 households), the wider market area's population is over 1.3 million. Its housing markets are diverse, with a well integrated sub-regional market in the south of the District, closely aligned to the South Hampshire urban areas, and several more localised markets around Winchester Town and the market towns and rural parts of the District.

These markets are characterised by good quality housing but very high housing costs, creating affordability problems for many households. This impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals, the sustainability of communities and affects the ability of the economy to change and grow. Inadequate housing impacts on economic prosperity and threatens the sustainability of local services.

It is important, therefore, to have adequate available sites for development and new homes that are affordable so that housing need does not outstrip housing supply.

However, meeting housing needs goes beyond building more homes. Building cohesive communities must also be a priority. In order to create such cohesion, it is important that support is provided to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our community. What and how new housing and housing services are provided will be fundamental to building communities and ensuring we have a strong and sustainable economy.

Everyone in the District, no matter who they are or where they live, must have the opportunity to enjoy a good quality of life now and in the future.

The 2017 White Paper *Fixing our broken housing market* recognises the difficulties created by Britain's poorly performing housing market. It aims to make housing more affordable and to provide security for households, seeing the construction of homes as the starting point. It wishes to see the creation of a housing market that is as fair for those who don't own their own homes as it is for those that do. This is a vision that resonates with ours and that we endorse.

In particular we support the encouragement for councils to build more homes and the ambition to tackle affordability by helping households priced out of the market. We also support the emphasis given to homes for rent, both in terms of providing more across sectors and ensuring that the right safeguards are in place to provide security for tenants, together with the desire to prevent homelessness.

It is of critical importance that the Government provides us with the tools to allow us to realise these ambitions and appreciates that the diversity of the housing markets across Britain means that a one size fits all approach is not the solution. Local problems and solutions must be identified locally. We are well placed to understand the challenges we have and to foster existing, and create new, relationships and partnerships to tackle them. This Strategy will act as the springboard.

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2. The Challenges

There are many challenges that face Winchester's housing market. Some of these are new challenges; some are becoming more serious as a result of inadequate attention in the past and changes in circumstances.

Winchester has a buoyant housing market and is an attractive place to invest for developers, owners and renters. The Local Plan creates a positive planning environment for that investment while planning to ensure local needs are met.

The benefits of a buoyant housing market are not, however, shared equally across our communities. **Housing costs, homelessness, the needs of elderly and vulnerable households are amongst challenges that are faced.** Many members of our community are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances and intervention is needed to support these individuals and to support Winchester achieve its ambitions.

Housing Strategy Primary Focus

Those who are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances.

This section expands on the key challenges and considerations which impact on achieving the above primary focus as follows:

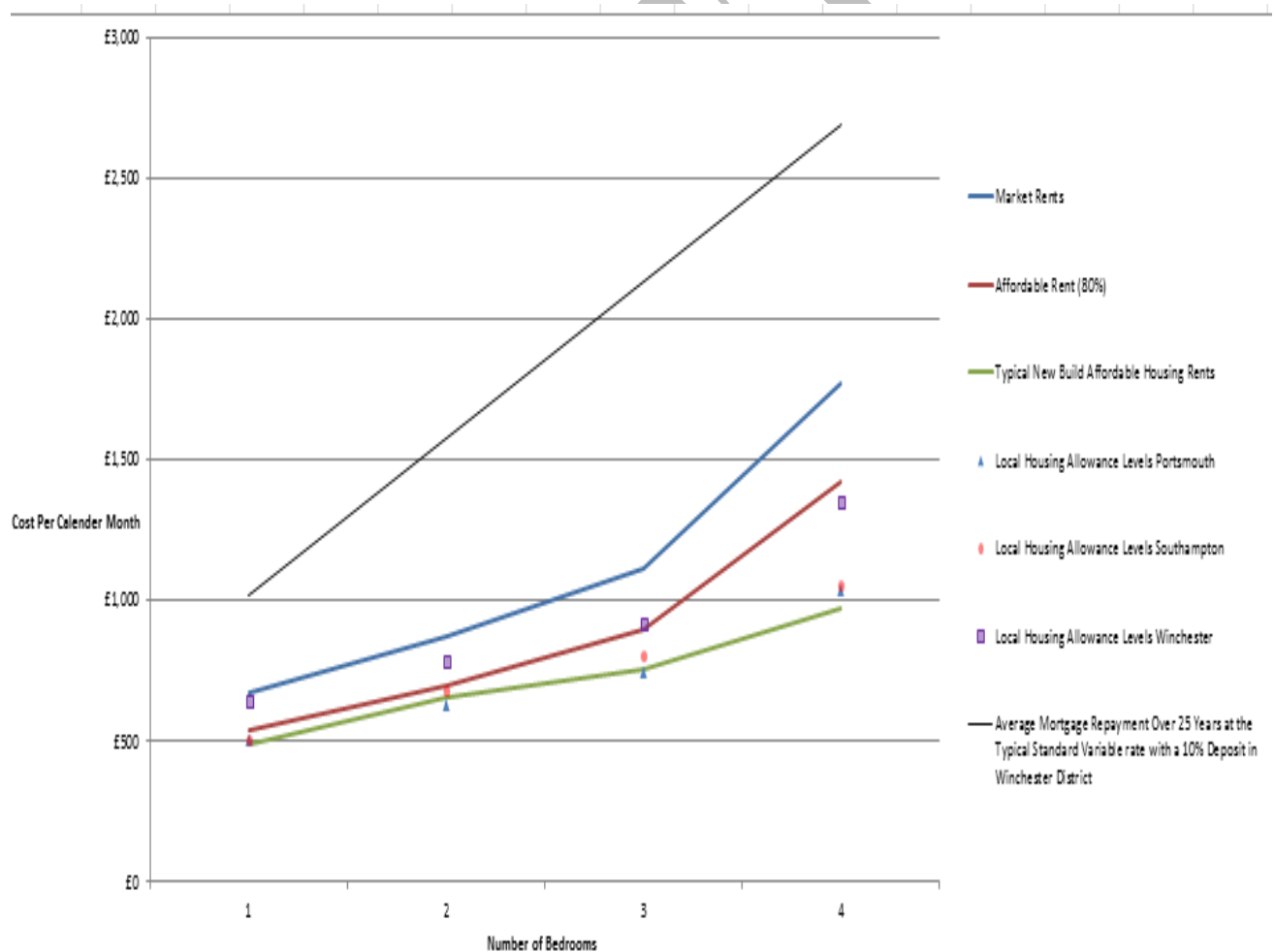
- Housing affordability
- Welfare Reform
- Local Plan provisions
- Inadequate housing options
- Matching supply and demand
- Meeting the needs of all household types
- Stock Condition & Energy Efficiency

Housing affordability

Housing affordability is the most significant challenge faced and the need for affordable housing is high. In recent years affordability has become an issue for a broader cross section of society and many households are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about the type or location of their home. This means newly forming and existing households are unable to afford suitable accommodation, including some working within lower paid jobs in health and social care, education, leisure and hospitality sectors. Households who would not traditionally have sought affordable housing are increasingly unable to access market housing. This impacts on individuals, the economy, the environment and wider society.

As in other parts of Hampshire, competition for homes continues to be high. However, a good transport network, in-migration of families from higher value areas who often have significant purchasing power and large numbers of students fuel local demand and drive up values. A consequence of this can be that local people are forced to move outside the District, away from employment opportunities and social networks. Alternatively, those who remain in the District are made to live in unsuitable housing conditions because they need to stay close to education or employment opportunities.

Average District property prices are around £500,000. A household income in excess of £60,000 pa is required to buy an entry level home whilst the figure stands at £30,000 pa for the private rental market. The household incomes of those securing shared ownership properties are typically in the region of £30,000 pa, many of those being small households. With average household incomes of a 2 adult household little over £20,000 pa, and a family little over £30,000 pa the affordability problem becomes evident.



Comparative Illustration of Relative Housing Costs (District)

New homes normally attract a premium over second hand resales. This can be sufficient to erode the benefits of discounts or incentives delivered through initiatives such as Starter Homes meaning that such products may do little to

improve affordability in the market, unless they deliver additional homes rather than substitute for alternative tenures.

Affordability can be particularly challenging for **rural** residents with residents often committing higher proportions of their incomes to housing costs. Resultantly, rural communities can become less diverse as younger people leave and older, wealthier, households arrive which can in turn have a negative impact on local businesses and services. New rural homes, such as those delivered through the **Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing** (HARAH), help meet specific rural needs. Newer initiatives, such as community led housing, also have the potential to do the same in both urban and rural areas.

Particular problems exist for newly forming households, with over 70% of new households unable to rent in the open market. Demand is high for rental properties from a range of sectors, including students, those requiring benefit support, relocating families and younger people at the start of their careers. Certain areas have high concentrations of privately rented student accommodation and houses in multiple occupation. This can affect the characteristics of those areas and impact on the supply of housing for other sectors of the community.

The affordability of **Affordable Rents** presents challenges. Homes provided at Affordable Rent levels provide income for reinvestment in new affordable homes. Yet, if rents are set too high the properties become unaffordable. Applying a common measure of affordability, no more than 33% of gross household income spent on housing, reveals that an 80% Affordable Rent, and sometimes rents at Local Housing Allowance levels, are unaffordable for much of the target market.

Of course, it is not just rents that impact on affordability. Other costs such as energy, water and repairs all can have significant impacts. A significant proportion of housing debt related enquires to Citizens Advice relate to these issues, with high proportion of those enquiries relating to private rented sector homes.

While homes for Affordable Rent are of the highest priority, in order to meet other needs and create cohesive communities it is important to recognise the challenges faced by those unlikely to secure such a home or who wish to access intermediate or low cost home ownership homes, for instance shared ownership or other parts of the rented sector.

Welfare Reform

Welfare reform is impacting on the affordability of homes and the type of homes demanded. The Social Sector Size Criteria is meaning that smaller homes are demanded in the affordable rented sector. Local Housing Allowances, Benefit Cap, restrictions to allowances at 2 dependants and Universal Credit entitlement levels impact on a range of households ability to afford to live in the District;

Single claimants – Under recent policy changes single applicants aged under 35 (without children) are restricted in relation to how much housing benefit they are eligible for. Under the new measures single applicants under 35 year old applicants (without children) will only be eligible for Local Housing Allowance rates for shared accommodation. This means that such applicants are not eligible for Local Housing Allowances rates of one, two, three or four bedroom properties. This is likely to lead to an increased demand for shared accommodation within a house or flat. Further proposed changes to entitlements for 18-21 year olds are likely to further diminish viable housing options and result in hidden youth homelessness.

Disabled claimants – The most vulnerable in our area reliant on disability benefits have been affected by welfare reform, including a reduction in Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) with the abolition of the work related element and in most cases, are not exempt from the social sector size criteria which may affect their ability to meet rental costs for properties not specifically designed for purpose.

Families – Due to rental levels and caps most existing 'out of work' tenants reliant on Housing Benefit who have more than 3 children will now be affected by the Benefit Cap which is applied to Housing Benefit. For new tenants/claimants Housing Benefit allowances are now restricted to 2 children, should the family have a third child their benefits will not increase. This means those housed/re-housed in larger properties to meet the needs of their household will not see an increase in Housing Benefit to cover the higher rent.

Local Plan provisions

The provision of The Local Plan's 12,500 new homes (2011 to 2031). The latest forecasts suggest that population of the district is set to grow by over 12,000 between 2017 and 2031 alone. New homes are needed to accommodate such population growth with the Local Plan serving as a mechanism which plans for the implementation of these new homes. Dwellings will be provided on a range of sites across the District, from single dwellings to much larger strategic provisions of several thousand homes at Waterlooville, Whiteley and Winchester Town where substantial new neighbourhoods are planned.

Many of these homes will be provided for owner occupation, although in recent years the private rented sector has become increasingly important. The provision of affordable housing as part of this overall supply is critical and Local Plan 1 policies, supported by Local Plan 2 policies, enable its provision. Priority is given to homes for Affordable Rent, with support being given for other affordable tenures such as those for low cost home ownership. Rural affordable housing provision, housing for private rent and specialist housing, for instance for those with additional support needs, is also supported.

Until very recently new affordable housing has been provided, in the main, by housing associations or similar organisations. The Council now has a very active building programme to ensure greater supply of affordable housing.

The Council's Self and Custom Build Register currently has over 100 individuals and associations registered indicating demand for these plots.

Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (adopted 2013)

Selected and summarised spatial planning strategy and objectives

- Residential development should meet a range of community housing needs and deliver a wide choice of homes, with priority given to maximising the provision of affordable housing.
- The provision of 12,500 new homes across the District by 2031, to include:
 - New neighbourhoods in *Winchester Town* at Barton Farm (2000 homes), and in the *South Hampshire Urban Area* at Waterlooville (3000 homes) and Whitely (3500 homes), and;
 - Further housing to meet the needs of the *Winchester Town, the Market Towns and Rural Area*.
- Development should provide a range of housing types, tenures and sizes and include market homes for sale, affordable homes, and homes attractive to the private rented sector.
- Specialist forms of accommodation, such as extra care housing for older persons, and homes for those with disabilities and support needs should be provided.
- Most new homes should be 2 and 3 bed houses.

The review of the Council's Local Plan will commence in 2018. This will include a review of policies relating to land supply, housing numbers and affordable housing policies.

Since the Local Plan was adopted in 2013 there have been changes in the local housing markets, partly as a consequence of economic factors, impacting on house prices and investor decisions, and partly as a result of Government policies and strategies, such as welfare reform, the National Planning Policy Framework and the 2017 White Paper *Fixing our broken housing market*.

Local Plan policies remain sound, providing certainty and direction, while allowing changing circumstances to be taken into account. The same is true of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (which will be

reviewed in 2017). Supported by the positive planning environment in Winchester, with Planning and Housing Teams working closely together, the policies continue to be successfully applied despite changing circumstances. Examples of this have been the switch in emphasis to 1 and 2 bedroom affordable accommodation, away from 2 and 3 bedroom homes, the approach taken to permitting low cost home ownership dwellings as part of rural exception sites and broadening the types of affordable tenure offered, for instance rent to buy and discounted market sale.

Always at the heart of these decisions has been the need to achieve local priorities, making sure that the type, affordability and tenure of affordable housing provided meets priority local needs. This approach will continue ahead of the review of planning policies and this Housing Strategy will be a material consideration in planning decisions.

The Local Plan update and review provides the opportunity to review the approach we are taking. Changes signalled at national level suggest a broadening of the affordable housing offer and begin to outline new methodologies for assessing housing need. The review process will need to ensure that new requirements are complied with and opportunities taken.

In order to achieve this Strategy's vision of creating cohesive communities and ensuring everyone has a choice of high quality housing to meet their needs we support this broadening of the offer. As noted in the Foreword and Introduction to this document, intervention is needed by the Council to ensure the interpretation of national ambitions reflect local circumstances so those that are the primary focus of this Strategy (those who are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances) are supported. The approach adopted in this Strategy and which will be developed and taken forward in the revised Local Plan is, and will be, based on sound local evidence and on locally agreed priorities.

Inadequate housing options

Inadequate housing options represent a threat to economic prosperity. Commercial and residential development need to be mutually supportive as the housing market impacts on economic performance. While the attractiveness of the area is a driver of attracting higher paid and higher skilled workers, affordability can impact on businesses deciding to locate or stay.

Homes are needed that encourage the wealth creators to locate and stay in the District. It is also important to ensure those active in the local economy, be it in the commercial world or providing services, can live in the District. This often means lower value homes for younger people seeking employment for

the first time or perhaps entrepreneurs considering starting up their own business.

Retail and hospitality economies are supported by the resident student population. However, those in lower paid jobs have particular difficulty in accessing the local housing market with consequent impacts on the economy and on transport and the environment due to resultant commuting patterns.

The **two universities** are of vital importance to Winchester through the contribution they make to the local economy, culture and vibrancy. They do, however, bring their own pressures to the local housing market. There are around 2,500 student beds across the town area ranging from purpose built student accommodation to shared accommodation in converted houses. Pressures are felt most strongly in Stanmore where family housing has been lost to such shared accommodation.

Matching Supply and Demand

Providing the right type of housing – matching demand with meeting peoples’ needs. Around 67% of homes are in owner occupation, with a roughly equal split of affordable and private rented homes. There was a downward trend in owner occupation between the last two Censuses.

The southern part of the District lies within a well integrated sub-regional housing market that extends east to west. The central and northern parts of the District contain a number of more fragmented local housing markets.

Currently, most households are aged over 30 and the District has a relatively high proportion of 1 and 2 person households, which is somewhat influenced by the presence of two universities and the type of households living in the town area. There is an increasing population of elderly people (including those over the age 80 years who are more likely to have support needs).

There are more family type households in the housing market areas outside the town, particularly in the southern sub-regional market.

Winchester 2017 Population

0-18	19-29	30-59	60-79	80+	Total
23.3%	11.7%	37.9%	20.7%	6.4%	100.0%

Household Size	Total
All categories	100.0%
1 person in household	27.4%
2 people in household	37.1%
3 people in household	14.3%
4 people in household	14.6%
5 + people in household	6.5%

The population is projected to increase by approximately 11,000 people between 2017 and 2022 with the age profile remaining broadly similar.

It is important to note that a high proportion of 1 and 2 person households does not directly translate into an identical demand for 1 and 2 bedroom homes, as people tend to consume as much housing as they can afford. Affordable housing allocation policies and welfare provisions mean there is a much closer correlation between household and property size in the affordable and private rented sectors.

Migration is a key determinant of population change with central and southern Hampshire, together with London being common sources of migrants. The relatively high levels of in-migrants between the ages of 25-44 years are notable. This may be a result of families with school age children making lifestyle choices and moving out of higher priced areas into the District. Their equity and purchasing ability can impact on the local market and contribute to the gentrification of some areas creating inflationary pressures. This can have adverse effects on local communities, making it hard for local households to compete in the housing market.

A significant proportion of the population is aged over 60 and a generational divide in wealth is impacting on the nature of housing demand in two principal ways: parents **downsizing** to unlock equity to assist children's housing costs, and a demand from younger people for rented properties. This approach has an added advantage of creating churn in the housing stock, releasing (sometimes a chain) of homes for new occupation.

In order to ensure most effective use of housing stock and to match supply and demand, many affordable housing providers already offer fixed term tenancies. As part of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 new provisions were made that will prevent local authorities in England from offering secure tenancies for life in most circumstances. Fixed term tenancies are regarded as being the main tenure type for social housing in the future.

In order to meet local housing needs effectively, and to design sustainably, **new homes must be fit for purpose**. Local Plan 1 policies aim to ensure a significant supply of 2 and 3 bedroom houses to reflect local demand. In the affordable sector, there has been a **trend towards providing 1 and 2 bedroom properties alongside family homes as a consequence of welfare reform**.

Local Plan 2 requires new affordable homes to be built to the **Nationally Described Space Standards** to ensure dwelling design reflects intended occupancy level, and to high standards of **accessibility and adaptability** (Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 standards apply to new affordable housing) to reflect the needs of all members of the community, including older persons and those with disabilities.

Meeting the needs of all household types

While the problem of access to suitable housing is common across this District, it is **vulnerable and disadvantaged households who are most adversely affected**. Welfare reform (see above) will particularly impact on such households.

The changing demographics of the area mean meeting the **needs of older persons will become increasingly important**. There has been a significant growth in those aged over 80 years in recent years. Although the needs of older people can often be met in their existing homes or by moving to more suitable mainstream housing in some cases, particularly as vulnerability increases, more specialised accommodation such as extra care is required. As noted above in the context of owner occupied housing, the churn in the housing stock that such moves create can assist others finding suitable homes. It is important to remember that a mix of people, housing types, sizes and tenures are ingredients of a cohesive community and that by ignoring such factors an exclusive community can be created which can undermine the aim of creating inclusiveness.

People with disabilities are a significant group within the District's population with some of these households having specific housing requirements, including those relating to mobility. Disability is often linked to age and therefore levels of disability are likely to increase as the population ages. As outlined above, welfare reform has implications for some people with a disability.

While **supported housing** of various forms is provided across the District the lack of move-on accommodation hampers its effective use and means households are unable to access accommodation they need. Furthermore, there needs to be greater co-ordination between agencies groups involved in supported housing provision.

Recent years have seen the needs of the most vulnerable groups increasing; in particular the **homeless**, rough sleepers and individuals with complex needs, such as mental health and substance dependency. While numbers are relatively low their needs are severe.

Specific needs have also been identified for **gypsy and travellers and travelling show people**, where inadequate provision is currently made to meet their needs. These needs will be met through the planning system.

Stock Condition & Energy Efficiency

The District's **housing stock** is generally very good, across all sectors. Homes are predominantly of post Second World War construction. Council and other affordable housing has achieved the Decent Home Standard. It is important to ensure that **Council homes**, and those owned by **registered providers** are maintained to high standards.

In the **private rented sector** homes are generally of a good standard, and programmes of accreditation operated by the Council have helped ensure high management standards. There are high levels of houses in multiple occupation in the Winchester Town area, due to a significant extent to students.

Owner occupied homes are also generally of a high standard. There are, however, instances of poor property **energy efficiency** in some types of housing, for instance those without mains gas in rural areas, and **fuel poverty** for some low income households.

Most private rented sector properties are owned by landlords with modest property portfolios. However, there are examples of larger scale landlords, both in the student and general private rented sector. Some privately owned properties have the poorest energy efficiency. Newer affordable housing has been built to higher standards which benefits the household as well as the environment. The Local Plan sets ambitious low carbon policies for all new homes.

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Housing Strategy Priorities and Objectives

Priority 1

To accelerate and to maximise the supply of high quality housing across the District.

Key objectives

Support the creation of cohesive communities, in particular by ensuring a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures are provided that meets a range of needs in a way that adopts good urban design principles to support this objective.

1. Work with providers to increase the supply of high quality affordable homes of a range of sizes, types and tenures to meet the diverse needs of our communities and sustain the vibrancy of the local economy, with priority being given to homes for Affordable Rent.
2. Develop Council homes by providing homes that would not otherwise be built and by ensuring tenure mix prioritises Affordable Rent where other providers are unable to do this.
3. **Double the supply of Council homes built in the period 2017-2020.**
4. **Establish a housing company or other specialist vehicle to support development** of affordable and private rented homes.
5. To lobby and challenge the Government to change its approach to Housing Revenue Account Debt Caps in order to allow the Council to provide more new homes.
6. Review the impact of affordable rents on demand and develop an approach to rent setting for affordable homes to ensure properties are affordable to target markets.
7. Adopt an innovative approach to new affordable housing provision, including exploring the opportunities for **shared ownership** housing, modern methods of construction, community led housing, **custom/self building** and housing types to meet specific markets, such as, supported housing (including extra care and for those with a learning disability), downsizers, sharers & newly forming households.
8. Identify opportunities to increase the supply for private rented (including multi-family development) and student rented accommodation.
9. When possible, other than for 1 bed properties, plan for houses rather than flats to be developed.
10. Identify opportunities for the disposal of Council owned land and property for housing development.

Priority 2 - To improve the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households.

Key objectives

1. Drive down homelessness across the District and support partner agencies in the drive for an improved life for those in need.
2. Review the Council's Older Persons' Housing Strategy and enable those with care and support needs to have a choice of affordable accommodation and support that suits their needs and promotes independence, doing so in partnership with Hampshire County Council and West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group together with other stakeholders in the statutory and voluntary sectors.
3. Promote independence and support the creation of accessible homes and accessible environments, in particular helping people with disabilities and those with support needs get the accommodation and support they need.
4. Increase the provision of supported and move-on housing, doing so in partnership with the Hampshire County Council and West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group together with other stakeholders in the statutory and voluntary sectors.
5. Through the planning system meet the needs of gypsies, travellers, and travelling show people.
6. Support our residents with the impact of welfare reform.

Priority 3 - To support local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs.

Key objectives

1. Provide good access to affordable housing options across a range of tenures, including affordable and sub-market rent (within Local Housing Allowance rates), market rent, shared ownership and student housing.
2. Create a Council operated Open Market Shared Ownership scheme to assist eligible households buy existing homes.
3. Effectively communicate housing options to those in housing need.
4. Provide an effective, fair and transparent process for accessing affordable housing.
5. Provide residents with direct access to affordable private rented housing (within Local Housing Allowance rates).
6. Become experts in finding innovative solutions to support residents trying to buy their own home.

7. Review the Strategic Tenancy Policy to enable tenancies to be offered that support the objective of creating cohesive communities, providing tenants with an appropriate level of security while creating flexibility in the affordable housing stock.
8. Develop and implement a policy for granting fixed term tenancies for Council homes, taking into account the Strategic Tenancy Policy.

Priority 4 - To make best use of housing.

Key objectives

1. Deliver good housing stock condition and energy performance for Council owned dwellings that meet the Decent Homes Standard.
2. Where appropriate, to restrict permitted development rights in Winchester so that new Houses in Multiple Occupation require planning permission.
3. Promote downsizing of underoccupied Council homes through the use of incentive and other initiatives to assist tenants to move to accommodation more appropriate to their housing need.
4. Assist tenants in extensively adapted homes who no longer have need for the adaptations to move to more appropriate accommodation.
5. Develop strategies, policies and actions for private sector housing, empty properties and HRA asset management.
6. Maintain and improve the standard of the private sector housing stock to ensure it is fit for purpose and helps to meet the challenges of climate change.
7. Understand better the impact of fuel poverty on households.
8. To ensure the Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy supports Housing Strategy priorities.
9. To review the Council's Empty Property Strategy

Priority 5 - To engage with residents and create cohesive communities.

Key objectives

1. Be proactive in our tenant engagement, achieving effective representation and insight across all tenant and customer groups.
2. Ensure new development is planned with the involvement of local

stakeholders and provided in a way that adds value to communities, particularly by supporting new communities in major development areas establish themselves.

3. Work with local communities and their representatives to help them identify local priorities and find sustainable solutions, increasing their capacity to resolve issues themselves.
4. Ensure methods of engagement take account of the need to involve hard to reach groups, in particular those with protected characteristics and those who are vulnerable or excluded.

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3. Implementation

The Housing Strategy will be implemented through the actions and investment of Winchester City Council along with a range of stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and through a number of partnerships, such as HARA and PUSH; although it's recognised that some partnership arrangements may alter during the life of the strategy as a consequence of devolution. Relationships with communities will be key to understanding and meeting needs.

The principal route for investment will be from the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA). We will work with Government and other partners with the aim of securing further resources for the HRA through raising or removing the debt cap and intend to create a specialist vehicle to create investment capacity outside the HRA.

We will also aim to secure resources for the District through Government's specialised funds such as those related to community housing, self/custom build, infrastructure funding and homelessness prevention.

Inward investment by others will be important means of achieving objectives, including private sector investment, for instance housebuilders and institutional investors, registered providers and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), particular through their Affordable Housing Programme, as well as targeted initiatives. We will work closely with the HCA to secure funding for the Council and support others in their bids. The voluntary sector will be of critical importance to achieving ambitions, utilising their expertise and energy, as well as financial resources.

The objectives contained in the Strategy have been translated into specific actions in the Action Plans in supporting documents which are set out in diagram on page 26 'The Housing Strategy in Context', and it is these actions that will deliver change.

Progress of these actions will be regularly monitored, with the Council and Assistant Director (Chief Housing Officer) taking the lead and taking responsibility for responding to changing circumstances.

4. Monitoring and Review

Some of the objectives and actions in this Strategy are short term and will be achieved quickly. Others will take many years to realise. It is important to be aware that there are many influences that mean the needs of our communities will change over time. The Housing Strategy must respond to these changing needs.

There are current uncertainties arising from the implications around the exit from the European Union and the degree to which this will have consequences for the local economy and for the local housing market. The provision of new housing has a role to play in not only provided much needed homes, but boosting local economies. Construction not only creates jobs for those directly involved in building but provides a stimulus for associated trades and professions, as well as homes for those who can spend and work to support the local economy. The links between housing and local economic growth ambitions must be closer than ever in the future, and must include links with Local Economic Partnerships and to Government initiatives aimed at stimulating growth.

Providing housing is about much more than putting a roof over someone's head. It is central to individuals' health and wellbeing and it will be important to develop stronger links in this area.

Government borrowing and spending is under continual pressure. The welfare system has undergone radical change and this continues.

However emerging Government policy around housing clearly sets a long term priority to increase house building through accelerated construction investment. We must capitalise on the opportunities to influence the use of affordable housing and the ability to build Council Homes. Winchester City Council has a significant leadership role to play in helping communities shape their future

The Housing Strategy will be kept under review so that it is responsive to the changing world, changing local needs and changing ambitions and so it creates a framework to ensure change in Winchester is for the better.

Appendix 1 – Glossary (non legal definitions)

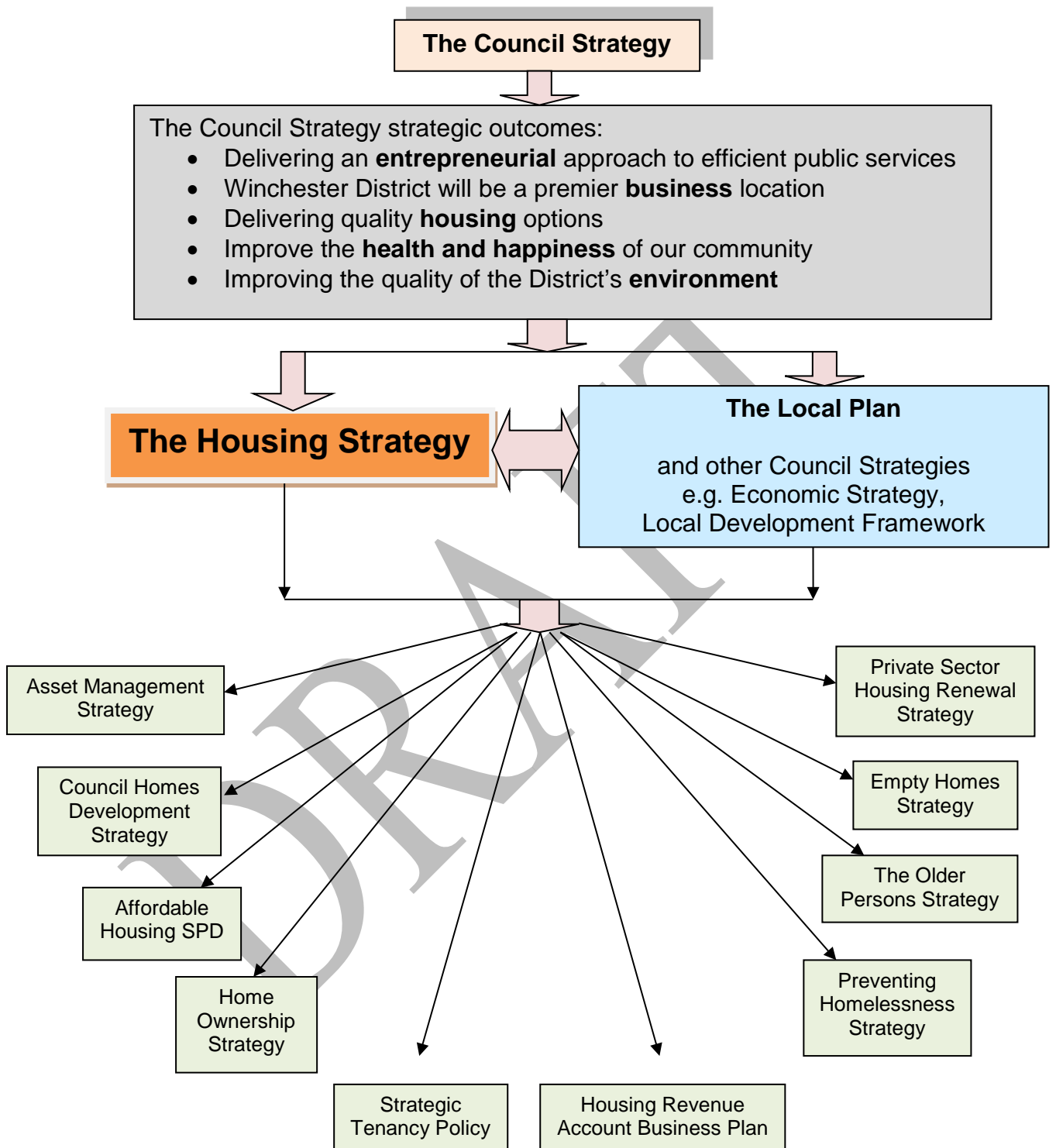
Affordable Housing	Housing provided with subsidy for people who are unable to resolve their housing requirements in the local housing market because of the relationship between housing costs and incomes. This can be social rented housing, affordable rented (at rents of up to 80% of the local market rent) and intermediate.
Affordable Rents	Rents charged on certain kinds of affordable housing. Rent controls require rents are no more than 80% of the local market rent.
Community Cohesion	Community cohesion, despite there being no definitive definition, is known to be characterised by shared interest in and access to the local area from those who come from a range of different household compositions, backgrounds and tenures. Along with this such cohesion is also characterised by an increased acceptance and tolerance of those from differing backgrounds and large support networks to create an inclusive space for all.
Decent Homes	A national standard /aimed at improving the supply of affordable and certain privately owned stock.
Disability	The disadvantage or restriction of activity and opportunity – caused by a society which takes little or no account of the barriers faced by people who have ‘impairments’ and thus excludes them from mainstream activity.
Disadvantage	Some people are ‘disadvantaged’ by the circumstances they find themselves in – often by a combination of social and practical factors. As a result they find it difficult to obtain services or goods on the same basis as other groups or individuals. People more likely to suffer disadvantage are often described as ‘vulnerable’.
Fixed Term / Flexible Tenancies	A new form of tenancy introduced by the Localism Act 2011 which can be used by local authorities. A flexible tenancy is a time-limited form of secure tenancy and carries many of the same rights a secure tenancy.
Fuel Poverty	Since 2014 the definition of Fuel Poverty has changed from that based on a household that spends more than 10% of its income (including benefits) on all household energy fuel use, to a new definition based on Low Income High Costs (LIHC). Under the new Low Income High Cost definition a

	<p>household is considered to be fuel poor where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level)</i> • <i>Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line</i>
Gentrification	<p>Gentrification may be defined as the process in which one socioeconomic group is displaced by the inflow of those tending to be from a higher socioeconomic background. The result of this influx of those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds inhabiting a given area is rising house prices, increased investment in housing and services and an increased cost and range of goods and services available. The process can result in those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds being priced out of a local area.</p>
HARAH	<p>The Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing. A partnership between local authorities (East Hampshire DC, Basingstoke and Deane BC, Hart BC, New Forest DC, Test Valley BC and Hampshire CC); Action Hampshire, South Downs and New Forest National Park Authorities, the Homes and Community Agency and Hampshire Village Homes that has the responsibility for delivering affordable rural housing.</p>
Homelessness	<p>A person who has no home available to occupy, but not necessarily rough sleepers or young people sleeping on the streets.</p>
Housing Company	<p>Wholly or partially Council owned company to deliver private sector housing. Surpluses are reinvested in line with Council priorities.</p>
Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	<p>Sets out the Council's strategy for its own housing stock</p>
Intermediate housing	<p>Housing at prices or rents above those of social rent but below market prices or rents. Housing can include shared ownership / equity and intermediate rent.</p>
Local Housing Allowance	<p>Is used to work out how much housing benefit someone can get if they rent their home from a private landlord.</p> <p>This is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where people live in the UK • whether they live in shared accommodation • the number of bedrooms entitled to under

	the rules
Local Plan	The Local Plan is the long term strategic plan for development within Winchester District, and includes the strategic vision, objectives and the key policies needed to achieve sustainable development in Winchester District to 2031.
Market Rent	The amount for which a property is leased
Move-on housing	Homes that people who have been in hostels for homeless people or temporary accommodation can move to on a more permanent basis.
Open market shared ownership scheme	A Winchester City Council scheme to support households to purchase their own homes
Protected Characteristic	<p>Under the Equality Act (2010) it is illegal for a person to be discriminated against on the basis of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age; • Disability; • Gender Reassignment; • Marriage and Civil Partnership; • Pregnancy and Maternity; • Race; • Religion or belief; • Sex; • Sexual Orientation. <p>The council also has a duty to positively promote equality which involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics. • Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people. • Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
PUSH	Partnership for South Hampshire; a partnership of councils that aims for economically led growth.
Registered Provider	Provider registered with Homes and Community

	Agency most commonly a housing association.
Self/Custom Build	Where someone directly organises the design and construction or completion of their own home ¹ or works with a specialist developer to deliver or complete their own home.
Social sector size criteria	Restrictions to Housing Benefit for working age customers living in the social rented sector who are occupying a larger property than their household size requires.
Supported Housing	Term used to describe any housing for vulnerable people that includes some form of support service.
Starter Homes	New homes or new conversions sold at a minimum discount of 20% below full market value ⁶
Vulnerable	<p>The term vulnerable has two principle meanings in a housing context:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In terms of homelessness legislation a person is 'vulnerable' if he or she is less able to fend for themselves than an ordinary homeless person and so will suffer injury or detriment in circumstances in which the ordinary homeless person would not. 2. In terms of decent homes in the private sector, vulnerable households have been defined as those in receipt of at least one of the principal means tested or disability related benefits.

Appendix 2 - The Housing Strategy in Context



Appendix 2 - Consultation Issue Summarised and Grouped by Priority

Priority 1: Accelerating/Maximising Supply

- More new homes are needed
 - Increase density and find more land
 - Influence planning policy
 - Seek out new council build opportunities, self build etc...
 - As part of cohesive communities - including mixed tenure, mixed income, mixed age, mixed size, infrastructure, services, keyworkers
 - Supported housing as part of cohesive communities e.g. extra care; learning disability
 - Public sector land opportunities through HCC/One Public Estate (OPE)
- Homes need to be affordable – so we need to decide what that means
 - Study affordability and develop a rent setting policy (role out to RPs)
 - Rent setting approach at different price points for different markets (in/out of work) (See Priority 3)
 - Consider Welfare Reform
 - Does WCC want to make money?
- Identify and understand the markets (See Priority 3)
 - Meet a variety of needs – broaden our market offer (e.g. younger workers; graduates)
 - Homes at different affordability levels
 - Different product, different marketing, different register/allocations policy/eligibility at each price point
 - Work with Registered Providers/Market
 - Enter new markets – Private Rented Sector/Shared Ownership/market, niche markets (young sharers/young workers/graduates)?
- Redefine what a “nice” house is.
 - Consider the role of small homes with communal spaces
 - Better meeting younger persons needs; HMO alternatives - Young persons aspirations (See Priority 2)
 - Modern Methods of Construction (MMCs) etc...
- Create churn in the stock (See Priority 2 & 3)
 - Link to tenancy policy – fixed term
 - Are downsizers drying up?
 - Create an attractive general needs downsizer product
 - Build more extra care
 - Better meeting older persons needs

Where will policies/actions be embedded?

- Portfolio Holder Plan/Business/Service Plans
- Affordable Housing SPD (Supplementary Planning Document)
- Tenancy Strategy
- Local Plan
- Council House Development Strategy
- Scheme of Allocations
- Benefit's strategies?

Priority 2: Improving Housing Circumstances – vulnerable & excluded

- Older Persons
 - More extra care (HCC capital grants available)
 - Are downsizers drying up?
 - New attractive homes for downsizers
 - Public sector land opportunities through HCC/One Public Estate (OPE)
 - See Priority 1 & 3

- Young People
 - Alternative to HMOs
 - Impacted by Welfare Reform
 - See Priority 1

- Homes for those with a learning disability
 - HCC capital grants available
 - Public sector land opportunities through HCC/ One Public Estate (OPE)

- Advice provision
 - What, who by, co-ordination

- Develop health/social care links
 - Home from Hospital
 - Move-on accommodation
 - Develop statutory/voluntary sector relationship
 - Public sector land opportunities through HCC/ One Public Estate (OPE)
 - HCC capital grants for older persons/learning disability

Where will policies/actions being embedded?

- Portfolio Holder plan/Business/Service Plans
- Scheme of Allocations
- Older Persons Strategy
- Tenancy Strategy
- Council House Development Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy

Priority 3: Accessing Housing

- Is HHC working?
- Does the register capture an idea of all those who needs can't be met by the market?
- Meet a broader range of market needs (See Priority 1)
- Different products at different price point with different groups eligible/ (See Priority 1)

Where will policies/actions being embedded?

- Portfolio Holder Plan/Business/Service Plans
- Scheme of Allocations

Priority 4: Best Use of Housing

- Local energy company/energy purchasing club
- Energy efficiency before cosmetic improvement in Council stock
- Downsizing (See Priority 1 & 2)
- Funding play areas and shared open space
- Tackle empty homes
- City lets for downsizer owner occupiers

Where will policies/actions being embedded?

- Portfolio Holder Plan/Business/Service Plans
- Asset Management Strategy
- Council House Development Strategy
- City Lets

Priority 5: Engagement - Consolidated Consultation Issues

- Ensure policies and actions consider/engage excluded groups/protected characteristics
- Use focus groups
- Ensure clear issues to debate
- Give good feedback
- Use tenant to tenant engagement
- Need to have someone to raise queries with
- Personalise contact
- Manage expectations about service delivery
- Signpost to support/ village agents good model
- Increase frequency of tenant conference
- Use digital media to communicate, but also hard copies
- Transport needs important
- Events should have food/activities for children – free entry
- Find alternative words to “survey”/consultation – puts people off
- Infrastructure needed (especially schools) early in development (e.g. Major Development Areas)

Where will policies/actions being embedded?

- Portfolio Holder Plan/Business/Service Plans
- Tenant Engagement Strategy
- Communication Plans