

# Chichester District Council

CABINET

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## Housing Strategy Review

### 1. Contacts

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### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. To endorse the review of the Housing Strategy.
- 2.2. To approve the recommended range of options for future housing delivery as set out in section 6 of appendix 1.
- 2.3. To approve the proposed changes to the capital investment programme as set out in 6.1 below.
- 2.4. To note the progress achieved in delivering the existing targets in the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan at appendix 3 and to endorse the new target dates.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. In September 2013 the council adopted a new housing strategy covering the period 2013-2018 and a capital investment plan to support the priorities set out in the strategy. The new strategy took account of the main local and national issues likely to affect Chichester district over the strategy period, identified the key challenges and explained how the council intends to use its resources to address housing needs. Detailed targets for delivering the objectives were set out in the Housing Delivery Plan, and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was requested to review the plan and its progress annually.
- 3.2. Last year a review of the Housing Delivery targets was undertaken with a commitment to carry out a more extensive review of the Housing Strategy in 2015 to take account of new government policy following the election and to reflect the findings of the Housing Condition Stock Modelling.
- 3.3. The Housing Strategy review (appendix 1) sets out:
  - Progress against the current strategy
  - Arising local and national issues
  - Implications and key challenges for the next 5 years
  - Proposals for future priorities
  - Future housing delivery

- Proposed allocation of Capital Funding
- 3.4. Government priorities now focus on increasing the supply of housing, including low cost home ownership and starter homes. Over the next 5 years there is likely to be an increase in the supply of these homes provided by the housing market. At the same time the supply of affordable rented housing is expected to decline. The council may no longer be able to insist on a quota of affordable rented homes being provided on new market sites and existing affordable rented homes are likely to be lost through the Right to Buy. However, the Council will still have the same duties to house vulnerable households and this is likely to put pressure on the housing register and existing housing services.
  - 3.5. Potential affordable housing delivery options that have been considered or are currently being investigated are tabled in appendix 2.

#### **4. Outcomes to be achieved**

- 4.1. An updated Housing Strategy Delivery Plan which reflects changes in government policy and updated priorities.
- 4.2. A flexible range of options to maximise delivery of affordable housing to best meet local housing needs and a capital funding programme which supports the priorities set out in the housing strategy.

#### **5. Proposals**

- 5.1. It is proposed that the current four key priorities in the strategy are still relevant.
  - Maximise the supply of local homes to meet the needs of local people.
  - Make the most effective use of existing stock, whilst maintaining sustainable communities.
  - Enable local people to find their own solutions.
  - Provide additional support for those that most need it.

These should be maintained, the affordable housing targets retained and the updated Housing Strategy Delivery Plan endorsed to reflect priorities over the remaining strategy period. These include:

- Strengthening the evidence base of local need and affordability
- Supporting opportunities for intermediate and starter home housing to support the local economy and growth, whilst ensuring they are affordable to and accessible by local households.
- Extending Homefinder, the Council's in-house lettings agency and reducing management charges to incentivise and retain landlords.
- Continuing to explore the options for affordable housing delivery to meet the needs of those unable to purchase and making best use of the council's resources.
- Providing advice and support to communities to meet their own housing needs through registered providers or community land trusts.
- Setting up a custom build and self-build register.
- Working with the well-being team to address excess cold and fuel poverty – a priority for the Private Sector Renewal Strategy.

- 5.2. The Housing Strategy Delivery Plan has been reviewed and Appendix 3 provides details of performance against milestones and targets. New targets and actions are proposed supporting new priorities identified by the Housing Strategy review and are shown in italics.

## **6. Resource and legal implications**

- 6.1. The Housing Strategy review at appendix 1, section 7 sets out the proposed reallocation of existing resources.
- 6.2. It is proposed that the mortgage rescue fund be renamed the Homeless Prevention Fund and that the use of these funds is widened to include preventing homelessness as a result of the welfare reforms.
- 6.3. £2,626,613 remains in the current Affordable Housing Delivery Fund, comprising £2m capital funds and £626,613 commuted sums. It is proposed to split this into two separate funds:
  1. The Affordable Housing Grant Fund – the £626,613 commuted sums previously approved by cabinet together with a further £743,675 of commuted sums received since 2013. These funds are to be used to grant fund affordable housing provided by registered providers and community land trusts.
  2. The Affordable Housing Capital Fund –the £2m already allocated to affordable housing delivery, the unspent Equity Loan Scheme Part 2 funds of £500,000 and receipts received from the sale of the Church Road site. To be used as a recyclable loan fund to enable the delivery of affordable housing by registered providers and community land trusts.
- 6.4. Finally it is proposed to use the unspent Equity Loan Scheme Part 1 funds of £202,875 to address excess cold and fuel poverty issues identified in the draft Private Sector Renewal Strategy and subject to a further report to be taken to Cabinet in March.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1. This review has been considered and shaped by discussions with the Chichester Housing Delivery Partnership, corporate management team and at a cabinet strategic briefing meeting. Consultation has included the housing operations team, the planning policy team, economic development, the Housing Benefits Manager and any relevant comments have been included in the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan review in Appendix 3: There have also been meetings with the National Community Land Trust Network and Wickham Community Land Trust.
- 7.2. On 12 January 2016 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considered the Housing Strategy review, together with the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan and endorsed the new target dates set within the delivery plan. OSC recommended to Cabinet that the recommended options for future housing delivery, together with capital investment, be supported.

## 8. Community impact and corporate risks

8.1. These proposals will have a positive impact on local people and communities through the provision of affordable housing and delivery of the housing strategy objectives.

## 9. Other implications

<b>Crime &amp; Disorder:</b>	None
<b>Climate Change:</b>	None
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact:</b>	None
<b>Safeguarding and Early Help:</b>	None

## 10. Appendices

10.1. The Housing Strategy review.

10.2. Housing delivery options.

10.3. The Housing Strategy Delivery Plan - Review of current performance December 2015.

## 11. Background Papers

11.1 None