

## Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2015-16

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Report (as at 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2015)
1	General	Review the Housing Strategy 2009-2012 and produce an updated Housing Strategy for 2014-2017, following a consultation exercise on a Draft Housing Strategy	Director of Communities	<del>Mar 2016</del> July 2016	<b>Delayed</b> – The Housing Portfolio Holder has previously determined that the next Housing Strategy should not be drafted until the Council's new Draft Local Plan has been published. Since production of the Council's Draft Local Plan is not now likely to be published until around July 2016, the timescale for producing the new Housing Strategy has also had to slip.
2	Local Plan	Complete the gathering of information, including the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), to form the evidence on which key decisions will be taken as part of the Local Plan.	Asst. Director (Policy Planning & Economic Devt)	<del>Under Review</del> July 2016	<b>In Progress</b> - An updated joint SHMA, covering 4 local authority districts, is currently in preparation. Work on the SHMA began last year and a draft report was prepared at the end of 2014. However, in early 2015, two new relevant sets of data were released covering 2012-based Household Projections and a new 2014-based run of the East of England Forecasting Model economic projections. These new datasets, as well as an analysis of other inter-Censal data, need to be incorporated into the new SHMA, in order to make it as robust as possible, and members have asked officers to discuss this latest information with SHMA partner authorities, and undertake this additional analysis as part of the SHMA.
3	Local Plan	Agree on objectively assessed Housing and Employment Need for the Local Plan Period.	Asst. Director (Policy Planning & Economic Devt)	<del>Under Review</del> Spring 2016	<b>Not yet required</b> – This work will follow on from completion of the SHMA (see (2) above). Once an Objectively Assessed Housing Need figure is established for the SHMA area apportionment of this figure will need to be agreed between the 4 SHMA partners. Agreement on apportionment is unlikely to be reached until after EFDC has completed its Green Belt Review (anticipated December 2015).



4	Local Plan	Complete a District-Wide Viability Assessment on viable levels of affordable housing provision within developments	Asst. Director (Policy Planning & Economic Devt)	<del>Under Review</del> Spring 2016	<b>In Progress</b> – The Council’s consultants have produced their Draft Stage 1 Report, on which officers have commented. The final version is expected in early June 2015. A presentation on the findings was given to all members on 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2015. Stage 2 of the Viability Assessment will be undertaken once the Council’s proposals for its new Local Plan are more advanced.
5	Local Plan	Agree a Draft Local Plan (Preferred Options) and undertake the appropriate Sustainability Appraisal	Asst. Director (Policy Planning & Economic Devt)	<del>Under Review</del> Spring 2016	<b>Not yet required</b> – The Draft Plan will be formulated (accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal) once all the required evidence has been gathered, including the SHMA, and the Objectively Assessed Housing Need has been established.
6	Local Plan	Undertake a Consultation Exercise on the Local Plan Preferred Options Draft	Asst. Director (Policy Planning & Economic Devt)	<del>Under Review</del> July 2016	<b>Not yet required</b> – This will be undertaken once the Draft Plan has been published.
7	Local Plan	Submit the Final Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for an Examination in Public	Asst. Director (Policy Planning & Economic Devt)	<del>Under Review</del> Sept 2017	<b>Not yet required</b> – This will be undertaken once the consultation on the Draft Plan has been completed and the Council has agreed its Pre-Submission Local Plan.
8	Housing Market	Consider subscribing to the Hometrack Service to provide ongoing housing market intelligence for planning and housing purposes	Director of Communities / Forward Planning Manager	<del>March 2015</del> Sept 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – Housing and Planning Officers have received a presentation from Hometrack, and their service appears to meet the Council’s needs. Planning Officers are currently in discussions with officers from neighbouring councils to consider a possible joint/bulk subscription, which would reduce the costs to the Council.

9	Regeneration	Work in partnership with Essex County Council, Epping Town Council and other partners to commence a sustainable regeneration scheme for the St Johns Area of Epping, in accordance with the adopted Design and Development Brief, which includes an appropriate amount of market and affordable housing	Director of Neighbourhoods	Dec 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – The Council has selected a preferred developer following a competitive process and has agreed key terms. Discussions are currently in progress with regard to the legal documentation and it is hoped that completion will take place during Summer 2015.
10	Affordable Housing Provision	Work with Moat Housing to commence the development of the Council-owned difficult-to-let garage site at Vere Road, Loughton to provide 15 new affordable rented flats and an additional 14 parking spaces for private development on the adjacent site of the former Sir Winston Churchill PH.	Director of Communities	Dec 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – The Cabinet has agreed the key terms for the provision of a 125 year lease to Moat Housing. Following approval from its officer committee, Moat now needs to obtain approval from its Board to undertake the development. Once approval has been received, Moat will prepare and submit a planning application. Part of this process will include an early discussion with the two ward members on the proposed design, as agreed by the Housing Portfolio Holder. EFDC's Legal Service has been instructed to draft the required lease.
11	Affordable Housing Provision	Work with housing associations and developers to complete the development of 107 new affordable homes for rent and shared ownership by September 2015 at the following non-Council owned sites: (a) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell – 52 new homes (b) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell – 17 new homes (c) St. Johns School – 38 new homes	Director of Communities	Sept 2015	<b>Partly Achieved</b> – The 69 new affordable homes at the former Jennikings Nursery and Manor Road Garden Centre sites have now all been completed. The 11 affordable homes forming Phase 1 of the St Johns School development are due for completion in June 2015, and the remaining 27 affordable homes under Phase 2 are due for completion in September 2015.

12	Affordable Housing Provision	Seek planning permission for residential development at the Council's Pyrles Lane Nursery site, Loughton, including the provision of at least 40% affordable housing, by addressing the issues resulting in the previous planning permission refusal	Director of Neighbourhoods	<del>April 2015</del> June 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – The design for the revised scheme is currently being finalised and a new outline planning application is due to be submitted in June 2015. At its meeting on 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2015, the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee will be considering a recommendation that, if outline planning application is granted and the Cabinet subsequently decides to sell the site on the open market, the sale be subject to a requirement that the required affordable housing element (expected to be between 40-50% of the total number of properties) be sold to the Council on practical completion, on agreed terms (to be set out in a separate Development Agreement) to be approved by the Cabinet when considering the sale of the site.
13	Affordable Housing Provision	Consider whether to undertake a Phase 3 of the Open Market Home Ownership Scheme with B3Living - to enable first-time buyers in the District to purchase a property of their choice from the open market through shared ownership, funded jointly by the Council, B3Living and the applicants	Director of Communities	<del>April 2015</del> Aug 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – The final sales under Phase 2 are almost at completion. A recent analysis has shown that the Council's investment in each of the first 10 properties provided under the Scheme, up to and including 2013/14, has increased by an estimated 21 % (£115,343) - from £552,015 to £115,343 - since the first property was purchased in March 2012. The Director of Communities is currently in discussions with B3Living over the potential for undertaking a Phase 3 and, if it is felt this would be appropriate, a report will be submitted to Cabinet accordingly.
14	Affordable Housing Provision	Appoint an affordable housing viability consultant, through a competitive exercise, for a 3-year period in order to provide specialist advice and undertake the validation of viability appraisals submitted by developers who assert that the Council's expected level of affordable housing provision on their site unviable and propose a financial contribution in lieu	Director of Communities	April 2015	<b>Achieved</b> – Following a competitive exercise, Kift Consulting Ltd has been appointed as the Council's affordable housing viability consultant, for an initial period of 1 year, with the option to extend by two further one year periods.

		of the provision of on-site affordable housing			
15	Affordable Housing Provision	Consider the introduction of Supplementary Planning Guidance on the required approach by developers to the undertaking of viability assessments for developments involving affordable housing	Principal Planning Officer / Director of Communities	<del>July 2015</del> Sept 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – It has been concluded that the approach should be to provide guidance to planning applicants, rather than formal Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Director of Communities will shortly be drafting the proposed Guidance, initially for consideration by officers and then for formal adoption by the Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder.
16	Council Housebuilding Programme	Complete the development of 23 new affordable homes for rent at Waltham Abbey, under Phase 1 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	<del>Dec 2015</del> Apr 2016	<b>In Progress</b> – Works are currently behind schedule, due to issues raised by the contractor. The current expected completion date is March/ April 2016.
17	Council Housebuilding Programme	Complete a major conversion scheme to convert 20 unpopular bedsits at Marden Close and a community hall at Faversham Hall, Marden Close, to provide 12 self-contained one-bedroomed rented flats for Housing Register applicants	Asst. Director (Property & Devt.)	<del>Sept 2015</del> Oct 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – Works are substantially on target to complete in October 2015.
18	Council Housebuilding Programme	Obtain planning permission for the development of new affordable homes for rent at Burton Road, Loughton, under Phase 2 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Sept 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – Following refusal of the original application for planning permission, a revised planning application has been submitted, for a development with slightly less homes and a lower building height. At the request of the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee, the Cabinet is due to consider a recommendation at its meeting in June 2015 that off-street parking be provided in nearby Torrington Drive, to help ensure that the new development does not cause any local parking problems.

19	Council Housebuilding Programme	Seek Development Partner status for the Council with the HCA, to enable the Council to secure the £0.5 million funding obtained from the HCA for Phase 2 of the Council Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	<del>June 2015</del> May 2015	<b>Achieved</b> – Notification was received in May 2015 that the Council's application for Development Partner Status has been approved, which will enable the Council to access the £0.5million grant, provided that planning permission is granted for Phase 2 of the Housebuilding Programme.
20	Council Housebuilding Programme	Complete the remaining development and financial appraisals for the identified potential development sites and formulate a Pipeline Programme of developments for Phases Years 3-6 of the Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	<del>Mar 2016</del> July 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – The next 9 development/financial appraisals will be considered by the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee on 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2015. The last 12 development appraisals are due to be considered at the following meeting of the Cabinet Committee in July 2015.
21	Council and Housing Association Accommodation	Implement the Council's revised Housing Allocations Scheme, including a revised Local Eligibility Criteria increasing the requirement for applicants to have lived within the District from 3 – 5 years and lowering the maximum combined income / assets threshold to £76,000.	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	July 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – Following the adoption of the revised Housing Allocations Scheme by the Cabinet, arrangements are on target to implement the changes to the new Scheme on 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2015.
22	Council and Housing Association Accommodation	Update the existing District-wide Nominations Agreements with each of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners for new rented housing developments - to take account of the new Affordable Rents Framework - and formulate new District-wide Nominations Agreements for shared ownership properties with the same partners.	Director of Communities	June 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – A new District-wide Nominations Agreement has been drafted, on which all the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners have been consulted. A further version of the Draft Nominations Agreement, which takes account of Preferred Partners' comments, is currently being produced for final consultation, prior to engrossment and signing by each Partner.

23	Council and Housing Association Accommodation	Procure a provider for an updated Housing Register Hosting and Choice Based Lettings Agency Service, in partnership with five neighbouring local authorities	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	Sept 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – The procurement is at the final stages of the selection process and a recommendation on the selection of the preferred tenderer will be considered by the Housing Portfolio Holder in June 2015.
24	Council and Housing Association Accommodation	Subscribe and contribute information to the new proposed Essex Veterans' Portal, in partnership with other Essex local authorities and Essex agencies, in support of the Community Covenant to assist former members of the Armed Forces.	Policy & Grants Officer	June 2015	<b>Achieved</b> – The Council now supports the Essex Veterans' Portal, which was officially launched at the end of May 2015, and information from the Council will be updated on a regular basis.
25	Council Housing	Implement the Council's revised Tenancy Policy, to extend the provision of flexible (fixed term) tenancies for 10 year periods (including an introductory tenancy period) to all Council properties (excluding sheltered properties).	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	July 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – All the required work to implement the policy is underway, and arrangements are on track to implement the new policy on 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2015. The policy excludes existing Council tenants downsizing to smaller Council accommodation.
26	Council Housing	Bring together all the Council's fraud functions, including social housing fraud into one corporate team, to provide synergy, consistent working practices and shared intelligence	Chief Internal Auditor	April 2015	<b>Achieved</b> – The Corporate Fraud Team was formed in April 2015. All fraud officers now come under the responsibility of the Chief Internal Auditor.
27	Homelessness	Update the Council's Homelessness Strategy, to ensure that it is up to date and sets out the most appropriate approach to responding to homelessness over the next 3 years	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	June 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – The Draft Homelessness Strategy is due to be considered by the Housing Select Committee in June, prior to adoption by the Housing Portfolio Holder.



28	Homelessness	Consider the feasibility of replacing the mobile homes in the grounds of the Council's Homeless Persons' Hostel at Norway House, North Weald with new temporary accommodation for homeless families, that will be fit for purpose for the future	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Dec 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – An initial Feasibility Report has been received from the Council's consultants, which is currently under consideration.
29	Homelessness	Undertake improvements to the rooms at Norway House, North Weald, to improve the facilities and decor	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Mar 2016	<b>In Progress</b> – Initial considerations are under discussions, but cannot be progressed yet due to staffing issues at Norway House.
30	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Work in partnership with Essex County Council to provide a supported housing scheme at Lindsay House, Epping.	Director of Communities	Mar 2017	<b>In Progress</b> – The Chief Executive is leading on negotiations with the County Council over the disposal of Lindsay House to Essex County Council, as part of the arrangements for the development of the site at St Johns Road, Epping.
31	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Include a requirement in the Draft Local Plan that an increased number of homes within new housing developments in the District should meet the Lifetime Homes Standard than presently required	Asst. Director (Policy Planning & Economic Development)	Under Review	<b>Not yet required</b> – This will be considered as part of the Preferred Options (Draft) Local Plan.
32	Empty Homes	Bring at least 40 long-term empty properties back into use by Council intervention within any 12-month period, including the continued use of the PLACE Scheme	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Mar 2016	<b>Achieved</b> – 60 long term empty properties were brought back into use in 2014/15.
33	Rural Housing	Continue to work with Hastoe Housing Association and Parish Councils to investigate the development potential for rural housing schemes in villages, through the Council's Rural Planning Exceptions Policy	Director of Communities	Mar 2016	<b>In Progress</b> – As part of the promotion of rural exception schemes, Hastoe Housing Association will be giving a presentation to the Local Councils Liaison Committee on 6 <sup>th</sup> July to explain how they work and the success of schemes undertaken in rural areas to date.

34	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licence conditions for existing holiday park homes sites in the District, following consultation with site owners and statutory agencies	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Sept 2015	<b>In Progress</b> – Following a consultation process, the Cabinet will be considering the adoption of new licence conditions for holiday park home sites at its meeting on 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2015.
35	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Consider and adopt a corporate protocol for dealing with unsuitable living conditions within agricultural and nursery accommodation, from a housing, planning, legal and economic development perspective	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Mar 2016	<b>In Progress</b> – The Leadership Team has agreed in principle to establish a Working Party to consider all the issues, subject to the Terms of Reference and membership being agreed by the Management Board.
36	CARE Agency	Prepare for the retendering of the County Council funding for home improvement agencies within Essex, to ensure the continued viability of the Council's in-house Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Agency	Private Housing Manager (Grants and CARE)	July 2015	<b>No Longer Required</b> – The latest information received from Essex County Council is that they appear, again, not to tender HIA services for Epping Forest, since they are happy with the performance and quality of the service provided by the Council's CARE Service – which is currently the only in-house HIA in Essex.