

Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2016
12-Month Progress Report as at 1st January 2017

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Report (as at 1 st January 2017)
1	General	Review the Housing Strategy 2009-2012 and produce an updated Housing Strategy for 2016-2019, following a consultation exercise on a Draft Housing Strategy	Director of Communities	July 2016 April 2017	Back on Track – The former Housing Portfolio Holder previously determined that the new Housing Strategy should not be formulated until the Draft Local Plan (Preferred Approach) has been published (due to the dependency on the Draft Plan). However, now that the Draft Plan has been published, an Officer Project Team has been established to produce a Draft Housing Strategy which, in the first instance, will be submitted to the Select Committee for discussion, prior to formal consultation.
2	Local Plan	Agree with the Council's Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) partners how much of the Council's Objectively Assessed Housing Need will be provided in neighbouring districts.	Planning Policy Manager	Spring 2016 Mar 2017	In Progress – A draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been prepared which sets out the proposed distribution across the SHMA and discussed by the Co-operation for Sustainable Development Board – further discussions are required before it can be signed off. The draft MOU is available on the Council's website.
3	Local Plan	Complete Stage 2 of the District-Wide Viability Assessment to determine viable levels of affordable housing provision within future developments	Planning Policy Manager	Spring 2016 Mar 2017	In Progress – Following the consultation on the Draft Local Plan between 31 October and 12 December 2016 an inception meeting has been held with the appointed consultations to start Stage 2 of the Viability assessment. The Draft MOU was used as the basis for the proposed housing requirement in the Draft Local Plan. The Housing White Paper due to be published in January 2017 will provide more details on starter homes and affordable housing.

4	Local Plan	Agree a Draft Local Plan (Preferred Approach) and undertake the appropriate Sustainability Appraisal	Planning Policy Manager	Spring Oct 2016	Achieved - The Draft Local Plan was approved by Cabinet and Full Council in October 2016 for consultation under Regulation 18. An interim Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken alongside the Draft Local Plan and is available on the Council's website
5	Local Plan	Undertake a Consultation Exercise on the Draft Local Plan (Preferred Approach)	Planning Policy Manager	July Nov 2016	Achieved – The Consultation Exercise on the Draft Local Plan was undertaken between 31 October and 12 December 2016. The responses are currently being analysed.
6	Local Plan	Submit the Final Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for an Examination in Public	Planning Policy Manager	Sept Dec 2017	In progress – Following the recent consultation the Council will now be preparing the pre-submission publication version of the Local Plan. It is expected that the publication of the Local Plan will be in late 2017 with submission for examination shortly after.
7	Local Plan	Include appropriate provision within the Local Plan to meet the Government's requirements to ensure the provision of a set percentage, or number, of starter homes on all development sites over a certain threshold, to meet the proposed requirements of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.	Planning Policy Manager	Spring 2016 Oct 2017	In Progress – The provision for starter homes did not form part of the Draft Local Plan as the regulations on the operation of starter homes were delayed. It is anticipated that details will be announced in the Housing White Paper due to be published in January 2017.
8	Local Plan	Include appropriate provision within the Local Plan to meet the Government's requirements to meet the expressed needs for local people wanting to build their own homes registered on the Self-build and Custom-build Register, to meet the proposed requirements of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.	Planning Policy Manager	Spring 2016 Oct 2017	On target – The approach was included in the Draft Local Plan published for consultation on 31 October 2016.

9	Regeneration	Work in partnership with Essex County Council, Epping Town Council and a development partner to exchange legal contracts for a regeneration scheme for the St Johns Area of Epping, in accordance with the Design and Development Brief, which includes an appropriate amount of market and affordable housing	Director of Neighbourhoods	Feb April 2017	In Progress – The Council has now purchased the land relating to Epping Primary School from Essex CC. The next stage is to enter into legal agreements with the Town Council and the preferred developer regarding the development proposals.
10	Affordable Housing Provision	Consider the possibility of the proposed development of new affordable rented flats at the Council-owned difficult-to-let garage site at Vere Road, Loughton being undertaken by the Council, through the Council Housebuilding Programme, instead of by a housing association	Director of Communities	Mar Sept 2016	No longer being pursued - Following discussions with Higgins Homes, the developer of the adjacent site of the former Sir Winston Churchill PH, the Cabinet has agreed that this difficult-to-let garage site should, instead, be provided to Higgins Homes for car parking for their private residents.
11	Affordable Housing Provision	Work with housing associations and developers to complete the development of 118 new affordable homes, with planning permission, for rent and shared ownership at the following non-Council owned sites: (a) Knollys Nursery, Waltham Abbey – 63 new homes (b) Fyfield Research Park, Ongar – 44 new homes (c) Netherhouse Farm, Sewardstone – 8 new homes (d) Barnfield, Roydon – 3 new homes (e) Esperanza Nursery, Stapleford Abbots – 1 new home	Director of Communities	Dec 2017 Apr 2018	In Progress – Development has commenced at Knolly's Nursery. The developer for the Barnfield, Roydon development has contracted with B3Living to provide the 3 shared ownership homes, as part of the agreed development approach with the Council (see No.12 below). Progress by the developers of the other sites is unknown.

12	Affordable Housing Provision	Enter into a development agreement with the developer for the development at Barnfield, Roydon for the Council to purchase the 8 affordable rented homes required to be provided as part of the scheme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Feb 2016	Achieved – Following receipt of planning permission for a revised scheme, the developer has entered into a Development Agreement with the Council to provide the 8 affordable rented homes for the development, which is due to be commenced shortly.
13	Affordable Housing Provision	Obtain planning permission for residential development at the Council's Pyrles Lane Nursery site, Loughton, including the provision of at least 40% affordable housing	Director of Neighbourhoods	Feb 2016	Achieved – The development has now received planning permission, including the provision of 40% affordable housing.
14	Affordable Housing Provision	Subject to the receipt of planning permission for the proposed development at the Pyrles Lane, Loughton, if the Cabinet decides to sell the site on the open market, sell the land subject to a requirement that the required affordable housing element to be sold to the Council on practical completion, on agreed terms.	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Oct April 2017	On Target - A report will be considered by Cabinet in due course on the most appropriate approach to marketing the sale of the Pyrles Lane development site, as well as the delivery of the affordable housing.
15	Affordable Housing Provision	Consider the provision of guidance to planning applicants on the required approach by developers to the undertaking of viability assessments for developments involving affordable housing	Director of Communities	Apr July 2017	In Progress – The Guidance has been drafted and will be considered by the Governance Select Committee in April 2017. A formal consultation process will then be undertaken, following which the Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder will be asked to formally adopt the Guidance
16	Affordable Housing Provision	Revise the Council's Shared Ownership Policy, to take account of current requirements and the potential effect of the provision of starter homes as affordable homes on the supply of affordable rented housing	Director of Communities	Feb 2016 April 2017	Delayed – Officers have been awaiting the outcome of the DCLG's consultation on the proposed detailed planning arrangements for the introduction of starter homes, which is still awaited. It is now proposed to incorporate the Shared Ownership Policy within the Council's new Housing Strategy (see (1) above).

17	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.)	Apr Sept 2017	Delayed, but now in progress – Due to insufficient progress being made by the contractor to build the new homes, the Council terminated its construction contract with the contractor at the beginning of June 2016. A new contractor has now been appointed to complete the required works.
18	Council Housebuilding Programme	Start on site with the development of 51 new affordable homes for rent at Burton Road, Loughton, under Phase 2 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	April June 2016	Achieved – The contractor has taken possession of the site and will be starting works on site shortly.
19	Council Housebuilding Programme	Start on site with the development of 34 new affordable homes for rent at North Weald, Ongar, Epping and Coopersale, under Phase 3 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Sept 2016 Feb 2017	In Progress – Tenders were agreed by the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee in December 2016, and works are due to start in February 2017.
20	Council Housebuilding Programme	Seek planning permission for the development of new affordable homes for rent in Loughton, under Phase 4 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	March 2016	Achieved – 11 sites within the proposed Phase 4 have received planning permission; 4 sites have been refused planning permission. However, Phase 4 has not been progressed any further due to the Moritorium placed on the Council Housebuilding Programme by the Cabinet.
21	Council Housebuilding Programme	Seek planning permission for the development of new affordable homes for rent in Ongar and Buckhurst Hill, under Phase 5 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	July 2016 March 2017	On Target – 5 sites within the proposed Phase 5 have received planning permission; 2 sites have been deferred pending further consideration. However, Phase 5 has not been progressed any further due to the Moritorium placed on the Council Housebuilding Programme by the Cabinet.

22	Council Housebuilding Programme	Consider the creation of a new post of Housing Development Manager, to support the Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.) and provide additional capacity in order to deliver the Council Housebuilding Programme	Director of Communities	Feb 2016	Achieved – The Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee agreed to the creation of two new posts of Housing Development Manager and Housing Development Officer, both on 3-year fixed term contracts. A Housing Development Manager was appointed, but left after a short while. Following an unsuccessful recruitment campaign, a temporary Housing Development Officer has been appointed from a recruitment agency.
23	Council Housebuilding Programme	Complete the 12 remaining development and financial appraisals for the identified potential development sites and formulate a Pipeline Programme of developments for Phases 6 onwards of the Housebuilding Programme	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Feb 2016	Achieved – Development and Financial Appraisals for all of the identified potential development sites have been completed and considered by the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee.
24	Council and Housing Association Accommodation	Complete the new 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 to update the provisions for nominations of shared ownership properties.	Director of Communities	Jan 2016	Achieved – A new District-wide Nominations Agreement has now been signed with all of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners.
25	Council Housing Accommodation	Revise the Council's Tenancy Policy to implement the introduction of 5-year fixed term tenancies for all new tenants (including transferring, downsizing and sheltered tenants), to meet the proposed requirements of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	Nov 2016 April 2017	Under Review : awaiting Government Guidance – Through the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the Government has introduced a requirement for all social landlords to introduce fixed-term tenancies for up to 5 years, or up to 10 years for those with a disability, or up to 19 years for those with children (up to nine years of age). The Council currently offers fixed term tenancies of 10 years to all new tenants, so the

					detailed arrangements are awaited from the DCLG in order to assess whether or not the Council needs to review its approach.
26	Council Housing Accommodation	Provide up to 1 x 1 bedroom and 1 x 2 bedroom flats each year for 4 years to Syrian refugees, on non-secure tenancies, to assist the Government's commitment to accommodate 20,000 Syrian refugees in the UK over a 4-year period.	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	Dec 2016 Mar 2017	In Progress – 1 X 2 bedroom flat was provided in 2016, although the family shortly vacated to move to another part of the country.
27	Council Housing Accommodation	Prepare for the introduction of the Government's "Pay to Stay" scheme, to charge higher rents for Council tenants with household incomes above £30,000 p/a, to meet the proposed requirements of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.	Asst. Director (Private Sector and Communities Support)	Apr 2017	No longer required – The Government announced in November 2016 that the proposed requirement for councils to charge increased rents, up to market rents, to higher income tenants would no longer be pursued.
28	Council Housing Accommodation	Prepare for the sale of "high value" Council properties to fund the expected required levy to the Government, to meet the proposed requirements of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Apr Sept 2017	Awaiting Government Guidance – The requirement for stock-owning councils to pay a levy to the Government, based on: an assumption that councils will sell all void properties over Government-specified value thresholds (to be determined); and a Government estimate for each council of the number and value of such properties arising each year has been included in the Housing and Planning Act 2016. However, no information has yet been provided by the DCLG on what the value thresholds will be for different parts of the country, nor how the levy will be calculated or what the levy will be for each local authority. The DCLG has recently advised that no levy will be charged in 2017/18. It is therefore not possible to plan to sell higher value properties, or to pay the levy, until the detailed arrangements are clear.

29	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 the future	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt.)	Mar 2016 Apr 2017	Delayed – Although an initial feasibility study has been received from the Council's consultants, it needs detailed consideration - which has not been possible due to officers' focus on progressing the Council's Housebuilding Programme and the lack of staffing capacity. However, the Leader and Housing Portfolio Holder have asked officers to investigate the possibility of undertaking a pilot scheme for the supply and installation of modular accommodation for single homeless people, for which a report will come forward to Cabinet in March 2017.
30	Homelessness	Introduce a new scheme to fund the provision of returnable tenancy deposits, through tenancy deposit agents, to assist potentially homeless applicants to be accommodated in the private rented sector	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	Apr 2016 Apr 2017	In Progress – The introduction of this scheme has not proved possible, due to tenancy deposit agents being unreceptive. However, the report on homelessness to the January meeting of the Select Committee proposes a different way forward.
31	Homelessness	Consider the provision of further rental loans, in addition to the provision of returnable tenancy deposits, to assist potentially homeless families to be accommodated in the private rented sector	Asst. Director (Housing Operations)	Feb 2016	Achieved - The Cabinet agreed to the provision of additional funding for further rental loans, through the Council's "Invest to Save" Scheme.
32	Homelessness	Seek to obtain the Government's Gold Standard Award for the provision of homelessness services, following the peer review by other Essex local authorities and the delivery of the resultant Action Plan	Housing Options Manager	April 2017	In Progress – The required Peer Review has been undertaken and an Action Plan agreed, which must be completed before the Gold Standard Award can be received.

33	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Review the Council’s sheltered housing assets, and formulate a strategy for the determining the future use of each sheltered housing site (including retention, remodelling, refurbishment, redevelopment and sale), to ensure that the Council’s sheltered housing provision is fit for the future.	Director of Communities	July 2016 Sept 2017	In Progress – An officer Project Team has been established to consider this issue in detail, and has formulated a number of draft recommendations. However, it is not possible to progress the project any further, until the outcome of the Stage 1 Further HRA Financial Options Review has been completed and the future of the Council Housebuilding Programme is known. In due course, it is envisaged that the outcome and recommendations of the review will be reported to the Communities Select Committee in the first instance.
34	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	No longer being pursued – This proposal originally formed part of the discussions with Essex County Council and other partners on the proposed terms of the legal arrangements for the development of the St. Johns area of Epping. However, it was subsequently agreed to take Lindsay House out of the discussions. It is now proposed that Lindsay House will be sold on the open market.
35	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	Planning Policy Manager	Spring 2016	Achieved - This has been included within the Draft Local Plan
36	Affordable Housing Provision	Work with Essex County Council to consider the feasibility and viability of providing a new Independent Living (extra care) scheme for older people, as part of the proposed Leisure and Community Hub at Hillhouse, Waltham Abbey, as part of the Masterplanning Exercise for the area	Director of Communities	June August 2016	Achieved – Following the formulation of a Masterplan for Hillhouse, Outline Planning Permission was granted in November 2016 for the Hillhouse development, which includes the inclusion of a new Independent Living Scheme.

37	Empty Homes	Review and revise the Council's Housing Service Strategy on Empty Properties	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Mar 2016	Achieved – This was considered and endorsed by the former Housing Select Committee in March 2016.
38	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 2017	Limited progress – There have been no opportunities identified for rural housing schemes in villages, through the Council's Rural Planning Exceptions Policy, since the formulation of the Action Plan.
39	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Deliver the Action Plan formulated by the Nursery Workers Accommodation Working Party and 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)	Dec 2016 July 2017	In Progress – An Action Plan has been formulated. This includes consultation on a draft accommodation standard. However, the National Union of Farmers (NFU) advised nursery owners not to co-operate with the Council. Subsequently, a meeting has been held with the NFU and growers to discuss the way forward on a number of matters relating to nurseries in the Lee Valley, including the provision of improved accommodation for workers.
40	CARE Agency	Prepare for, and meet, the requirements for the new contract with Essex County Council for funding the Council's in-house Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Agency	Private Housing Manager (Grants and CARE)	July 2016 Jan 2017	No longer required – In December 2016, Essex County Council announced its intention to cease the provision of any funding for CARE, or any other home improvement agencies across Essex. Therefore, there is no need to enter into any new contract.