

**REPORT TO:** Housing Portfolio Holder  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Director of Housing

19 October 2016

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## **AFFORDABLE HOMES DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2017/18**

### **Purpose**

1. To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update on the revised Affordable Homes Service Plan for 2017/18.
2. This is not a key decision.

### **Recommendations**

3. That the Housing Portfolio Holder endorses the service plan actions identified in this report and suggests additions to or amendments to these service plan actions if required.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. A list of service projects needs to be agreed in the autumn to enable service and financial planning to be put in place for effective delivery by April 2017. The proposed list represents a continuation of key projects already underway and a series of new projects designed to take forward key developments identified in previous years work and to further enhance the service to customers. The final version of the Service Plan will be presented to the Portfolio Holder in March 2017.

### **Background**

5. The existing Affordable Homes Service Plan includes a number of service plan projects intended to run over a two or three year timeframe. This is therefore a refresh of the service plan designed mainly to introduce new service plan actions to address external challenges.
6. The Affordable Homes service plan differs to other service plans within the Council as it is closely linked to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan. The introduction of the self financing regime for council housing from April 2012 means that a separate 30 year HRA Business Plan is in place from 2012/13 onwards.
7. There is also a linked Asset Management Strategy that sets out the Councils approach to managing its homes and other properties, which also covers a 30 year period. Arising from the Asset Management Strategy, the Five Year Housing Maintenance Plan sets out the planned expenditure to maintain the Council's homes and forms part of the HRA Business Plan.
8. The service plan is set in the context of the overarching Housing Strategy 2012 - 2016, which in turn is related to the sub regional housing strategy, which reflects the sub regional strategic housing agenda of the sub regional housing market centred on Cambridge. The strategy itself is an action for the service plan and following delays in

the finalisation of national regulations on new legislation will now be completed during 2017.

### Considerations

9. The service plan addresses the key Councils key aims and actions from the Corporate Plan 2016 - 2020, as well as projects contained within the Business Efficiency and Improvement Plan.
10. Government policy changes such as the reduction in rents, changes to welfare benefits, higher rents for higher earning households and the proposal to sell council houses to pay for the extension of the Right to Buy to housing associations also require specific activity to model the impacts and to identify possible mitigations for both the Council and for the Council's tenants.

### Options

11. The Portfolio Holder is requested to consider these proposed actions and to suggest changes or additions where required.

Table 1 Proposed Service Plan themes 2017 -18

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Carried Forward or New</b>	<b>Budget implication</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1	Housing Strategy 2017 - 2022	CF	No extra budget required	Process of review underway but will be completed in 2017 to allow time for details of new Housing Bill and other Government policy changes to be firmed up and for work to be completed to align the strategy with Cambridge City.
2	Tenant profiling project	CF	No extra budget required at this stage	We will need to gather more information on our tenants to enable us to understand the impact of welfare changes and help mitigate any negative impacts. In particular we need to understand who might fit within the over £30K household income category.
3	Delivery models review partnership and shared working	CF	No extra budget required	Working in partnership with Cambridge City, housing associations and private sector contractors we will need to explore if there are new and efficient ways of delivering core front line services e.g. new partnership models to deliver

				responsive repairs delivery of housing related support.
4	Community Impact Assessment Tool development	N	No extra budget required at this stage	Development of an approach that allows us to evidence more robustly the wider community impact of service delivery approaches in housing.
5	Explore options for cleaning contract	N	No extra budget required at this stage	To develop and evaluate a pilot scheme to extend the scope and offer of the cleaning service provided by existing staff with a view to improving the quality of life of vulnerable people in the District.
6	Homelessness mitigation	CF	No extra budget required at this stage	A range of activities to be considered to try and offset the worst of the impacts of policy on homelessness. May require a fresh strategy to be produced.
7	Private Sector leasing project	N	No extra budget required at this stage	Linked to homelessness work. Implementation project for new PSL
8	High value sales	N	Will require substantial resources to take forward business options	Consultancy advice now obtained. Project to implement decision once Regulations have been received.
9	1:1 replacement programme	N	No extra budget required at this stage	Partner project to high value sales. Partnership project to deliver new replacement affordable homes.
10	Devolution housing delivery	N	Budget to come from devolution settlement	Partnership project to deliver new affordable homes
11	Pay to Stay	N	Potential cost to Council of around £100k pa – may be some funding from Government	Awaiting Regulations before detail finalised. Working with Cambridge City on implementation project.
12	IT procurement	N	No extra	Working with Cambridge City.

			budget required at this stage	Project management from 3C
13	'Through the Door' project	N	No extra budget required at this stage	To develop a pilot scheme to explore new ways of addressing loneliness amongst older people in the District.
14	CLT Umbrella	N	Potential for external funding	Project to explore setting up of CLT body to support local CLT developments on exception sites
15	Purpose built shared accommodation	N	No extra budget required at this stage	Project to explore scale of demand and funding/partnerships required to meet this demand.
16	Housing health & social care partnership developments	N	No extra budget required at this stage	Strategic partnership project linked to a number of delivery projects
17	Together for Families	N	No extra budget required at this stage	Shared project with Environmental Services and County Council to ensure that families with multiplier and complex needs are best supported.
18	Self Build	CF	No extra budget required at this stage	Project to take forward the work established as part of the Vanguard Pilot. To include working closely with planning to embed the local service and further development of the regional service offer.

### Implications

12. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

#### **Financial**

13. There are financial dimensions to all of these projects but there is no significant new funding required at this stage.

#### **Legal**

14. A number of these projects will require specialist input from our legal services.

***Staffing***

15. There are no specific staffing requirements arising from these projects at this stage.

***Risk Management***

16. Risk logs will be developed for each project.

***Equality and Diversity***

17. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out on each policy change as it is developed.

**Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)**

18. The final version of the service plan will be produced with the help of the Tenant Participation Group and the Youth Council.

**Effect on Strategic Aims**

19. The Affordable Homes service plan is important for all three of the Council's main strategic aims.

**Conclusions/Summary**

20. Table 1, contains a draft service plan actions list that will be incorporated within the final form of the Affordable Homes service plan to be brought back to the Housing Portfolio Holder in March 2017.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

None

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