

Central Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



please ask for Helen Bell
direct line 0300 300 4040
date 5 January 2012

NOTICE OF MEETING

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Date & Time

Thursday, 19 January 2012 6.30 p.m.

Venue at

Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS MEETING

AGENDA

Prayers

The Reverend Michael Trodden of St Andrew's Church Amphill will take prayers.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence to be received.

2. **Minutes**

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 November 2011.

(Attached pages 5 to 36)

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations and their nature in relation to:-

(a) Personal Interests in any agenda item

(b) Personal and Prejudicial Interests in any agenda item

4. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman to announce any matters of communication.

5. **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

The Leader of the Council to announce any matters of communication, including:

(a) to invite the Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing to provide an update on recent matters of interest; and

(b) to invite the Executive Member for External Affairs to provide an update on recent matters of interest.

6. **Questions, Statements and Deputations**

To receive any questions, statements and deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of part A4 of the Constitution. (This session will be held at the Chairman's discretion and will normally last no longer than 15 minutes.)

7. **Petitions**

To receive and discuss petitions, if any, in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of part A4 of the Constitution.

8. **Recommendations from the Executive**

To consider recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on **10 January 2012** and answer questions asked under Rule No. 12.1.

(a) **Treasury Management Policy** (to follow)

(b) **Treasury Management Strategy** (to follow)

(c) **Metal Theft Prevention** (to follow)

9. **Questions on the Functions of Bedfordshire Police Authority and the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority**

To receive and answer questions.

10. **Written Questions**

To answer written questions, if any, from Members of the Council under Rule No. 12.2.

11. **Open Questions**

To answer Open Questions asked by Members of the Council under Rule No. 12.7.

12. **Motions (if any)**

To consider motions by Members of the Council under Rule No. 16 in the order received.

13. **Housing Strategy**

To approve the Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy 2011-2016.

(Attached pages 37 to 96)

This page is intentionally left blank

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 24 November 2011.

PRESENT

Cllr P Hollick (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs R B Gammons (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs	P N Aldis	Cllrs	Mrs S A Goodchild	Cllrs	B Saunders
	Mrs A Barker		Mrs D B Green		J A G Saunders
	A R Bastable		Mrs D B Gurney		A Shadbolt
	L Birt		Mrs C Hegley		N J Sheppard
	M C Blair		J G Jamieson		I Shingler
	D Bowater		R W Johnstone		M A Smith
	A D Brown		D Jones		Miss A Sparrow
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE		M R Jones		B J Spurr
	Mrs S Clark		D J Lawrence		R C Stay
	J A E Clarke		Mrs J G Lawrence		A M Turner
	N B Costin		I A MacKilligan		Mrs P E Turner MBE
	I Dalgarno		K C Matthews		M A G Versallion
	A L Dodwell		Ms C Maudlin		P F Vickers
	Mrs R J Drinkwater		D McVicar		N Warren
	P A Duckett		J Murray		R D Wenham
	Dr R Egan		Mrs M Mustoe		J N Young
	C C Gomm		R B Pepworth		A Zerny

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	R D Berry	Cllrs	K Janes	Cllrs	B Wells
	D J Hopkin		T Nicols		P Williams

–

Officers:	Mr G Alderson	–	Director of Sustainable Communities
	Mr J Atkinson	–	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
	Miss H Bell	–	Committee Services Officer
	Mr R Carr	–	Chief Executive
	Mrs J Ogley	–	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Mrs C Parry	–	Assistant Director (Acting), Children's Services Operations
	Ms M Peaston	–	Committee Services Manager
	Mr C Warboys	–	Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer

C/11/43 **Prayers**

Prayers were taken by Reverend Martin Hathaway.

C/11/44 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

C/11/45 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

There were no declarations made.

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**

Councillors Mrs J Lawrence and R Stay declared an interest in Agenda Item No 18, Members' Allowances Scheme 2011/12 & 2012/13. The declarations were recorded under that item.

C/11/46 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman commented on a number of matters:

- Everton Lower School, a Council maintained school, had received "Outstanding" in their recent Ofsted inspection.
- Elayne Clifford had been awarded a Local Policing Commander's Certificate of Merit in recognition of her work as an Emergency Duty Social Worker.
- Workforce planning, which is a statutory function in Children's Services, had been assessed and received high praise compared with the workforce planning of other Councils.

The Chairman also commented on events which had taken place or were planned, to which he had been invited, among these, it was particularly noted that Dunstable had been chosen as a town to take part in the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay on 9 July 2012.

C/11/47 **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

The Leader summarised feedback received from the recent Residents' Survey.

C/11/48 **Questions, Statements and Deputations**

Questions and statements were put by a member of the public under the Public Participation provisions set out at Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

- (a) Mr Clarke asked a question relating to the cost of awarded contracts.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources indicated he would provide a written reply.

- (b) Mr Clarke asked a question about compensation payments.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources indicated he would provide a written reply.

- (c) Mr Clarke made a statement on recommendations set out under Agenda Item No 10, Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group and requested that some specific changes proposed be rejected and others supported.

- (d) Mr Clarke made a statement on recommendations set out under Agenda Item No 18, Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group.

C/11/49 **Petitions**

No petitions had been received.

C/11/50 **Recommendations from the Executive**

Economic Development Plan

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 15 November 2011, seeking adoption of the Economic Development Plan.

RESOLVED

that the Economic Development Plan, as set out in the Executive report of 15 November 2011, be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

Capital Programme Review

The Council considered a report of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 November 2011, seeking approval of the revised Capital Programme for 2011/12.

RESOLVED

that the revised Capital Programme for 2011/12 be approved as set out in the report of the Executive of 15 November 2011.

C/11/51

Recommendations from General Purposes Committee

Boundary Commission for England – Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries Review

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 6 October 2011 seeking approval and adoption of alternative proposals for the Parliamentary Boundary as set out in Appendix A, which was circulated separately from the agenda.

RESOLVED

that the alternative proposals for those Parliamentary boundaries as they affect the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Sub- Region of the Eastern Region, as revised by officers in consultation with the Chairman of General Purposes Committee, be approved and adopted and then submitted to the Boundary Commission for England for consideration, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

C/11/52

Recommendations from Constitution Advisory Group

The Council considered recommendations from the meeting of the Constitution Advisory Group held on 31 October 2011.

The Council took into account the representations made under the Public Participation Scheme.

Further to discussion an amendment to Appendix C was moved and seconded based on a revised Appendix C which was tabled at the meeting.

RESOLVED

to adopt the changes to the Constitution set out in Appendices A, B, revised Appendix C, and D-H inclusive, with the following effects:

- A. changes to provide for a process for petitions relating to the budget;
- B. changes to provide for a timeframe of 3 minutes for public participation for all purposes and all meetings, by amending “5 minutes” where stated, to “3 minutes”;
- C. changes to suggest a notice period of 2 clear working days for questions from the public at public meetings to enable questions to be answered at the meeting, with questions not previously notified being answered either at the meeting or afterwards, in writing;
- D. changes to remove the provision for members of the public to speak twice on the same matter;
- E. changes to replace the existing list of key plans, policies and strategies in the Council’s Policy Framework;
- F. changes to provide for a Council budget setting meeting;
- G. changes to a specified threshold sum and other minor drafting amendments;
- H. changes to reflect legislative provisions governing Council Members’ attendance and speaking at quasi judicial Committees and Sub-Committees.

C/11/53

Report of the Police Authority

A report of the meeting of the Bedfordshire Police Authority held on 10 September 2011 was submitted.

Councillor Hollick, representative of the Police Authority, answered questions on issues in the report.

RESOLVED

that the report of the Bedfordshire Police Authority be noted.

C/11/54 **Report of the Fire Authority**

The Council considered a report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority detailing information from its meeting held on 7 September 2011.

RESOLVED

that the report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority be noted.

C/11/55 **Written Questions**

A written question had been submitted under Rule 12.2 by Councillor Aldis as follows:

“At the last meeting of the Council I asked a question about land for allotments in Sandy. What hope can the Executive Member offer to the present and future allotment holders in Sandy of having a plot on which to “grow their own” in the near future? Can he give indication of the progress that is being made in securing land for allotments and the timescales that he sees as being realistic and meaningful?”

The following reply was received:

“Central Bedfordshire Council is well aware of the lack of allotments in Sandy and is working with Sandy Town Council to address the Town Council’s need to meet its statutory duty. Finding a site has proved difficult and several options have been looked at but dismissed.

I can confirm that Officers have located a potential site on land east of the A1. Discussions need to reach a conclusion with the Council’s tenant before any further progress can be made as his consent and the amendment of his tenancy are required.

An exact timescale is not available at this stage of the negotiations and residents are asked to be patient. This is a priority matter for Central Bedfordshire Council and we are keeping the Town Council and Allotment Association Members aware of progress”.

C/11/56

Open Questions

The Chairman presided over Open Questions asked of Executive Members and Deputy Members under Procedure Rule 12.7.

1. Councillor Murray asked about the progress of a claim that had been submitted to the Council from a member of the public.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources advised that the claim was being addressed.

2. Councillor Duckett asked a question about the economic benefits of the Luton Busway Scheme to Central Bedfordshire.

The Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Strategic Planning & Economic Development explained the benefits, including the impact on jobs and new homes in Central Bedfordshire.

3. Councillor Shadbolt asked for an update on the Automatic Number Plate Recognition Scheme (ANPR).

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services advised that the Auto Number Plate Recognition scheme had been launched and that there were three ANPR vehicles working throughout Central Bedfordshire.

4. Councillor McVicar invited the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities to join him in commending the Council on the opening of Creasey Park football facility which had been assisted by the appropriate application of Section 106 monies.

5. Councillor Murray asked a question about the status of schooling in Dunstable.

The Executive Member for Children's Services clarified the number of schools that had applied for academy status and the associated implications. He indicated that he would meet with Councillors from Dunstable and Houghton Regis to discuss the matter further.

6. Councillor Egan asked questions about implications for low paid workers as a result of a reduction in mileage allowances.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources indicated that he would check the information on which the questions were based and would endeavour to provide a written reply.

7. Councillor Egan sought assurance that problems incurred by a developer who had left a playground in poor condition would be rectified.

The Executive member for Social Care, Health and Housing advised that she was awaiting the outcome of a meeting to discuss resolution of the issue and would now also liaise with the Executive Member for

Sustainable Communities-Strategic Planning and Economic Development.

8. Councillor Zerny asked a question about the job role and performance of the Executive Member for Economic Partnerships and the Executive Member for External Affairs.

The Leader advised that he had included an outline of these roles in his address to the Council meeting on 21 July 2011 and commented on the performance of the Executive Members.

9. Councillor Goodchild asked if Central Bedfordshire Council would be supporting a new initiative organised by Daybreak television show and the Salvation Army, "Donate a Coat".

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing indicated that she would seek further information on the initiative and that she would be minded to support and encourage support from others.

10. Councillor Sparrow asked what effect the public services strike might have on Central Bedfordshire schools.

The Executive Member for Children's Services advised that the exact number of school closures was unknown at this time. Data would be collated for submission to the Department for Education as required two days before the strike.

11. Councillor Duckett asked a question about the approach to the deployment of Section 106 monies in relation to traffic management.

The Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services confirmed that Councillors would be consulted on the use of Section 106 monies.

12. Councillor Aldis asked a question about the planning consultation process with regard to the installation of a temporary building in Sandy.

The Executive Member for Planning clarified the consultation process which he had no reason to doubt had been followed appropriately.

13. Councillor Clarke asked a question about whether monies available through the Growing Places Fund, allocated to Local Enterprise Partnerships, would benefit Central Bedfordshire.

The Executive Member for Economic Partnerships advised that in excess of £13 million had been allocated to the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and that this Council would be seeking to take advantage of the opportunities this presented.

14. Councillor Murray asked a question about car parking policies in Central Bedfordshire.

The Executive Member for Sustainable-Communities Strategic Planning and Economic Development clarified the car parking policy in Central Bedfordshire.

C/11/57 Motions (if any)

No motions had been received under Procedure Rule No 16.

C/11/58 Calendar of meetings

The Council considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources seeking approval of the calendar of meetings for the Municipal Year 2012/13.

RESOLVED

that the calendar of meetings for the period May 2012 – June 2013 as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved.

C/11/59 Membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel

The Council considered a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources which sought an increase in the size of the membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel from three to four and the re-appointment of Mrs B Heley, an existing Panel member. The Executive Member for Corporate Resources moved an amendment to the recommendation by adding at the end the words:

“and that the quorum for any meeting of the Panel will be three”.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the size of the Independent Remuneration Panel membership be increased from three to four members, that the persons appointed to serve for the period ending 31 March 2016 and that the quorum for any meeting of the Panel be three;**
- 2. that Mrs B Heley be offered a further appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel for the period ending 31 March 2015;**
- 3. that the appointment process to fill vacancies on the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in Paragraph 10 of the report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources be approved.**

C/11/60 **Members Allowances**

The Executive Member for External Affairs and the Chairman of General Purposes Committee each declared a personal interest in this item by reason of their specific allowances being discussed and left the meeting for the duration of the discussion on this particular aspect of the debate.

The Council considered the report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources setting out recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for the Members Allowances Scheme for 2011/12 and 2012/13 following its meetings held on 3 August, 20 October and 2 November 2011.

In relation to recommendation 1 an amendment was moved, seconded and upon being put to the vote, was declared carried.

The amendment provided for the addition of the words“save that in the case of the Executive Members without Portfolio, each will receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of £10,654.72 (which is 34% of the recommended SRA for the Leader) with effect from 19 May 2011”.

RESOLVED

1. **that the Scheme of Members' Allowances for Central Bedfordshire for the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 be amended, in accordance with the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in the report and also to provide that the Executive Members without Portfolio each will receive an SRA of £10,654.72 (which is 34% of the recommended SRA for the Leader) with effect from 19 May 2011;**
2. **that the concerns of the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding consultation and the publication of its recommendations be noted.**

C/11/61 **Variation of the Scheme of Executive Functions Delegated to Officers**

The Council noted a variation to the scheme of Executive Functions delegated to officers authorised by the Leader, as follows:

Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services – Publication of Statutory Notices for alterations to schools maintained by the Council.

C/11/62 **Variation of the arrangements for the discharge of Executive Functions**

The Council noted a variation of arrangements for the discharge of Executive functions delegated by the Leader, as follows:

Executive Member for Children’s Services – determination of proposals to alter the upper or lower age of pupils in schools.

C/11/63 **Change of Membership on a Committee**

The Council noted that since the last meeting, under Part B5 2.6.1 of the Council’s Constitution, the Leader had made the following change to membership of a Committee.

Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Bowater had replaced Councillor Shadbolt.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 9.20 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix A

The proposed changes to the Constitution are shown in red below.

PETITIONS SCHEME

1. Submission and Content of Petitions

- 1.1 Members of the public may present the Council, or the Executive, or a committee with petitions, upon giving at least 7 clear working days notice in writing of the petition to the Monitoring Officer, subject to the principles of the General Principles Governing All Public Participation set out at Part A4 Appendix A section 2 of the Constitution. If, following consideration of the petition as provided in paragraphs 5 to 7 below, the petition organiser is not satisfied with the response, he/she may request that the response be reviewed by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee in accordance with the procedure in paragraph 10.

A new section 7 would be inserted after existing section 6, and the document re-numbered accordingly.

7. Petitions on matters which may be affected by the setting of the Council's Budget

- 7.1 Petitions on matters which may be affected by the setting of the Council's budget shall be considered first by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then by the Customer and Central Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee which meets prior to the Executive's consideration of the proposed budget.
- 7.2 The Customer and Central Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall make recommendations to the Executive on the matters set out in the petitions.
- 7.3 The Executive shall have regard to the recommendations arising from the petitions when determining its budgetary recommendations to Council.
- 7.4 If any petitions on budgetary matters are received outside of this timeframe, they may be referred to the appropriate body for consideration, but there is no assurance that they would be taken into account in the budget setting process.

Comment [P1]: Re-number thereafter

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix B

5. Petitions presented at Full Council:

5.2.1 Petitions should be presented by either:-

5.2.1.1 The lead petitioner; or

5.2.1.2 An individual nominated by the lead petitioner; or

5.2.1.3 A member of the Council on behalf of the lead petitioner.

5.2.2 who shall be entitled to speak for no more than 3 minutes to summarise the contents of the petition. Deleted: 5

6. Petitions presented at or referred to the Executive or Committees

6.1 Where petitions are presented directly to the Executive or a committee, or referred to the Executive or a committee from the Council, they will be considered in the order that they are received on the basis of the following procedure:-

6.1.1 Petitions should be presented by either:-

6.1.1.1 The lead petitioner; or

6.1.1.2 An individual nominated by the lead petitioner; or

6.1.1.3 A member of the Council on behalf of the lead petitioner

who shall be entitled to speak for no more than 3 minutes to summarise the contents of the petition. Deleted: 5

This page is intentionally left blank

Item 10 Recommendations from Constitution Advisory Group

Replacement Appendix C

3.1 Advance Notice:-

- 3.1.1 Advance notice of questions, statements or deputations should be submitted in writing to the Monitoring Officer a minimum of 2 clear working days before the meeting to enable an answer to be given at the meeting. If no advance notice is given of a question, a written answer may be provided after the meeting.
- 3.1.2 Persons wishing to speak must arrive no later than 15 minutes before the start of the meeting and complete a form indicating their wish to speak; and
- 3.1.3 It is recommended that speakers are present at the start of the meeting, since the timing of individual agenda items cannot be predicted.

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix D

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURE (Appx A to Part A4 of the Constitution) Asking questions, making statements, deputations and presenting petitions at meetings of the Council, the Executive or Committees

1. When Public Participation will Operate

1.1 Members of the public will be able to participate at meetings of:-

- The Full Council;
- The Executive;
- The Overview and Scrutiny committees
- Licensing Committee ¹

(¹: where a public hearing is being conducted by the Licensing Committee or its sub committees, public participation shall be considered in accordance with the separate procedure applying to such hearings)

- Development Management Committee²

(²: A separate public participation procedure operates where the Development Management Committee is determining planning or other applications, as set out in Annex 3 of this procedure.)

- General Purposes Committee
- Audit Committee
- Standards Committee

by asking questions or making statements at the beginning of the meeting and by presenting petitions or making a deputation.

Deleted: either, or both of,

Deleted: /or on individual agenda items,

PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND DEPUTATIONS AT MEETINGS (Annex 1)

1. Public Questions, Statements and Deputations at the Beginning of the Meeting

1.1 At the beginning of each meeting of the Council (other than annual or extraordinary meetings, except at the discretion of the Chairman), the Executive and committees, a period of up to 15 minutes will be allowed for public questions or statements, deputations and responses.

- 1.2 The Chairman of the Council, executive or committee will have discretion to extend this period.
- 1.3 Questions, statements or deputations should be relevant to the functions of the body to which they are addressed and relate to matters over which the Authority has powers or duties, including where the Council shares delivery responsibilities, or which affect the area of the Authority.
- 1.4 Normally no more than three speakers will be allowed to speak at a meeting on any one subject, with each individual speaker being restricted to a total of **three** minutes.
- 1.5 In the case of deputations, or where there are groups of speakers for or against an issue, each group will only have a total of three minutes to speak and, therefore, they will be encouraged to appoint a spokesperson.
- 1.6 Questions, statements and deputations during the 15 minute period will also be subject to the principles set out at paragraphs 3 below and to the general principles governing public participation at paragraph 2 of Appendix A.

3. **Principles Governing Public Questions, Statements and Deputations**

- 3.1 Advance Notice:-
 - 3.1.1 Advance notice of questions, statements and deputations must be submitted in writing to the Monitoring Officer a minimum of 2 clear working days before the meeting;
 - 3.1.2 Where a speaker has given advance notice, it is recommended that he/she be present at the start of the meeting, since the timing of individual agenda items cannot be predicted.
- 3.2 The order of speaking will be in the order in which requests are received.
- 3.3 Questions should be directed to the chairman, who may request the appropriate member (or at a meeting of the Executive or a committee, the relevant officer), to reply.
- 3.4 Each question will be put and answered without discussion, although the Chairman may allow:-

Deleted: 2.

Deleted: Questions, Statements and Deputations on Individual Agenda Items¶

Deleted: 2.1

Deleted: Questions, statements or deputations on an individual agenda item will be allowed immediately after it has been introduced by the report author, another officer, relevant member or the Chairman of the Council, Executive or committee. ¶

Formatted: Body Text 2, Left, Tabs: 1.27 cm, Left + 3.17 cm, Left

Deleted: 2.2

Deleted: Normally no more than three speakers will be allowed to speak on any one subject, with each individual speaker being restricted to a total of **three** minutes.¶

Formatted: Tabs: 4.5 cm, Left + Not at 4.44 cm

Deleted: 2.3

Deleted: In the case of deputations, or where there are groups of speakers for or against an issue, each group will only have a total of three minutes to speak and, therefore, they will be encouraged to appoint a spokesperson.¶

Formatted: Tabs: 4.5 cm, Left + 5.71 cm, Left + Not at 4.44 cm + 5.75 cm

Deleted: 2.4

Deleted: After members of the public have been able to speak, the Chairman may invite ... [1]

Formatted: ... [2]

Deleted: 2.5

Deleted: The item will then be considered by members ... [3]

Deleted: 2.6

Deleted: Questions, statements and deputatio... [4]

Formatted: ... [5]

Deleted: and

Deleted:

Deleted: or

Deleted: need not

Deleted: but if notice has been given, it will be easier to ... [6]

... [7]

Deleted: 3

- 3.4.1 Further clarification or supplementary questions, including the Chairman asking questions of the member of the public; and
- 3.4.2 A Member to request that an issue raised be included on the agenda of a future meeting.
- 3.5 Any question which does not receive a response through lack of time or information will be given a written reply within 5 working days after the meeting on the condition that the questioner has provided his/her name and address.

Deleted: notice

Deleted: completed and handed in a form containing full details of the question and

Page 2: [1] Deleted **PeastonM01** **25/10/11 15:48:00**

After members of the public have been able to speak, the Chairman may invite the relevant member (or, at a meeting of the Executive or a committee, the relevant officer) to comment and/or clarify matters.

Page 2: [2] Formatted **PeastonM01** **25/10/11 15:48:00**

Tabs: 4.5 cm, Left + 5.71 cm, Left + Not at 4.44 cm + 5.75 cm

Page 2: [3] Deleted **PeastonM01** **25/10/11 15:48:00**

The item will then be considered by members of the Council, Executive or committee.

Page 2: [4] Deleted **PeastonM01** **25/10/11 15:48:00**

Questions, statements and deputations on individual agenda items will also be subject to the principles set out at paragraph 3 below and to the general principles and exceptions governing public participation at paragraph 2 of Appendix A.

Page 2: [5] Formatted **PeastonM01** **25/10/11 15:49:00**

Tabs: -1.38 cm, Left + 2.54 cm, Left + 4.44 cm, Left + 5.75 cm, Left + 6.6 cm, Left + 7.49 cm, Left

Page 2: [6] Deleted **PeastonM01** **03/10/11 14:09:00**

but if notice has been given, it will be easier to give a more detailed reply

Page 2: [7] Deleted **PeastonM01** **04/10/11 14:04:00**

- 3.1.2 However persons wishing to speak must arrive no later than 15 minutes before the start of the meeting and complete a form indicating their wish to speak; and

B2 THE BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. Policy Framework: Definition

1.1 The policy framework means the following plans, policies and strategies and such others as may be added by the Council. (Note: all other plans and policies shall be the responsibility of the Executive.)

- 1.1.1 Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy
- 1.1.2 Local Transport Plan
- 1.1.3 Plans with Development Plan Document status which together comprise the Local Development Framework and the Waste and Minerals Development Framework
- 1.1.4 Sustainable Community Strategy
- 1.1.5 Statement of Licensing Policy under Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003
- 1.1.6 Statement of Licensing Authority Policy under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005
- 1.1.7 Corporate Strategic Plan/Medium Term Plan
- 1.1.8 Older People's Strategy
- 1.1.9 Housing Strategy
- 1.1.10 Climate Change Strategy
- 1.1.11 Equality and Diversity Strategy
- 1.1.12 Joint Economic Development Strategy for Bedfordshire

1.2 The title of the plans, policies and strategies described above may, from time to time, be varied. Notwithstanding any change in title, these plans, policies and strategies will be deemed to be still part of the policy framework until expressly removed by the Council.

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.95 cm

Deleted: 2 . Required Plans

Deleted: ¶
¶
1.1.2.1 . Children and Young People's Plan¶
1.1.2.2

Deleted: 3

Deleted: 2.4

Deleted: 2.5

Deleted: 2.6

Deleted: 2.7

Deleted: Statement

Deleted: ¶
1.1.3
Recommended/Discretionary Plans¶
¶

Formatted: Indent: Hanging: 3.17 cm, Tabs: 2.86 cm, Left + Not at 2.22 cm

Deleted: 3.1

Deleted: (including Directorate Development Plans)

Deleted: 3.2

Deleted: 1.1.3.3 . Cultural Strategy (including the Leisure Strategy)¶

Deleted: 3.4

Deleted: 3.5

Deleted: 1.1.3.6 . Customer Service Strategy, Communication Strategy, and Community Engagement Strategy¶
1.1.3.7 . Local Area Agreement¶
1.1.3.8 . Regional Spatial Strategies including the MKSM sub-regional strategy (including Luton and South Bedfordshire growth area strategy documents, unless formally delegated by the Council to a joint committee)¶

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.95 cm

Deleted: 3.9

Deleted: 3.10

Deleted: ¶
¶
¶
¶
¶
¶

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix F

Deleted: B5

Formatted: Right

Deleted: FULL
COUNCIL PROCEDURE
RULES

B5 FULL COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

1. Council Meetings

1.1 There are four types of Council meeting:

Deleted: three

1.1.1 the Annual meeting

Deleted: T

1.1.2 the budget-setting meeting

1.1.3 ordinary meetings

Deleted: 2

Deleted: O

1.1.4 extraordinary meetings.

Deleted: 3

Deleted: E

1.2 These meetings will take place in accordance with the following procedure rules.

2. Annual Meeting of the Council

2.1 Timing

2.1.2 In a year when there is an ordinary election of councillors, the Annual meeting will take place within 21 days of the retirement of outgoing councillors. In any other year the Annual meeting of the Council will take place in March, April or May.

2.2 Business

2.2.1 The order of business at the Annual meeting will be:-

2.2.2.1 To elect a person to preside if the chairman and vice-chairman are absent.

2.2.2.2 To elect the Chairman of the Council.

Deleted:

2.2.2.3 To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Council.

2.2.2.4 To elect the Leader of the Council in the year following the election of all councillors.

2.2.2.5 To approve the minutes of the last meeting.

2.2.2.6 To receive any declarations of interest from members.

2.2.2.7 Chairman's announcements and communications.

2.2.2.8 Leader's announcements and communications.

- 2.2.2.9 At the discretion of the chairman, to permit public participation in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part A4 of the constitution.
- 2.2.2.10 To receive and consider recommendations of the Executive and committees and answer questions asked under Rule No 12.1. (Note: This item of business will not be dealt with at the Annual meeting held immediately following the election of the new Council.)
- 2.2.2.11 Subject to paragraph 2.5.1, to appoint overview and scrutiny committees (as set out in Part D (Overview and Scrutiny)), a Standards Committee (as set out in Part F (Ethical Governance)) and such other committees as the Council considers appropriate to deal with matters which are neither reserved to the full Council nor are executive functions, (as set out in Part E (Regulatory and other committees) of the constitution).
- 2.2.2.12 To agree the scheme of delegation or such part of it as the constitution provides it is for the Council to agree (as set out in Part E2 and H3 of the constitution).
- 2.2.2.13 To receive at the meeting immediately following an election of all councillors, a report from the Leader of the Council regarding the composition of the Executive for the coming year, the names of councillors he/she has chosen to be members of the Executive and the responsibilities to be held by those councillors together with a written record of the proposed Scheme of Delegation of Executive Functions. In any other year, to receive a report from the Leader on any changes to those appointments or delegations.
- 2.2.2.14 To make appointments to outside bodies in the year following an election of all councillors.
- 2.2.2.15 Other business, if any, specified in the summons.
- 2.2.2.16 To receive and consider an Annual report from its overview and scrutiny committees. (This item of business will not be dealt with at the annual meeting held immediately following an election of all councillors.)

Deleted:

Deleted:

2.2.2.17 To receive and consider an annual report from the Leader, outlining policy priorities for the forthcoming year. (This item of business will not be dealt with at the Annual meeting held immediately following an election of all councillors, but instead may be dealt with at the first ordinary meeting after the Annual meeting).

Deleted: ¶

2.3 Election of the Leader

Deleted: ¶

¶
¶
¶

2.3.1 The Leader is elected at:

2.3.1.1 The Annual meeting of the Council following an election of all councillors; or

2.3.1.2 The next meeting following the resignation, dismissal or vacation of office by the Leader.

2.3.2 The election of the Leader shall be conducted by the chairman on the basis of nominations being made and seconded and put to the vote. If there are more than two people nominated for the position of leader and there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken. The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

Deleted:

Deleted:

2.4 Dismissal of the Leader

2.4.1 Dismissal of the Leader can only be made on the basis of a motion signed by 10 members of the Council and included on the agenda for a Council meeting in accordance with the normal rules for notices of motion. The motion shall indicate the reasons for the proposed dismissal except in cases where the political control of the Council has changed. If approved, the dismissal will take immediate effect.

2.5 Appointment of Councillors on Committees

2.5.1 At the Annual meeting, the Council will:-

2.5.1.1 Confirm which committees to establish for the municipal year and their size and respective terms of reference;

2.5.1.2 Decide the allocation of seats (and substitutes where permitted) to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules;

2.5.1.3 Receive nominations from group leaders of members to serve on committees (and substitutes where permitted) and appoint to those committees;

- 2.5.1.4 Receive nominations of group leaders for the chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees and to appoint to those committees; and
- 2.5.1.5 Appoint co-opted members, as appropriate, to committees.

2.6 Variation of Membership

- 2.6.1 The Council may at any time (whether or not at the Annual meeting) amend the decisions made above.
- 2.6.2 The appropriate group leader or deputy group leader will notify the Monitoring Officer by formal notice, of any changes in membership of any committee, other forum or outside body allocated to their group, for report to the next meeting of the Council for information. Such notice shall be provided to the Monitoring Officer or his/her nominee prior to the commencement of the forum in question to enable it to have effect for that meeting.

2.7 Substitute Members

- 2.7.1 As well as allocating seats on committees, the Council will allocate seats for substitute members shown in 2.7.2 and 2.7.3 below.
- 2.7.2 For each committee or sub-committee, the Council will appoint half of the number of substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on that committee or sub-committee (being a minimum of one and rounded up by one in the case of odd numbers).
- 2.7.3 Each Independent elected member not belonging to a political group within the Council is entitled to nominate a substitute to attend one of these forums in his/her place.
- 2.7.4 A member who is unable to attend a meeting may arrange for one of the named substitutes appointed by the Council to attend in his/her place. Where such an arrangement has not been made, any of the named substitutes will be entitled to act as substitute for an absent member of their group.
- 2.7.5 Substitute members may attend the meeting in the capacity only:-
 - 2.7.5.1 To take the place of the ordinary member for whom they are the designated substitute;
 - 2.7.5.2 After the Monitoring Officer, or his/her nominee, has been notified before the meeting of the intended substitution;

2.7.5.3 After declaring his/her status as a substitute member at the start of the meeting.

2.7.6 The member substituted shall cease to be a member of the forum concerned throughout the meeting, including any adjournment, and the substitute attending the meeting shall be a full member of that forum for the same period.

3. THE BUDGET SETTING MEETING

Deleted: 3.
Deleted: ORDINARY MEETINGS

3.1 Timing

3.1.1 The budget setting meeting will take place in accordance with the Calendar of Meetings agreed annually by Council.

Formatted: Normal

3.1.2 However, the Chairman and Monitoring Officer may determine, having regard to special circumstances, that the budget setting meeting shall be held at such other place or time as they consider appropriate.

Formatted: Normal

3.2 Business

Deleted: 2

3.2.1 The order of business at every budget setting meeting of the Council shall be:

Formatted: Normal

3.2.1.1 To elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent

Formatted Table

3.2.1.2 To approve the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Council.

Formatted: Normal

3.2.1.3 To receive any declarations of interest from members of the Council.

Formatted: Normal

3.2.1.4 Announcements from the Chairman of the Council

Formatted: Normal

3.2.1.5 Announcements from the Leader of the Council

Formatted: Normal

3.2.1.6 Reports of the Statutory Officers, if any

Formatted Table

3.2.1.7 To receive and consider recommendations contained within reports of the Executive including

- The Members' Allowances Scheme**
 - The Treasury Management Strategy**
 - The Capital Programme Strategy**
 - The Medium Term Financial Plan**
- and additionally the formal Council Tax resolution.**

Formatted: Normal, Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.63 cm + Tab after: 1.27 cm + Indent at: 1.27 cm

3.2.1.8 Any other business specified in the summons.

3.2.2 It shall be the duty of the Monitoring Officer, after consultation with the Chairman, to refuse to accept any motion which in his/her reasonable opinion out of order or otherwise inappropriate and it shall be the duty of the Monitoring Officer, at the direction of the Chairman, to exclude all quotations, extracts or other matters which would not form a necessary part of the resolution should the motion be adopted.

Deleted: 2

Formatted: Normal

4. ORDINARY MEETINGS

APPENDIX G

C2 KEY DECISIONS AND THE FORWARD PLAN

1. Key Decisions

- 1.1 A Key Decision means an executive decision which is likely:-
 - 1.1.1 To result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings, which are significant as defined in 1.2 below, having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
 - 1.1.2 To be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of the Council.
- 1.2 For the purposes of 1.1.1 above, savings or expenditure are significant if they exceed £200,000 per annum (revenue) or £500,000 whole life cost (capital).
- 1.3 Savings and expenditure in 1.2 above, do not include:-
 - 1.3.1 The day to day activity of the Council's treasury management functions, which are covered by the Treasury Management Policy Statement approved separately by the Council.
 - 1.3.2 Expenditure which is identified in the approved Revenue Budget or Service Plan for the service concerned;
 - 1.3.3 Implementation of a capital project identified in the approved Capital Programme and in respect of which the detailed business case (or equivalent) has been approved;
 - 1.3.4 Implementation of an explicit policy within the approved Budget and Policy Framework or fulfilment of the policy intention of a key decision previously approved by the Executive;
 - 1.3.5 The invitation of tenders or awarding of contracts where necessary to provide for the continuation of an established policy or service standard.
- 1.4 For the purpose of 1.1.2 above, a decision will be regarded as "significant" if the outcome of the decision will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the Authority to a substantial number of people living or working in the wards affected.

Deleted: 2

Deleted: or 10% of the budget for the cost centre concerned, whichever is the smaller

Deleted: es

Deleted: signing

- 1.5 A decision maker may only take a Key Decision in accordance with the requirements of the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in Part G2 of the constitution.

2. Forward Plan

- 2.1 Each month the Monitoring Officer will publish a plan (known as “the Forward Plan”). The Forward Plan will be published at least 14 days before the start of the period covered.
- 2.2 The Forward Plan will contain details of all matters likely to be the subject of Key Decisions during the twelve month period commencing on the first day of the month following its publication.
- 2.3 Further details regarding the contents of and arrangements for publishing the Forward Plan are set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part G2 of the constitution.

E3 COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES

16. Rights of Non-Members

16.1 Subject to paragraph 16.2, every member of the Council shall have the right to attend meetings of a committee. Such members shall be entitled to speak once on any item and may, with the consent of the person presiding, contribute further but shall not vote.

Deleted: E

16.2 This rule does not apply to committees and sub-committees such as the Licensing Sub-Committee which exercise quasi-judicial functions where different arrangements are prescribed.

This page is intentionally left blank

Meeting: Council
Date: 19th January 2012
Subject: Housing Strategy
Report of: Cllr Ken Matthews Executive Member for Sustainable Development
Summary: The report advises Members on the development of the Housing Strategy for Central Bedfordshire.

The report invites Members to approve the Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy 2011/2012-2015/2016.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officers: John Goody, Principal Housing Development Officer
Michael David, Principal Housing Development Officer
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: The Council
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Delivering a strategic approach to Housing in both meeting need and enabling affordable homes, is a key element in meeting the Council's top level priorities.

Financial:

The financial implications of the Housing Strategy were incorporated into the Capital Programme 2010 /11 previously approved by Members. There are therefore no new financial implications for the Council arising from the adoption of the Housing Strategy.

The Strategy refers to various external funding streams and in addition the Local Investment Plan has bid for grant and loan support for a number of discrete projects under the Homes & Communities Agency's (HCA's) Affordable Homes Programme. Discussions are continuing on this and grant funding will be made available to registered providers depending on the outcome of these bids. RP's will endeavour to spend the funds in accordance with the priorities within the Housing Strategy.

Legal:

Most local authorities take the view that a document setting out the key strategic housing objectives is necessary. The Strategy is essential in delivering the Council's key corporate objectives.

Risk Management:

Failure to produce a housing strategy would result in the Sustainable Communities Strategy not having a suitable and justified source of evidence. Having a housing strategy has also proved useful in attracting funding, often in ad hoc, initiative oriented bidding rounds.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

Current staff resources will be used to deliver the action plan.

Equalities/Human Rights:

Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote race, gender and disability equality and to tackle discrimination experienced by other vulnerable groups. The Council must ensure that decisions minimise unfairness and do not have a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, and men and women.

As part of the development of the Housing Strategy, an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are fully considered. This has highlighted that access to appropriate housing is particularly important for reducing inequalities, because too often those who are most disadvantaged are more likely to be living in housing that does not adequately meet their needs. Lack of choice and quality in housing stock means that the most vulnerable communities are often housed in cramped, poor quality accommodation. The Central Bedfordshire Equalities Forum supports the priorities set out in the Housing Strategy and agrees that they reflect the key issues experienced by vulnerable groups.

Community Safety:

Development of the Housing Strategy has considered the Council's statutory duties under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Key Community Safety stakeholders, including the Community Safety partnership, have been consulted as part of the wider public consultation.

Sustainability:

All new housing schemes will aim to meet the highest levels of sustainability compatible with best value and technical feasibility.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

A joint meeting of the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered an early draft of the Strategy in May 2010 and approved the short summary used to inform the Sustainable Communities Strategy. They asked for a number of changes to the Strategy itself relating to empty property and carbon reduction that have been incorporated in the final version of the document.

It was agreed at Executive on the 2nd November 2010 that following public consultation, the draft Strategy be referred direct to the Council for approval, subject to any amendments that may be appropriate in the light of the consultation, and that the Director of Sustainable Communities be authorised to report direct to the Council on this matter following consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Sustainable Development and Housing.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. **That the Council adopts the Housing Strategy 2011/2012-2015/2016 attached as Appendix A.**

Background

1. While many local authorities have over recent years divested themselves of the landlord function to provide social housing, all district and unitary authorities have a residual role in providing a strategic housing function that plans, resources and co-ordinates the activity of all those with a role in delivering and improving housing and living conditions in its area.

An overarching Housing Strategy is an important tool in:-

- a) providing a point of reference for all external stakeholders, including the health service, the Homes and Communities Agency, housing associations, developers and local community groups and associations;
- b) Describing all the Council's activities around delivering housing services and forms the basis for engagement with all external partners and communities.
- c) Providing the context for the statutory Homeless Strategy, Private Sector Renewal Strategy and Strategic Rent Policy, which are key operational housing service policy documents;

2. The draft Housing Strategy is attached at Appendix A. Its priorities are:-

Key Strategic Priority 1: Economic development and sustainable communities

- Retaining and attracting key skills to support and promote growth within our diverse and dispersed economy.
- Sustaining existing communities and neighbourhoods and facilitating the development of mixed communities including the rural areas.
- Meeting the housing needs of local people across a broad range of household groups.

Key Strategic Priority 2: Using council assets to aid the delivery of growth and housing

- Considering use of surplus public land for housing development subject to meeting disposal criteria.
- Increasing the number of rural exception sites delivered on council owned land.
- Promotion of a variety of tenures and mix of properties in urban and rural locations for both market and affordable housing that meets identified needs.

Key Strategic Priority 3: Meeting the accommodation and support needs of Older Persons and Vulnerable People

- Reviewing the effectiveness of sheltered housing.
- Identifying the housing needs of Older Persons and Vulnerable People.
- Identifying move-on accommodation.
- Joint assessments with Children's Services.
- Improving business intelligence to drive strategic and operational delivery to young people.
- Improving quality of advice to families
- Target families in housing need with early intervention and prevention.
- Dedicated staff training for safeguarding of vulnerable people.
- Providing comprehensive support for families in temporary accommodation.
- Developing strategic and operational partnerships to embed safeguarding practice and outcomes in assessment processes.

Key Strategic Priority 4: Providing housing options for the whole community

- Enhancing the quality of housing advice, better early intervention.
- Aligning business processes to provide a seamless model of service across Central Bedfordshire.
- Embed equalities practice across the service.
- Increase customer choice and control for housing.
- Dedicated Homelessness Prevention and Mortgage Rescue Officer.
- Strengthen existing Service Level Agreement with Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) - SLA targets.

3. Wide consultation had already taken place with a range of partner organisations such as Housing Associations and vulnerable adult user groups. This included a major event for all stakeholders in January 2010 when options and issues were examined by a wide audience including invited Members. Consultation with the Local Strategic Partnership has also taken place with the Strategic Housing Partnership and the Environment sub groups. Internal consultation has also taken place including Children's Services, ASCHH commissioning managers and planning development teams.

The Strategy has been equality impact assessed and found to meet equality standards.

The second consultation on the draft Housing Strategy started on the 4th January 2011 and went on for 12 weeks until the 31st March 2011. A formal consultation was open to the entire public and this included a web based questionnaire, a number of meetings, including a Citizen's Panel and Tenants Panel. The draft Housing Strategy was also available in all Libraries across CBC. Two open days were also held, one at Priory House and one at Watling House, where the public were invited to come in and voice their opinions and ask questions. A total of 131 consultation responses were received. Along with the Public Consultation 7 schools in total were consulted. This included 4 Middle Schools and 3 Upper Schools across the CBC area with a 189 responses received from upper school pupils and 4 workshops held with middle school pupils.

As a response to consultation various amendments were made to the draft document and approved by the Executive Member. The final document is now recommended for adoption by Council as an integral part of the Council's corporate policy framework.

4. **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Following approval of the Housing Strategy 2011/2012-2015/2016 by Council the Central Bedfordshire Council Housing Strategy will be adopted.

Appendices:

- Appendix A Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy 2011/2012-2015/2016
- Appendix B Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy consultation summary

Central Bedfordshire Council
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Housing Strategy

2011/2012 - 2015/2016



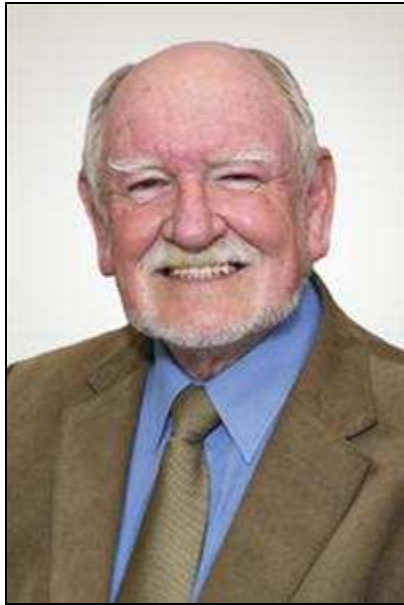
“Globally connected, delivering sustainable growth to ensure a green, prosperous and ambitious place for the benefit of all”

Contents

PAGE	
3	Foreword by Councillor Ken C Matthews
4	Introduction
5	Why Housing Matters
6	National Context
8	The Strategic Housing Role
9	Meeting Housing Need
10	The Relationship of the Housing Strategy to the other Council Strategies
11	Key Strategic Priorities
11	Key Strategic Priority 1: Economic development and sustainable communities
18	Key Strategic Priority 2: Using council controlled land assets to aid the delivery of growth and housing
22	Key Strategic Priority 3: Meeting the accommodation and support needs of older persons and vulnerable People
30	Key Strategic Priority 4: Providing housing options for the whole community
36	Reviewing the Strategy
37	Glossary

Foreword

Councillor Ken C Matthews – Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development



We are pleased to welcome you to the first Central Bedfordshire Council Housing Strategy. This strategy recognises Central Bedfordshire Council is a council that intends to make a difference. This new housing strategy sits at the core of Central Bedfordshire's growth agenda.

Central Bedfordshire has one of the fastest growing populations in the UK, facing an unprecedented demand for additional housing, whether it is for social housing renting, shared ownership or the open market. We will lay the spatial foundations where additional homes will be built, and set our policies and strategies to ensure new homes are built to reflect the very real needs of our local communities. Following the recession and the unprecedented levels of public borrowing, all public funding will be limited. Central Bedfordshire Council will strive to obtain external funding in order to ensure housing delivery and priorities are met and high standards for new homes are not compromised. We have to think innovatively, work collaboratively and efficiently to ensure that the financial resources that we provide now are recycled for further work in the future.

Central Bedfordshire Council is a new unitary authority and our priorities are being refreshed to reflect our new role and ambitions. One key aim is to develop the Council as an Economic Powerhouse and this strategy has a key role in achieving that aim. As the Council takes shape we will adapt and continue to change to meet the housing needs and priorities of the community.

Introduction

Central Bedfordshire Council was created as a unitary council on 1 April 2009. Central Bedfordshire took over the services previously provided for the area by Bedfordshire County Council, Mid Beds District Council and South Beds District Council. This strategy aims to set out the strategic direction for housing in Central Bedfordshire. It will be the first housing strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council.

The Strategy plays an integral part in the delivery of the Councils high level corporate priorities.

Central Bedfordshire corporate priorities	How Housing contributes to meeting the priority
Supporting and caring for an ageing population and those who are vulnerable	Meeting housing needs is key in ensuring an ageing population is cared for and supported.
Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people	Meeting the housing needs of families ensures children are protected from harm and have a stable environment to take up educational and other opportunities.
Maximising employment opportunities and delivering housing growth to meet the needs of our communities	This strategy will ensure that the new housing provided is of a high quality and in the right locations.
Keeping our communities safe	Housing contributes to effective community development and community cohesion by creating pride and social networks within neighbourhoods.
Promoting health and reducing inequalities	The provision of decent homes is a key government target because it has been recognised that decent homes form an important part of healthy lifestyles
Ensuring our local people have the skills to prosper	Developing good quality and desirable housing brings trade and commerce by raising the social capital within the area.
Nurturing a sense of pride and belonging	Developing good quality housing in a thoughtful and sustainable way can ensure development instills ownership and pride within communities and areas.
Getting around and caring for a green and clean environment	The impact of climate change is a major issue, by ensuring that the growth in the area responds to these impacts we can ensure sustainable development.

Why housing matters

Good housing contributes to a healthy community

Children and young adults living in poor housing conditions are up to 25% more likely to suffer from severe ill-health or disability than those in good quality housing.

Children living in poor quality housing have an increased risk of meningitis, asthma, and slow growth, which is linked to coronary heart disease.

Homeless children are up to four times more likely than other children to have mental health problems¹.

Good housing contributes to better education

Children who live in poor quality housing and overcrowded homes miss school more frequently due to illnesses and infections.

Homeless children are more likely to have behavioural problems, which can compromise academic achievement and relationships with peers and teachers.

Many homeless children have lower levels of academic achievement that cannot be explained by differences in their levels of ability².

The long-term health problems and low educational attainment that are associated with poor quality housing increase the likelihood of a person being unemployed or working in a low-paid job³.

Good housing is part of the delivery of a strong local economy

Employment will be limited without a stream of available, attractive and affordable housing. The housing market will not thrive unless people have the money to buy houses locally. Achieving the right housing, including affordable housing as well as market housing, is vital in attracting and retaining a skills base that will encourage inward investment⁴.

Buying a house is likely to be the biggest single investment many of us make in our lifetimes and an aspiration for many young people to work towards.

The construction of the many thousands of homes also opens up the opportunity for local people to be trained and work in the construction sector and take advantage of developing new skills based on the modern methods of

¹ Shelter (2006) [Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives](#).

² Shelter (2006) Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives.

³ Shelter (2006) Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives.

⁴ Housing Corporation (2008) Housing and economic development: moving forward together.

construction and renewable energy technologies to meet the standards for our new homes and refit existing homes.

The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide was adopted as a supplementary planning document for development control purposes by the Council in January 2010. The Council is committed to ensuring that new development is of high quality, is sustainable and maintains or enhances the character and local distinctiveness of the locality in which it is proposed. The Design Guide has been produced to set out the twin interacting principles contributing to good place making and to sustainable development, within the context of creating a safe, accessible, attractive and healthy built environment.

The ability of a community to attract and retain people and provide support for those who need it relies on good housing and attractive, inclusive neighbourhoods. Having a home is both a privilege and a responsibility. It raises aspirations and can instil the values of constructive social behaviour.

National context

The national policy drivers for housing are set out in a number of documents, including the Government's Housing Strategy *Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England*⁵, the Government green paper *Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable*, and the national strategy for an ageing society *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods*. Housing priorities are also conveyed through the annual Budget, as well as through frequent government announcements.

Currently, the main drivers for housing policy include:

- Increasing the delivery of new homes to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population.
- Promoting more environmentally-friendly development, through the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Building sustainable communities, through delivery of homes of a suitable size and tenure mix, supported by appropriate infrastructure.
- Increasing the provision of affordable housing in both the affordable rent and intermediate tenures.
- Enabling people to live independently in their own homes and communities and minimising the need for people to enter residential care.
- Using prevention methods to tackle homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation.

The Audit Commission report *Building better lives: getting the best from strategic housing*⁶, reinforces the importance of the strategic housing role. In particular it highlights the increased pressure housing services will come

⁵ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/housingstrategy2011>

⁶ http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/localgov/nationalstudies/buildingbetterlives/pages/buildingbetterlives_copy.aspx

under as a direct result of the fact that none of the national targets for building new homes set in 2007 will be met.

The regulatory and investment frameworks for housing are changing and place significant emphasis on the effective performance of the strategic housing role.

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has been established as the government's national housing delivery partner and is now the regulator of the landlord functions of social housing.

To qualify for financial support, the HCA expects councils to have developed and secured local agreement to soundly based strategies and business plans from local, sub-regional and regional partners. This means it is vital for us to effectively manage our relationships with partners to deliver a coherent message to the HCA through the 2011-15 Affordable Homes Programme Framework.

The Strategic Housing Role

The Relationship to the Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Communities Strategy

The Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy is incorporated into the Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Housing Strategy document sets out in more detail the priorities identified in the Sustainable Communities Strategy

What is the Strategic Housing Role?

The Housing Strategy aims to ensure the Council provides a comprehensive housing service, which improves the quality of life by seeking solutions to all aspects of housing need, through the creation and maintenance of stable communities across Central Bedfordshire. A large policy framework at National, Regional, Sub-regional and Local Government level directs the Council's strategic function in both housing and planning.

Government has defined a council's strategic housing role as:-

- Assessing and planning for housing need across all tenures
- Making best use of existing stock to meet need, through greater local discretion in access and lettings of social housing stock to make it more mixed in terms of type, size, affordability and tenure
- Planning and facilitating new housing supply
- Planning and Commissioning housing Support Services which link homes and housing support services
- Improving current stock
- Ensuring effective housing and neighbourhood management through partnership working

The priorities of this strategy set out to meet this role by ensuring that a fit for purpose strategy is in place to deal with the local issues affecting Central Bedfordshire.

Key Strategic Priorities

In order to fulfil the Strategic Housing Role and meet housing issues within Central Bedfordshire, four Key Strategic Priorities have been identified for the Central Bedfordshire Council Housing Strategy 2011/2012 and these are:

Key Strategic Priorities	
1	Economic development and sustainable communities
2	Using council assets to aid the delivery of growth and housing
3	Meeting the accommodation and support needs of older persons and vulnerable people
4	Providing housing options for the whole community

Meeting Housing need

In line with national guidelines, Central Bedfordshire Council feels that it is essential to have a good understanding of its housing markets and a clear indication of the need within the area. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was commissioned by all Local Authorities in Bedfordshire in order to achieve this objective and provide an insight into the housing market in Bedfordshire.

Affordable Rent will be the main type of new supply. Affordable Rent homes will be made available to tenants up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and allocated in the same way as social housing is at present. Registered providers that enter into a contract with the HCA will have the flexibility to convert a proportion of social rent properties to Affordable Rent at re-let; the additional financial capacity generated must be applied to support delivery of new supply.

The Council also has several other means to ensure affordable housing is built. These include: - new mixed housing developments where a section 106 legal agreement is used to ensure a percentage of affordable housing is built. 100% Housing Association Developments where Housing Association partners have secured land and bring forward a development of affordable housing; and Rural Housing Schemes, these schemes provide “local affordable housing for local people”. (These schemes are “exceptional” to any other housing development as they are built outside the defined settlement boundary). We plan to use Capital resources for development, especially for rural development, supported housing and also brownfield development.

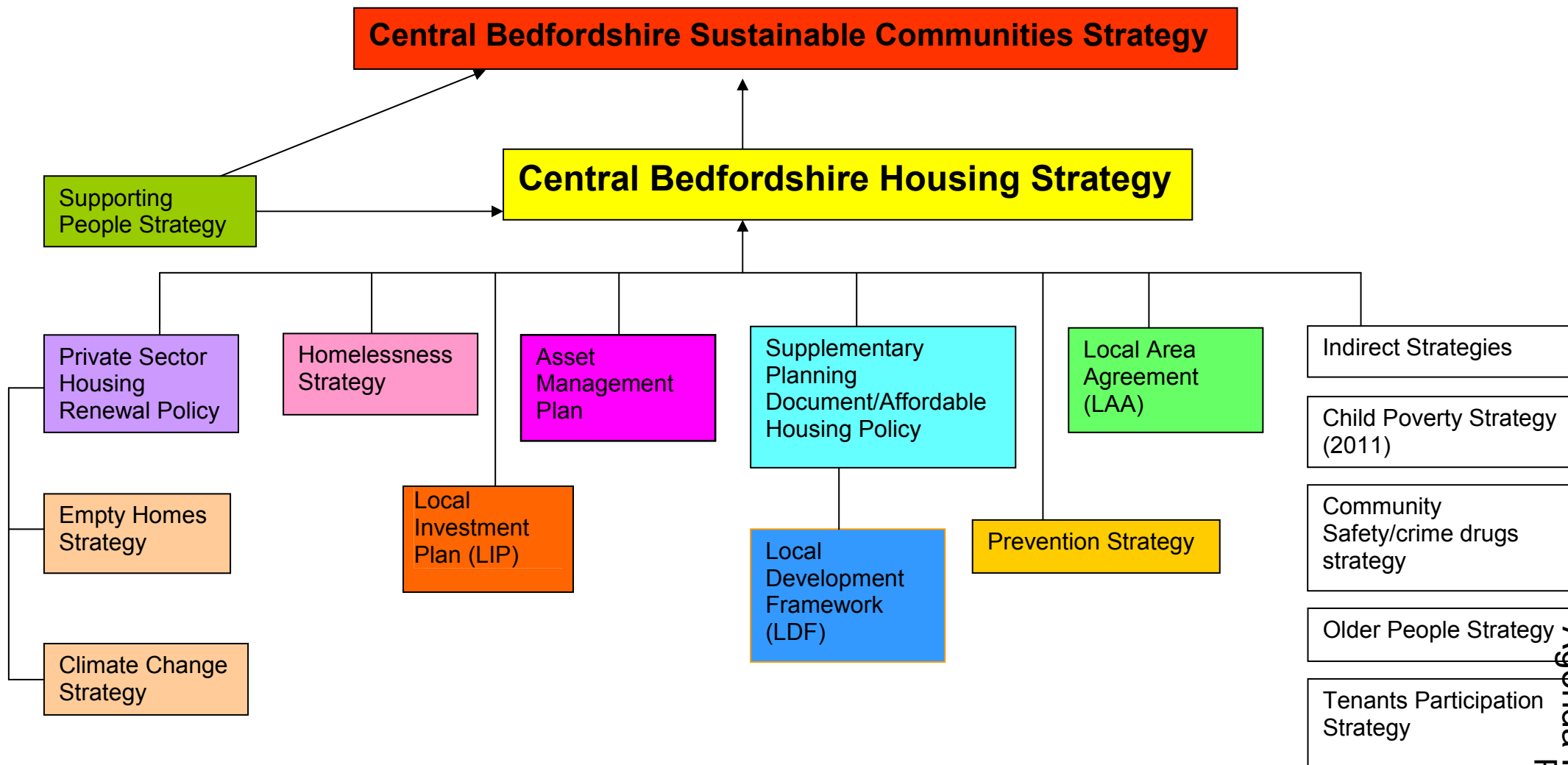
The Choice Based Lettings scheme (CBL) ensures that applicants for housing have some choice over the property they are offered. For Bedfordshire the scheme includes advertising all the vacant properties that become available. To increase mobility across the region, each of the main housing providers will also accept bids for a small proportion of their vacancies from applicants who live in other parts of the region.

For more information on resources to meet homelessness please see the Central Bedfordshire Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015.⁷

⁷ Central Bedfordshire Homelessness Strategy
http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/images/10%2004%2013%20Homelessness_Strategy_V8a_tcm5-27357.pdf

The Relationship of the Housing Strategy to the other Council Strategies

The Housing Strategy is informed by various other strategies which are shown in this diagram



Key Strategic Priorities

Key Strategic Priority 1: Economic development and sustainable communities

Issues

Central Bedfordshire is a widespread area with large and diverse communities. To ensure that these communities continue to thrive there must be opportunities for employment, good infrastructure and good housing, both social and market housing to ensure high levels of social capital and economic stability so that local communities remain sustainable.

Provision of affordable housing is fundamental to the economic and social sustainability of our communities - in the market towns, villages and the more sparsely populated areas of Central Bedfordshire. The Council is working with partners to ensure that the maximum amount of land is made available for affordable housing, including sources that may not previously have been considered such as Council owned land assets, but to do this we must ensure that the council gets value for money and meets the needs within the area.

Key considerations for the provision of affordable housing in Central Bedfordshire include:

- Retaining and attracting key skills to support and promote growth within our diverse and dispersed economy.
- Sustaining existing communities and neighbourhoods and facilitating the development of mixed communities including in the rural areas.
- Meeting the housing needs of local people across a broad range of household groups.

Housing supply is market driven and susceptible to change within the economy. The impact of the current economic downturn is being felt within the housing industry. The SHMA has identified that there is a shortage of both social rented and intermediate affordable housing. A need for affordable housing in North Central Bedfordshire (formerly Mid Beds area) of 2,200 social rented and 1,600 intermediate housing out of a total of 10,100 dwellings has been identified. In Luton Borough and South Central Bedfordshire (formerly South Beds area) a combined need of 7,700 social rented and 3,200 intermediate housing out of a total of 21,600 dwellings has been identified. The council will continue to maximise the supply of affordable housing through the planning system. By ensuring the right development, which meets the needs of the population and growth in Central Bedfordshire we can continue to grow and provide the opportunities for people to remain in the area.

However it is not just about developing new homes, the effective use of the existing housing stock is a key element in meeting housing need. Bringing empty homes back into use will rejuvenate neighbourhoods and aid regeneration in Central Bedfordshire. This in turn can help reduce the

attraction and occurrence of anti-social behaviour, reduce pressure to build on greenfield sites, and give local people a home in an area where they have a local connection.

Objectives

We must facilitate economic growth through the provision of new homes in sustainable locations with access to local employment and the provision of affordable housing and this is a key strategic aim of the council. We have researched our housing market and have planned targets for the future through a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment⁸ (JSNA). We have completed Local Housing Needs Surveys and Studies and intend to update the SHMA data regularly to ensure we can provide an up to date analysis of the housing market within Central Bedfordshire and adapt to meet its needs. We will work to balance employment and housing growth and ensure a supply that includes housing for key workers. We will seek to secure significant infrastructure funding essential for future economic growth of the area through the Local Investment Plan agreed with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

We need to ensure the renewal of the existing housing stock in the social and private rented sectors in order to support affordable living. Local people must have access to local employment and it is important for established communities to continue to thrive and maintain a skilled workforce. It is just as important to regenerate existing communities as well as building new ones and to ensure that we increase the opportunities for all our residents through an integrated regeneration approach to maximise the economic benefits for all. This means that we must have a good knowledge of both sectors of housing stock and ensure that we can maintain and update information to ensure we can focus on and regenerate the areas which are most in need. Please see the Central Bedfordshire Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy⁹ for more Information.

Empty homes are an issue within the county and they are a key resource. We must reduce the number of Empty Homes in Central Bedfordshire and ensure that they are brought back into use through Council interventions, including appropriate enforcement action, incentives, and partnership with owners to ensure they can provide for the housing needs of residents.

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to sustainability and aims to deliver affordable housing where and when it is needed. We will seek to ensure planning policy remains flexible and responsive to needs across the whole community. Sustainability encompasses three main components: environmental, social and economic. In rural areas environmental sustainability refers to the reduction in the use of natural resources,

⁸ JSNA: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/statistics/joint-strategic-needs-assessment.aspx>

⁹ Central Bedfordshire Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy: http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/housing/private-sector-housing/housing_grants/renewalpolicy.aspx

protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural environment. For housing this will include work towards reducing the carbon footprint of new developments and existing homes and aspire to carbon neutrality or as close as feasibly possible, and reducing water and energy use. We must ensure that we make homes as energy efficient as possible and maximise the opportunities of green technologies within Central Bedfordshire. Please see the Climate Change Strategy for further information.

Resources

We have funding allocated within the Capital budget until 2013 for new affordable housing developments. Where no other funding streams are possible and where there is an evidence base for intervention we will make a financial contribution if possible to enable key developments. We have the ability to assess housing need in local communities through housing needs surveys in villages and desktop affordability studies and focus our efforts on areas where there is a need identified.

Through Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings to enable affordable housing delivery and we can ensure Planning Contributions are received for all new development to provide and improve services in the local area where developments will affect services. We have the capacity to seek off-site financial contributions which can be used for service provision in other areas of Central Bedfordshire.

There are various grants available for affordable housing:-

- HCA grant funding
- HCA loans, expertise and training
- Other external funding e.g. Growth Area Funding (GAF)

The Local Development Framework¹⁰ (LDF) Core Strategy for the North has been adopted. It aims to deliver improved social, economic and environmental wellbeing for the community. It also seeks to ensure new development is provided in a sustainable manner, as well as trying to improve the sustainability of existing communities. The new Local Plan will provide the overall development framework for Central Bedfordshire, setting out where development should go and what standards it should aim to achieve. The LDF will co-ordinate the growth in Central Bedfordshire, considering the roles and relationships between settlements, as well as the strategy for infrastructure provision.

The Council has drafted a Local Investment Plan (LIP). The LIP establishes the economic, social and environmental context in Central Bedfordshire, on which a series of investment opportunities are based. These opportunities are identified and prioritised according to a rigorous evidence base and clear local vision.

¹⁰ Local Development Framework:
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/ldf/default.aspx>

The Government has introduced the new Affordable Rent regime. This includes giving greater flexibility to social landlords to determine the types of tenancies they grant to new tenants. Landlords will be able to offer lifetime tenancies where this is needed but also to set shorter tenancy periods where it makes more sense. The rights of existing secure and assured tenants will be protected.

The introduction of a new Affordable Rent product has been implemented and will allow a more diverse offer for the range of people accessing social housing. Affordable Rent will be the main type of new supply of affordable housing. Providers will be able to offer Affordable Rent homes on flexible tenancies. Where tenants are eligible for Housing Benefit it will continue to be paid in full in the same way as for social rented properties at present. In accordance with the new Affordable Rent regime Central Bedfordshire Council will be required to put in place a Tenancy Strategy to influence providers' policies in relation to use of the tenancy flexibility.

Actions

Lead Officer	Area of work	Action	Delivery and Outcomes	Time Frame	Key Partners
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, affordable housing delivery	Deliver an average of 300 affordable new homes each year Increase the supply of affordable housing to meet identified needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target on new affordable homes met Promote a variety of tenures and mix of properties in urban and rural locations for both market and affordable housing that meets identified needs. NI 155 	300 affordable housing delivery target for 2011/2012 Ongoing	HA partners, Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Developers
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, housing delivery	Obtain the maximum possible affordable homes through the planning system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased numbers of homes delivered via the planning system NI 154 NI 155 	Ongoing	HA partners, HCA, Developers
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, housing delivery	Continue to lobby for and progress proposals to develop on development land in Central Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New developments progressed and appropriate funding secured 	Ongoing	HA partners, HCA, Developers
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, monitoring the housing market	Monitor housing affordability using local housing market indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing understanding of affordability across tenures and market constituents. Actions developed to tackle key affordability issues. Updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 	Annually Ongoing to 2013	HA partners, Sub-Regional Partners
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, housing delivery	In conjunction with the LDF ensure that local infrastructure and space for local infrastructure exists to support new units of housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of new units delivered supported by the appropriate infrastructure. National Performance Indicators. NI 154 NI 155 	Annually Ongoing	HA partners, Sub-Regional Partners, Developers
Head of	Strategic	Increase availability of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed schemes and an increase 	Ongoing	HA partners,

Development Planning and Assistant Director ASCHH	Housing and Planning	affordable supported and Extra Care accommodation	<p>in suitable accommodation for all housing needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in the number of Extra care schemes developed 		HCA, Developers, Supporting People
Head of Growth	Strategic Housing and Planning; economic growth	Compile and deliver Local Investment Plan (LIP). Agree Local Investment Agreement (LIA) with HCA based on LIP. Monitor and review LIP and LIA as live documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic funding agreed including capital grants, equity loans and Growth Area Funding. Present true 'sustainable development' by capturing CBC corporate projects in one plan 	<p>LIP completed Autumn 2010</p> <p>LIA signed March 2011</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	HCA LSP (NHS, Police Fire etc) HAS Private developers and landowners
Head of Private Sector Housing	Private Sector Houses in Multiple Occupation	Deliver proactive approach towards identifying and improving HMO's, including through mandatory licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements in HMO stock, increase in HMO landlords licensed 	Ongoing	Private Sector Team, Strategic Housing, Environmental Health Team
Head of Private Sector Housing	Private Sector harmonisation of services	Maximise the degree to which Private Sector Housing Services across Central Bedfordshire are harmonised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New corporate software to harmonise computer systems Harmonise all grant forms and Legal Notices 	Ongoing	Private Sector Team
Head of Private Sector Housing	Private Sector, Empty Homes	Bringing empty properties back into use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A grant funding programme to bring empty properties back into use Number of empty homes brought back into use 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Private Sector Team, Pathmeads HA Private Sector
Head of Asset Management	Asset Management	Meet the decent homes target for Council owned homes and continue to maintain the housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decent homes target met (annual and final target) Number of improvements completed 	<p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Asset Management Team, Contractors
Head of Private Sector Housing	Private Sector, Empty Homes	Bringing empty properties back into use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding programme to bring empty properties back into use Empty Homes brought back into use 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Private Sector Team, Pathmeads HA Private Sector
Head of Private Sector	Private Sector, Climate	Ensure that the work of the Housing Service positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full participation in Carbon Action Network initiatives where appropriate 	Ongoing	Private Sector Team, Strategic Housing

Housing	Change	contributes to the Council's Corporate Climate Change agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and beneficial to Central Bedfordshire. Contribution to Corporate Climate Change Strategy 		Team, Carbon Action, Partner Contractors
Head of Asset Management	Estate Improvements Projects	The overall aim of this programme is to deal with a wide range of Estate Improvements projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of schemes Needs of the Estates are prioritised and included in programmes of works Regular inspections of housing estates Liaison with tenants groups Feedback from customer experience surveys 	Ongoing	Asset Management
Assistant Director ASCHH and Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and ASCHH	Seek to agree an approach with Registered Providers (RPs) for the implementation of Affordable Rent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create agreed approach on Tenancy agreements Create an agreed approach on rent levels Create a Tenancy Strategy Create a Rent Strategy 	2012/2013	Strategic Housing Team, ASCHH, HA Partners RPs

Key Strategic Priority 2: Using council assets to aid the delivery of growth and housing

Issues

In 2008 there was a decline in the housing market which reached a crisis point and had huge ramifications across the housing and development sector. This has inevitably had an impact on the supply of affordable housing where delivery is a percentage of an open market scheme. This situation is compounded by the restrictions in mortgage availability, which is affecting first time buyers in particular. Local housing associations are experiencing difficulty raising finance to bring forward affordable housing on rural exception sites and other 100% affordable housing sites. Problems faced by the rural community other than high prices and a shortage of affordable housing include limited access to transport and other services.

Planning and delivering housing growth and infrastructure is more of a challenge than ever, given the current global economic recession and the impact on the housing market and reduced developer contributions being available.

Rural housing provision will continue to form part of the mainstream planning system in this area. Village property prices are higher than the national average leading to decreased affordability especially for first time buyers who may wish to remain near families in their local area.

The SHMA highlighted rural housing as one of four key themes for the sub-region. Northern Central Bedfordshire is DEFRA classified as 'Rural 80' meaning over 80% of the population live in rural settlements and market towns. Issues affecting rural communities include affordability pressures, lack of housing supply, fuel poverty, and non decent housing. This combination of factors produces a particularly important housing need which will require a combination of measures to address that need.

Currently local rural housing needs are provided through an 'exception sites' policy in the Local Development Framework (LDF) which permits residential development to occur on sites that are not allocated within the plan and would not otherwise be acceptable for such purposes. Housing developed on the rural exception sites must be 100% affordable.

To continue to develop new affordable homes in rural Bedfordshire, it will be important to use all of the planning and strategic housing mechanisms and land assets available.

Objective

We plan to deliver successful and sustainable development whilst maintaining the character of Central Bedfordshire and develop on both urban and rural sites to meet the housing needs of Central Bedfordshire. To meet these housing needs we must ensure that we are proactive and must use our

resources and assets in a careful and sustained way to ensure delivery. Central Bedfordshire has land assets which could be used for development in the future to meet the growth targets and aid the delivery of housing.

Resources

The Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy for the North has been adopted and it aims to deliver improved social, economic and environmental wellbeing for the community. It also seeks to ensure new development is provided in a sustainable manner, as well as trying to improve the sustainability of existing communities.

We will seek to use Council owned assets and our land bank for development to deliver much needed housing and infrastructure in Central Bedfordshire and we must use our assets in a sustained manner and ensure value for money and best value at all times.

Actions

Lead Officer	Area of work	Action	Delivery and Outcomes	Time Frame	Key Partners
Head of Development Planning and Head of Asset Management	Strategic housing, planning, housing delivery and assets review	Identifying land for sites and identifying land for rural exception sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider use of surplus public land for housing development subject to meeting criteria Number of sites indentified Number of rural exception sites delivered on council owned land 	Ongoing Minimum of 20 affordable homes developed in rural areas per annum	HA partners, HCA, Developers
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, affordable housing delivery	Deliver an average of 300 affordable new homes each year Increase the supply of affordable housing to meet identified local needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target on new affordable homes met in 2010/2011 Promote a variety of tenures and mix of properties in urban and rural locations for both market and affordable housing that meets identified needs. NI 155 	300 affordable housing delivery target for 2011/2012 Ongoing Annually	HA partners, Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Developers
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, housing delivery	Obtain the maximum possible affordable homes through the planning system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased numbers of homes delivered via the planning system 	Ongoing	HA partners, HCA, Developers
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, affordable housing delivery	Continue to lobby for and progress proposals to develop on development land in Central Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New developments progressed and appropriate funding secured 	Ongoing	HA partners, HCA, Developers
Head of Growth and Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning; Economic Growth	Compile and deliver the Local Investment Plan (LIP) Agree Local Investment Agreement (LIA) with HCA based on LIP Monitor and review LIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic funding agreement including capital grants, equity loans and gap funding. Present true 'sustainable development' having captured CBC corporate projects in one plan 	LIP completed Autumn 2010 LIA signed March 2011 Ongoing	HCA LSP (NHS, Police Fire etc) HAs Private developers and landowners

		and LIA as live documents			
Head of Development Planning	Strategic Housing and Planning, affordable housing delivery	Compile and maintain local housing needs information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the number of Housing Needs Surveys completed 	Ongoing	Strategic Housing, BRCC

Key Strategic Priority 3: Meeting the accommodation and support needs of Older Persons and Vulnerable People

Issues

The population of Central Bedfordshire is ageing, therefore a full range of housing options and support services will be required to meet the differing needs and aspirations of older households along with lifetime homes. The challenge is to reduce the number of older people living in inappropriate accommodation and to support them to maintain independence. The current data from the SHMA shows the greatest increase in population will be in older people living in Central Bedfordshire. There will be a corresponding increase in the need for extra care accommodation and support needs as the population ages. There remains a need for continued investment to deliver decent homes and improve thermal comfort in the private sector, focusing particularly on the needs of vulnerable and older person occupiers.

Supported accommodation is currently concentrated in Bedford and there is a need to spread both services and accommodation more equitably across the south and middle of the County. Bedfordshire has a limited supply of supported housing or floating support services, designated specifically for offenders and ex-offenders. It is recognised that many of the generic homelessness and young people's services do in fact work with many people who have offending histories. However the only provision which is identified as specifically for offenders is in Bedford. The development of this type service in Central Bedfordshire is much needed.

There is a need to improve services for 16-18 year olds leaving care and who are not ready to support their own tenancies. Foyer or hostel settings are often inappropriate for this group. These young people need support to develop life skills over an intensive period in semi-independent provision. Provision of this sort should be provided in both the north and south of the county however there are none currently within Central Bedfordshire and services are provided in neighbouring authorities.

Evidence from EERA has shown that there has been an under-provision of authorised pitches for Gypsies & Travellers. Aside from the statutory duties, there are practical reasons for making provision for the Gypsy & Traveller community. If authorised sites are not provided, unauthorised camping is likely to continue. The associated problems, such as the costs of taking enforcement action, the tension that exists between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community and the social exclusion experienced by Gypsies and Travellers will continue.

*Putting People First Transforming Social Care (2007)*¹¹ introduced a vision for adult social care that is personalised for individuals, with prevention, early

¹¹ Putting People First - Across Government, the shared ambition is to put people first through a radical reform of public services, enabling people to live their own lives as they wish, confident that services are of high quality, are safe and promote their own individual needs for independence, well-being and dignity.

intervention and enablement at its core. Prevention and early intervention is key to meeting vulnerable peoples support needs. Evidence from the Partnership for Older Peoples Projects (POPPS) indicates that earlier intervention, before people reach high levels of need, may be more cost effective for the health and social care system. It is essential that Central Bedfordshire have services which can assess and meet people's needs before they escalate. Enablement services appear to be able to make significant reductions in the number of older people requiring ongoing social care support. Recent research has demonstrated the significant financial and quality of life gains which, can be achieved from a more rehabilitative and therapeutic intervention at the point of referral to social care. Connections with intermediate care services and housing are very important.

There is an increasing disparity between the housing provision for elderly persons and the population projections for this group. The needs of the growing elderly population are diverse and often urgent. The *Dr Foster Study Extra Care Residential Housing Provision in Central Bedfordshire* has outlined the growing need for Extra Care provision. Studies locally and at a national level have indicated that over 500 new extra care places are currently needed in Central Bedfordshire. However, models differ in the extent of how much development is required. The elderly population is predicted to grow considerably over the coming years, with those of 90 plus showing the biggest growth, increasing by almost 150% between 2009 and 2031. This will present challenges for the provision of residential care, and Extra Care housing specifically.

People become vulnerable and require the assistance of others for a wide range of reasons. The Council aims to support vulnerable people through working in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies and ensure that they receive the adequate support and accommodation needs.

Objectives

Any household that requires specialist or additional support services to enable them to thrive as part of the community could be considered as 'vulnerable'. We must ensure older persons and vulnerable groups have equal opportunity to be independent, have a good quality of life, be as healthy as possible and be safe and secure in their own home. It is important for the council to address the housing needs of older persons and vulnerable groups and ensure that they are not socially excluded and are part of the community. It is essential that different services and partners work together and ensure that vulnerable people are passed on to the correct services to ensure that needs can be met quickly and efficiently.

Half the households containing the frail and older persons are home owners outright. They may have a limited income and will not necessarily receive the same support services as current social tenants. A large proportion may also

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_081118

consider downsizing. We must ensure that we can balance support needs despite tenure and where people want to downsize ensure we have the correct mechanisms in place to aid them.

We must increase the number of Lifetime Homes developed within Central Bedfordshire to ensure people can stay in their homes and communities. Provision of mobility standard housing within new housing growth is essential to meeting the long term and increasing need for accessible housing for older persons. We will endeavor to deliver 40-50 accessible, affordable homes per annum; built to wheelchair standards to meet the growing need.

We must ensure that there are a wide range of options of extra care services and support and ensure that more bespoke services which focus on and match clients specific needs are readily available. We will establish specialist floating support services and options for vulnerable people and offer preventative interventions for existing tenants and resettlement support for people moving on from temporary/supported housing schemes.

Early interventions will be targeted towards people who are beginning to be at risk of needing some health or social care services. The outcome here is to keep people at home and give them choice and control to maintain their independence. They could include practical support services such as minor aids and adaptations, Disabled Facility Grants, lifetime housing, supported housing, telecare and various other options. Taking a holistic approach to care is important to ensure that people can remain within their homes and part of their community. Services will be designed to promote independent living and clear, accessible systems to enable people to find out about them when they are needed.

Care and support for adults in Central Bedfordshire is being transformed. Transforming People's Lives is Central Bedfordshire Council's commitment to providing social care for adults in a different way, working with NHS Bedfordshire and local community voluntary sector partners. We are determined to improve the quality of people's lives in Central Bedfordshire. We will change the way services are delivered to give more choice and control over the care and support received, making better use of resources, allocating them in a fairer and more transparent way and helping to improve the range and quality of local services. We will work together with the people who need our services and the people who are willing to volunteer to help shape and develop future care and support in Central Bedfordshire. We want to increase the level of involvement by service users and carers in the way services are run and in the shaping of services.

We must also reduce the occurrence of unauthorised sites by making sufficient new provision for Gypsies and Travellers across the authority. Local authorities are required by Government, through the Housing Act 2004, to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers alongside the settled population and develop a strategy that addresses any unmet need that is identified.

Resources

There are various budgets available to ensure we can meet the objectives such as:

- Discretionary Renewal Assistance Budget
- Safety, Security and Emergency Repair Grant
- Home Improvement Loan/Assistance
- Affordable Warmth Assistance
- Empty Homes Loan Assistance
- Home Loan Support Grant
- Relocation Grant
- Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)
- Energy Conservation Grant (ECG)
- Externally provided Energy Conservation resources, such as Warm Front, Carbon Emissions Reduction Target
- HRA budget and capital budgets

Strengthening the voluntary sector and in particular improving signposting and strengthening referral networks is important in getting the best out of existing resources. Existing resources include Partner Support agencies, Voluntary agencies and services, Supported Housing providers and Supporting People (SP) services e.g. Floating Support.

'Lifetime Homes' are houses designed with flexible features that allow all age groups to use and inhabit them even with their changing circumstances. The specification of such homes is different to that required by current Building Regulations. Homes built to meet this standard will provide for the needs of the changing age profile in the district and the Council wishes to see as many market homes as possible meeting this specification. This is in line with Government advice 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods', which sets out a target for all new homes to be built to this standard by 2013.

Actions

Lead Officer	Area of work	Action	Delivery and Outcomes	Time Frame	Key Partners
Head of Housing Needs	Meet the Housing Needs of young people 16-24	Implement protocol for 16/17 year olds. Identify use of own stock or other pathways (in partnership) to meet housing need for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify move-on accommodation Joint assessments with Children's Services Improve Business intelligence to drive strategic and operational delivery to young people 	Ongoing	Children's Services, Third Sector, Probation Services, Youth Offending Services, Bromford Support, Supporting People, Corporate Parenting Group
Head of Housing Need and Housing Heads of Service	Embed Think Family approach in homelessness prevention and broader interventions to sustain families in permanent settled accommodation	Provide early intervention and support to families Set up dedicated mediation Strategic approach with Children's Services on holistic family support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve quality of advice to families In partnership target families in housing need with early intervention and prevention Family Intervention Officers working closely with other Family Intervention Projects 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Children's Services, Probation Services, Youth Offending Services, Child Poverty Groups, Social Care, Third Sector, Estates Team
Head of Housing Needs	Strengthening Safeguarding Practices	Strengthen Safeguarding Practices for vulnerable adults and children across all aspects of housing options and homelessness prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated staff training for safeguarding of vulnerable people Provide comprehensive support for families in temporary accommodation Develop strategic and operational partnerships to embed safeguarding practice and outcomes in assessment processes 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	NHS/PCT , Children's Services, Social Care, Third Sector, Probation, Youth Offending, Education, Sub-Regional Partners, May Day Trust
All Heads of Housing	Strengthening Equalities practices	Improve business intelligence around equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated and focused equalities training for all staff Improve access to housing advice and 	Ongoing Ongoing	Third Sector, Estates Team, Children's Services, NHS/PCT,

	across all aspects of housing needs	Embed holistic equalities culture	to all marginalised groups		Equalities Forum, Aragon HA, Dedicated Equalities Groups, Forums Service Users
Head of Housing Needs	Investigating the particular problems that are experienced by people with complex needs and chaotic lifestyles	Improve business intelligence to identify key areas of need, including JSNA Work in partnership to improve commissioning for drug and alcohol services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely and develop the Mental Health Protocol and Forum • Develop protocols with key strategic partners to share intelligence and target service users • Develop work on identifying rough sleepers 	Ongoing	PCT/NHS, Mental Health Services, Third Sector, Police, Probation, Drug and Alcohol Services, May Day Trust
Head of Housing Needs	Sharing awareness and strengthening partnerships with community and other agencies	Engage with community and partners at all levels Promote outcomes to all strategic partners of homelessness prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific forums with key partners and service users to prevent homelessness • Development of key protocols and joint working on mutual outcomes 	Ongoing Ongoing	PCT/NHS Children's Services Social Care, Police CLG, Aragon HA, Estates Team, Carers Service Users, Sustainable Communities
All Heads of Housing	Tenancy Sustainment	Prevent homelessness by effective tenancy sustainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop early intervention strategies to identify key at risk service users • Ensure floating support targeting those that need help maintaining tenancies 	Ongoing Ongoing	NHS/PCT, Bromford Support, Third Sector, Estates Team, CAB, Social Care, PRS
All Heads of Housing	Housing Options	Incentivise households under-occupying larger social housing properties to move to smaller dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a consistent approach to under occupation across all social housing 	Ongoing	Housing Strategy Private Sector Team
Head Of Housing Needs	Meeting the housing needs of older persons and	Review of Sheltered Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the effectiveness of sheltered housing • Identifying the housing needs of older persons and the vulnerable 	Ongoing 2011/2012	Housing Needs Bromford Support Asset Management

	vulnerable people				
AD Housing	Strategic Housing, Housing Needs	All housing and partner services support the development and implementation of Preventative Strategy, achieving services which are preventative in nature, supporting independence and achieving greater Value For Money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI 141 – Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living NI 142 – Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living 	Annually Ongoing	Strategic Housing, HA partners, Housing Needs, Sub-Regional Partners
AD Housing	Strategic Housing, Housing Needs	Establish a strong and effective mental health and housing forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of service plan actions/protocols and PI's which reflect better joint working between mental health and housing services. NI 149 - Proportion of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation 	Ongoing Annually	Strategic Housing, HA partners, Housing Needs,
Commissioning Team	Produce Core Commissioning Strategy	Commissioning Strategy to modernise services in line with national policies and council priorities and integrate information into Transforming Peoples Lives (TPL Program).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI125 - Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care NI130 - Social care clients receiving self directed support NI138 - Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood NI146 - Adults with learning disabilities in employment 	Annually	Commissioning Team Adult Social Care Third Sector
Commissioning Team	Commissioning for Learning Disabilities and ASCHH	Implement procurement plan for Learning Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services are able to meet the needs of people with Learning disabilities and their carers around providing a range of housing options 	June 2013	Commissioning Team ASCHH Third Sector
Commissioning Team	Commissioning, JSNA and Adult Social Care	Ensure the JSNA and needs assessments are developed to support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs analysis is sufficiently robust to deliver transforming peoples lives Commissioning strategies take account 	Ongoing	Commissioning Team ASCHH Third Sector

		delivery of transforming peoples lives	of the priorities identified through the JSNA		
Commissioning Team	Commissioning and Adult Social Care	Developing the market, make providers aware and ensure they are able to develop services in line with transforming peoples lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers are aware of the transforming peoples lives agenda and supportive of change • An increase in the range of service choice with more bespoke services to meet needs 	June 2013	Commissioning Team ASCHH Third Sector
Head of Development Planning and Assistant Director ASCHH	Housing Strategy and Planning	Development of wheelchair accessible homes and mobility standard homes to meet the growing indentified need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of 40-50 mobility standard and wheelchair accessible homes per annum 	Annually	Housing Strategy Planning, ASCHH HA Partners, Developers

Key Strategic Priority 4: Providing housing options for the whole community

Issues

We recognise that within Central Bedfordshire there are limited affordable housing options in relation to the scale and diversity of need. It is essential that people in need of affordable housing have access to a comprehensive advice and assistance service which helps them to understand the pathways into housing that are available.

The widening gap between housing costs, particularly for owner occupation, and household incomes has resulted in fewer households being able to afford housing in Central Bedfordshire. In general, this means that a wide range of households need special help to live in a home that meets their needs. The groups particularly affected are households in housing need because of their personal circumstances. These can include a range of issues such as families increasing in size who need to transfer to a larger property or households that wish to downsize; those who are at risk of offending; those who need to move because of racial harassment or domestic violence; and people with special housing needs because of their health or personal circumstances. We must ensure there are range of housing options to meet the needs of people's changing circumstances.

Preventing homelessness is a key priority for Central Bedfordshire Council and its partners. We recognise the need to provide an efficient and focused housing needs service that delivers positive outcomes for homeless people.

Key areas we need to address are homeless young people, including non-priority need homelessness; and homeless people with complex needs, for example ex-offenders, people with mental health problems, people with drug or alcohol dependency, and people affected by a combination of different challenges. Present homelessness legislation requires that any 16 or 17 year old made homeless has an automatic priority need for housing assistance.

The issue of homelessness is extremely expensive and provides a strain on services however through early intervention and prevention the council can ensure cost effectiveness by preventing homelessness.

For full details on the evidence base for the homelessness issues and actions please see the Central Bedfordshire Homelessness Strategy 2010 - 2015.

Objective

Through early intervention and prevention, promoting choice and control and providing good quality housing advice we will contribute to supporting and caring for vulnerable people, BME groups, an ageing population and the whole community and ensure a variety of housing options are available for all.

The main objectives of the Housing Needs Service are;

- To increase the supply of affordable accommodation
- Early intervention to prevent homelessness
- Shift the focus on how we are best able to meet housing need, to promote choice
- Avoid the use of temporary accommodation where possible
- Provide support for vulnerable people
- Tackle the wider causes such as debt and unemployment
- Address the health needs of homeless people
- Focus on youth homelessness
- Strengthen partnerships with others and make best use of resources

A significant number of older people are living in under-occupied properties (i.e. those with two or more unoccupied bedrooms above the 'bedroom standard'). While many enjoy the additional space, for others under-occupation can be a problem. Some would find a smaller home easier to keep warm and cheaper and more manageable to run. We must ensure that we make the best use of stock by providing options for people to downsize which will free up properties for those in need.

Resources

The Choice Based Lettings¹² (CBL) Scheme aims to provide applicants with as much choice as possible in where they live by openly advertising vacancies and inviting applicants to express interest in vacancies that they would like to be offered and for which they are eligible to apply for. CBL also aims to simplify existing allocations procedures and provide an open and transparent service to all applicants.

The Lets Rent initiative launched in Central Bedfordshire in 2010 is intended to create further opportunities to meet housing need in the sector. Tenants going into the private rented sector under the Lets Rent Initiative will receive a deposit guarantee from the council, and floating tenancy support to prevent tenancy failure.

We have in place resources to give advice on how to prevent homelessness. A Homelessness Prevention and Mortgage Rescue Officer is working across Central Bedfordshire with partner agencies to provide advice and help with preventing homelessness. There are Service Level Agreements in place with the Citizens Advice Bureau in Central Bedfordshire to provide dedicated and comprehensive debt and money advice services.

Bedfordshire has both an in-house housing service (in former South Beds area) and a contracted out housing service (in former Mid Beds area) and the services will continue to work to harmonise service delivery. A Service Level Agreement has been agreed between Central Bedfordshire Council and

¹² Choice Based Lettings:
http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/housing/council_housing/allocations_info/default.aspx

Aragon Housing Association to ensure performance management outcomes which can be used to measure effectiveness and value for money.

The council has in place a Mortgage Rescue Scheme and Recession Impact Funding for those qualify for help which will help ensure people can remain in their homes.

The Tenancy Deposit Protection scheme which is a national initiative is being used within Bedfordshire to ensure good practice in rent deposit handling.

Full details of the resources to meet this strategic priority are contained in the Central Bedfordshire Homelessness Strategy 2010 – 2015.

Actions

Lead Officer	Area of work	Action	Delivery and Outcomes	Time Frame	Key Partners
AD Housing	Harmonise housing options service across Central Bedfordshire, following Local Government Review	To ensure a consistent, high quality service delivery to all across Central Bedfordshire. Improve Business Intelligence to interpret Housing Needs and equalities data across Central Bedfordshire. Review Allocations Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the Strategic Housing Review Align Business processes to provide a seamless model of service across Central Bedfordshire Embed equalities practice across the service Increase customer choice and control for housing 	Completed 2011 Ongoing 2011 Ongoing	Aragon Housing Association, Business Transformation, Third Sector, Social Care, Health, Children's Services
Head Of Housing Needs	Respond effectively to the Recession, focusing on Financial Inclusion	To work in partnership to alleviate the impact of recession on homelessness. Strategic focus in increased provision of money advice and homelessness prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated Homelessness Prevention and Mortgage Rescue Officer Strengthen existing Service Level Agreement with Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) - SLA targets Enhance the quality of housing advice, better early intervention 	Ongoing	Aragon HA, CAB, Salvation Army, Communities and Local Government (CLG), Bromford Support, Housing Benefit Team, Housing Estates DWP/Job Centre Plus Third Sector
Head of Housing Needs and Head of Private Sector Housing	Increase housing supply in partnership with the Private Rented Sector	Expand Lets Rent to increase housing supply Engage Private Sector Landlords to develop a partnership strategy, to encourage feedback and further consultation via a Landlord Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide sustainable homes for those in housing need Monitoring and Evaluation of Lets Rent Set up first forum by May 2010 Implement DWP Safeguarding guidance 	Ongoing Ongoing 2011	Private Rented Sector (PRS), Service Users, Housing Benefit, Bromford Support
Head of Housing	Meet the Housing Needs of young	Implement protocol for 16/17 year olds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify move on accommodation in partnership 	Ongoing	Children's Services Third Sector

Needs	people 16-24	Identify use of own stock or other pathways (in partnership) to meet housing need for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint assessments with Children's Services Improve Business intelligence to drive strategic and operational delivery to young people 	Ongoing Ongoing	Probation Youth Offending Services Bromford Support Supporting People
Head of Housing Need and Housing Heads of Service	Embed Think Family approach in homelessness prevention and broader interventions to sustain families in permanent settled accommodation	<p>Provide early intervention and support to families</p> <p>Set up a dedicated mediation service</p> <p>Strategic approach with Children's Services on holistic family support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve quality of advice to families In partnership target families in housing need with early intervention Family Intervention Officers work closely with other Family Intervention Project's 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Children's Services Probation Youth Offending Child Poverty Groups Social Care Third Sector Estates Team
Head of Housing Needs	Strengthen Safeguarding Practice for vulnerable adults and children across all aspects of housing options and homelessness prevention	Strengthen Safeguarding Practice for vulnerable adults and children across all aspects of housing options and homelessness prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated staff training of safeguarding Provide comprehensive support for families in temporary accommodation Develop strategic and operational partnerships to embed safeguarding practice and outcomes in assessment processes 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	NHS/PCT , Children's Services, Social Care, Third Sector, Probation, Youth Offending, Education, Sub-Regional Partners, May Day Trust
All Heads of Housing	Strengthen Equalities practice across all aspects of Housing Needs	<p>Improve business intelligence around equalities</p> <p>Embed holistic equalities culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated and focused equalities training for all staff Improve access to housing advice and to all marginalised groups 	Ongoing Ongoing	Third Sector, Estates Team, Children's Services, NHS/PCT, Equalities Forum, Aragon HA, Dedicated Equalities Groups, Forums Service Users
Head of Housing Needs	Investigate the particular problems and	Improve business intelligence to identify key areas of need, including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely and develop further the Mental Health Protocol and Forum Develop protocols with key strategic 	2011/2012 2011/2012	PCT/NHS, Mental Health Services, Third Sector,

	pathway journeys that are experienced by people with complex needs and chaotic lifestyles	JSNA Work in partnership to improve commissioning for drug and alcohol services	partners to share intelligence and target service users <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop work on identifying rough sleepers 	2011/2012	Police, Probation, Drug and Alcohol Services, May Day Trust
Head of Housing Needs	Sharing awareness and strengthening partnerships with community and other agencies	Engage with community and partners at all levels Promote outcomes to all strategic partners of homelessness prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific forums with key partners and service users to prevent homelessness Development of key protocols and joint working on mutual outcomes 	Ongoing Ongoing	PCT/NHS Children's Services Social Care, Police, CLG, Aragon HA, Estates Team, Carers, Service Users, Sustainable Communities

Reviewing the Strategy

Each strategic priority in this Housing Strategy has a specific action plan. The actions in the plan are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Resourced, Time-bound) and so have:

- Clear explanations;
- Milestones;
- Challenging but realistic targets;
- Section and Officer responsibilities;
- Additional resources required;
- Timescales, and;
- Measures of success.

This strategy has been developed in the context of a recession, and an unpredictable socio-economic future, and ahead of a detailed Value for Money review of strategic housing services which will inform the resources available for its implementation. Central Bedfordshire Council is only two years old and is still in its infancy. We understand that we must continue to improve and that as a new authority, we need to grow and adapt if we are going to meet the needs of our community. We propose to review the Housing Strategy on an annual basis so we can monitor our performance and targets and continuously improve on any weaknesses.

The Council is currently undergoing a review of the housing services; it is key that we take on board recommendation so that we can improve all areas of housing and ensure:

- Enhanced value for money
- Improved benchmarked performance
- Improved customer satisfaction

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Affordable Housing	Social rented and intermediate housing (e.g. shared ownership; below market rent) provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
Affordable Rent	Affordable Rent is a form of social housing. Homes will be made available at a rent level of up to 80% of gross market rents. RSLs/RPs will be able to charge rents of up to 80% of market rent on a proportion of their re-lets and on all new build stock.
ALMO	Arms Length Management Organisation
ASCHH	Adult Social Care, Health and Housing directorate
Anti-Social Behaviour	Activity that impacts on other people/communities in a negative way.
Audit Commission	An independent body responsible for making sure that public money is spent wisely and efficiently.
Bed and Breakfast (B&B)	Temporary housing, usually not self contained, often used for (but not ideally suitable for) homeless people.
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
Brownfield Land	Land previously built on
Choice Based Lettings (CBL)	New approach to letting empty properties whereby applicants on the Housing Register can choose which properties to be considered for. Applicants having expressed an interest will then be prioritised.
Code for Sustainable Homes	The aim of the Code is to improve the overall sustainability of new homes by setting a single national standard within which the home building industry can design and construct homes to higher environmental standards. Also providing new homebuyers with better information about the environmental impact of their new home and its potential running costs.
Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)	Is a legal function which allows local authorities to obtain land or property without the consent of the owner.
Decent Homes Standard	A standard, which all social housing must meet by 2010. The standard requires all properties to have reasonably modern facilities, be in a reasonable state of repair and have effective heating and insulation
Disable Facilities Grant (DFG)	Council grant to help towards the cost of adapting homes for people with disabilities to continue to live there. The adaptations should meet identified needs, be reasonable and practical.
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
Energy Efficiency	The provision of energy products such as boilers, light bulbs and insulation that save energy and produce less pollutants.
Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)	A review of the effect of an action or policy on equalities communities.
Extra Care Housing	New forms of sheltered housing and retirement housing have been pioneered in recent years, to cater for older people who are becoming more frail and less able to do everything for themselves. These are known as extra care, very sheltered or assisted living developments (or schemes). Most properties in these schemes will suit less

	mobile people and wheelchair users, and bathrooms particularly will be designed to make it easier for assistance to be offered. Schemes usually have their own care staff and provide one or more meals each day, if required. Extra care housing has developed from sheltered housing, and shares many of the same other features.
Floating Support	Support dependent on not having to live in a particular property.
Green Belt	An area of land protected from development. Councils have certain planning powers to designate land as Green Belt where (for example) it will preserve the character of an area and safeguard the countryside.
Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	The Homes and Communities Agency joins up the delivery of housing and regeneration under one roof, bringing together the functions of English Partnerships, the investment functions of the Housing Corporation, the Academy for Sustainable Communities.
Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)	Properties let to three or more tenants who form two or more households with shared facilities (e.g. kitchen). Legislation requires some to be licensed by the Council.
Housing Associations (HA)	Not for profit organisations providing affordable housing and which are registered by the HCA. Also known as Registered Social Landlords.
Housing Need	Households who lack their own housing or who live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market.
Housing Needs Survey	A survey that identifies housing need in a particular area through new research or by analysing existing data.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	The money which is spent on the day-to-day management and repair of council properties; which comes mainly from council rents.
Intermediate Tenures	Renting and ownership options at below market prices
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	The JSNA is the means by which Primary Care Trusts and local authorities will describe the future health, care and well-being needs of local populations.
Let's Rent Scheme	"Let's Rent" is a private sector housing scheme developed by the Housing Needs Service in partnership with private sector landlords, (PRS) Bromford Support, the Revenue and Benefits service, Private Sector Housing, other statutory and voluntary stakeholders. It will increase the number of good quality affordable homes in the private sector and will be available to households across Central Bedfordshire. The scheme has been created to assist in preventing homelessness, to offer customers threatened with homelessness a viable and sustainable alternative to Social housing or temporary accommodation when homeless and to promote customer choice and control.
Lifetime Homes	Houses/flats which have 16 design features with an accent on accessibility and design features that make the home flexible to accommodate the changing needs of households.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	A portfolio of updateable documents which will provide the local planning authority's policies for meeting the community's aims for the future of their area.
Low Cost Home	Subsidised home ownership e.g. an interest free loan for a

Ownership	percentage of the property value or shared ownership (part buy, part rent).
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
Move on	Movements both within and out of supported housing into independent living. It includes people who are moving into lower level accommodation-based support and those moving into independent accommodation, with or without floating support. It may also include people who need to move back into more supported environments.
Private Sector Assistance	Power of LA to help those in private housing e.g. owner occupiers, private landlords and their tenants gain access grants, loans, advice etc.
Regeneration	Improving areas that are run down, neglected, or deprived. Usually involves ways to improve the local economy as well as investment in the physical environment.
Registered Providers (RPs)	See Housing Association
Registered Social Landlord (RSL)	See Housing Association
Rural Exception Sites	Housing developed on these sites must be 100% affordable.
Section 106 agreements	These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing.
Shared Ownership	Where a person buys part of the value of a house from a housing association and pays rent on the other part.
Sheltered Housing	Housing usually for older people with a warden (or scheme manager) to give support.
Single Assessment Procedure/Process	A new system being developed to improve information sharing across Health, Social Services and Housing. The aim is to help vulnerable people access services, by cutting down on paperwork they must fill in.
Social Housing	Type of affordable housing, which includes rented dwellings, which are usually owned and managed by either the Council or a Registered Social Landlord.
Stakeholders	Any individual or group with an interest ('stake') in the success of an activity (in this case housing) and in delivering results, maintaining and improving services.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	A detailed study of a district and/or region that gives detailed information on the present and future housing need, types of housing, jobs and migration that are likely to occur and how this is likely to shape housing provision.
Supporting People (SP)	A national programme that aims to help people live independently, by planning and funding supported housing in line with local needs.
Sustainable Communities	Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.
Total Place	Total Place is a pilot scheme set up to transform public

	services through improved working between central and local government agencies and a better fit between community needs and the total resources available.
Third Sector	Is made up of voluntary organisations and community groups.
Vulnerable People	Government term for people who may have less access to, but more need for services, because of low income, disability or other personal circumstances.

Consultation Summary

In the consultation process for the development of the housing strategy, a number of methods were used to try and get as many opinions as possible on housing issues in Central Bedfordshire. These included a questionnaire and focus groups with Service Teams and Managers, Partner Organisations and service users. Consultation and involvement was undertaken with many colleagues within the Planning, Finance, Legal, Social Services, Health, Community Safety and Education functions within Central Bedfordshire.

On the 15th January 2010 Central Bedfordshire Council held a consultation on the proposed vision and strategic objectives of the new Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy. The objective of the consultation was to get as many views as we could on housing in Central Bedfordshire. This was so that when developing and writing the strategies, we could be sure that the correct issues were addressed. The results of the consultation were taken into account when writing the strategies, and the objectives.

Stakeholders and partners were split into five groups with each one discussing one of following topics in a workshop session.

Housing Strategy Consultation Event 15 January 2010 Workshop Feedback and Further Consultation

	Issue	Issues to be covered
Workshop 1	Affordability, and Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the SHMA tell us • What is the role of health partners in delivery especially in relation to extra care • The role of shared ownership still meeting need? • Issues affecting the availability of rural land for affordable housing
Workshop 2	Housing's part in transforming people's lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do housing outcomes overlap with outcomes on health and social care • Financial Inclusion • Are there possibilities for joint commissioning / joint delivery • What are the priorities between older people, families, those on low income, Young people, People Learning disabilities or those with Mental Health issues and other vulnerable groups.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering extra care housing • What are challenges in provision of housing for older people
Workshop 3	Working together to get the best partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are we doing well • Where are the dangers in partnership working • What are the barriers to fully engaging our partners • What can our partners deliver and how can we help them do this.
Workshop 4	Housing quality through best use of stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the private sector being fully utilised and what are the barriers for people accessing the private sector • How overcrowding can be addressed through best use of existing stock • Reducing Empty Homes • Ensuring homes meet the decent homes standard • Regeneration through growth
Workshop 5	Liveability, Place shaping and delivering sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of neighbourhoods communities thrive in terms of community safety, regeneration and sustainability • Homes to last a lifetime • Carbon neutrality

Some clear patterns emerged from the consultation process, particularly from the workshops. People were asked what they felt were the most important issues surrounding the topics used within the workshops. The issues that people felt were important showed very clear patterns and priorities. These are (in no particular order) – high house prices, high rents, lack of affordable housing, the need for more rural housing, local lettings, planning contributions and long waiting lists for affordable housing.

Key issues and responses emerging from each workshop are shown in the tables below.

Workshop 1: Affordability and Affordable Housing

What we do well	What can we do to improve	What problems must we overcome to reach our goals	What resources do we have to meet the our goals
Rural Exception Schemes	A planning approach that enables affordable housing	Opposition to urban growth and extension	Making best use of stock and land held by Central Bedfordshire Council

<p>A structure in place to assist Rural delivery</p> <p>Responding to market conditions</p> <p>Broad Range of intermediate products</p> <p>Housing growth Supply of affordable housing</p> <p>Growth for rural areas and infrastructure</p>	<p>Flexibility in policies e.g. allocations, tenure mix</p> <p>Best use of stock</p> <p>New solutions to provide affordable housing in smaller rural communities e.g. true local need by incentives to release land</p> <p>Raising awareness and publishing affordable housing across departments</p> <p>A strategy that identifies ways to meet need</p> <p>Get the right balance of housing</p> <p>Link provision to the evidence base</p> <p>Joint thinking on planning for household growth</p> <p>Have joint agendas e.g. social care health, private</p> <p>Strategic planning in terms of location and individual circumstances</p> <p>Different models to take into account aspirations</p>	<p>Lack of joined up strategic thought and conflicting view points within departments</p> <p>Lack of transport infrastructure including public transport and local services</p> <p>Lack of land supply and its accessibility</p> <p>Identifying hidden housing needs</p> <p>Protecting villages and their character</p> <p>Local opposition to developments</p> <p>Financial constraints through limits on planning contributions</p> <p>Over emphasis on small urban areas</p> <p>Financial constraints in risk taking in current market</p> <p>Limited funding from Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)</p> <p>Political uncertainty</p> <p>Ratio of tenure split</p>	<p>Review planning policy on financial contributions</p> <p>Make use of other assets such as land by incentivising agencies to bring land forward</p> <p>Develop a pipeline for housing delivery</p> <p>Demonstrate to the HCA what we can deliver</p> <p>Local letting policies</p> <p>A Policy on prioritising grants</p> <p>A policy framework that enables the most recent evidence base to be used</p> <p>Learning lessons from most recent experience i.e. housing downturn</p> <p>Transparent process' with agreed outcomes</p> <p>Review policy on rural schemes in terms of location (exceptions sites)</p> <p>Harmonisation of strategies so all partners agree outcomes</p>
---	---	--	--

	<p>Younger person provision</p> <p>Access to services and facilities</p> <p>Use the private sector to meet need e.g. empty homes, private rent</p>	Lack of social rented homes	<p>Partnership approach to avoid silo working</p> <p>Joint work and innovation on allocations</p> <p>Supporting HAs to develop mixed tenures</p> <p>Take into account future changes and market conditions</p> <p>Review stock profile to maximise supply of affordable housing</p>
--	--	-----------------------------	---

Workshop 2: Housing's Part in Transforming People's Lives

What we do well	What can we do to improve	What problems must we overcome to reach our goals	What resources and tools do we have to meet our goals
Providing monetary advice to clients	Outreach Services for leisure provision	Lack of joined up strategic thought and conflicting view points within departments	Telecare
Plain English Tenancy Agreements	Provide more choices for Older People	Lack or real ambition and vision to make changes	Multi-Disciplinary Working
Domestic Violence provision and advice	Create employment opportunities close to where you live	Resistance to change	Effective One-stop shop
Partnership Working	Provide accommodation for Young People in Central Beds	Lack of forward planning	Effective Outreach
Encouraging active		Limited financial resources	Remove resistance to importing best practice
			Community Focus

participation for Older people Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Delivering Outcomes for Vulnerable People Delivering a Youth Work Agenda	Improve move-on arrangements Multi-agency Outreach programs Better information and Advice and Advocacy Support Increased involvement of Service users Expanded re-ablement/move on services Build more life-time homes Integration of Services and joint working		Tackling inequalities agenda Using Existing assets Forward thinking and innovative ideas Value and use the Voluntary sector Support services and resources for vulnerable young people
--	--	--	--

Workshop 3: Working together to get the Best Partnerships

What we do well	What can we do to improve	What problems must we overcome to reach our goals	What resources do we have to meet our goals
Choice Based lettings (CBL) Domestic Abuse work Telecare service Neighbourhood Improvement Plans	Have clear Strategic and Operational structures Have good communication across the board Work with honesty and trust Evaluate and audit work and targets	Lack of trust between partners Keeping Control of projects Continuity of partnerships Policy restrictions Using staff and other resources effectively	Complete a piece of work to model good partnerships and show examples of good practice Move people and resources to areas where they are best suited Identify others that can deliver the strategy and targets

Anti Social Behaviour work	Working together instead parallel to one another	Lack of focus and capacity in terms of time	Set matching priorities with partners
Credit Union	Relinquishing control to the best resources to meet targets	Limited financial resources	Give clear timescales for things to work
Joint funding	Working without jargon and using plain English	Lack of clarity of targets	Pool resources and external funding
Working with customers	Create a good knowledge base	Not having clear and identified contact points	Secondments for staff to other organizations and partners to create an understanding of how partners work
	Have common systems/ using systems well	Political environment and bureaucracy	Use private sector and voluntary Organisations
	Influence progress and outcomes	Too much change without giving good initiatives time to deliver	
	Getting the right organisations and individuals leading projects	Short term thinking	
	Services users at decision making bodies	Lack of information distributed and communication breakdowns	
	Have strong leadership		
	Information sharing flexibility		
	Compromise to reach a common goal		
Establish common goals and targets			

Workshop 4: Housing quality through best use of stock

What we do well	What can we do to improve	What problems must we overcome to reach our goals	What resources do we have to meet our goals
<p>Good at statutory interventions giving grants and inspections.</p> <p>We are good at responding to very poor house conditions for tenants where they are drawn to CBC attention.</p> <p>Focus is on RSL stock and our own</p>	<p>Funding help for all owner occupiers.</p> <p>A free service in getting work done to owner-occupier's homes.</p> <p>A major promotion of equity release products for owners with interest free loans.</p> <p>Eliminate fuel poverty by providing totally free loft and cavity wall insulation to all homes where there is none.</p> <p>Web based access by locality to all housing related services, traders, product offers advice.</p> <p>Council to use its buying power to negotiate discounts on fuel prices for poor households.</p> <p>Fully funded empty homes programme using a combination of incentives for owners, advice and information and grants and loans should include use of CPO powers and purchase of properties by negotiation for onward sale to RSLs.</p>	<p>Limited capital resources</p> <p>Limited revenue budgets for staff and for empty homes scheme.</p> <p>Insufficient evidence base - much better information down to parishes' level and realistic target actions are needed.</p> <p>Lack of illness /morbidity statistics to see if health service can support housing inputs for sick or vulnerable.</p> <p>Council policies lack in forcing owners to release empty properties to the council and leave them empty.</p> <p>Lack of political and officer will to use CPO powers through lack of knowledge.</p> <p>Lack of political will to provide loans to landlords in return for nomination rights.</p>	<p>Dealing with fuel poverty in the worse homes in selected wards by a combination of grants, loans and advice to meet NI 187.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive plan to deal with empty homes including advice, information, enforcement, grants and loans to landlords to bring properties back into use and resources to deliver a small Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) programme.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive information base on stock and its better use including detailed energy efficiency, insulation and heating information, householder income, health and social care needs by ward.</p>

	<p>Fully funded rent deposit scheme.</p> <p>Landlord's accreditation scheme for all landlords.</p> <p>Better communication with parishes' access to newsletters and parish notice boards to send out key messages.</p> <p>Provide a user friendly service for older people to help with loft insulation and heating were the private sector will not help.</p>		
--	--	--	--

Workshop 5: Liveability, Place shaping and delivering sustainable development

What we do well	What can we do to improve	What problems must we overcome to reach our goals	What resources do we have to meet our goals
<p>Urban design of recent developments e.g. Stotfold</p> <p>S106 Strategy in place</p> <p>Partnership working</p> <p>Existing developments working well</p>	<p>Promote civic pride and community spirit.</p> <p>Reduce isolation of rural communities.</p> <p>Secure accommodation for those in housing need.</p> <p>Develop more affordable housing.</p> <p>Have network of local services.</p>	<p>Lack of accessibility to services.</p> <p>Resistance to change and modern development.</p> <p>Not enough involvement by large stakeholders.</p>	<p>Learning lessons from existing communities.</p> <p>Infrastructure in place first: Integrated Planning.</p> <p>Local Community Groups input with community and developer dialogue.</p> <p>Making use of local intelligence.</p>

	<p>Have mixed communities with interaction between different groups including Inter- generational.</p> <p>Accessibility for all too local services.</p> <p>Sustainable development e.g. Life time homes, Home working units.</p>		
--	--	--	--

Analysis of feedback from the Consultation

One of the key messages coming out of the consultation was that there is a large need for new affordable housing, especially rural housing and lifetime homes. The responses point to a high (and increasing) demand for affordable housing, a growing population particularly in relation to the older age groups. Furthermore, there were mixed opinions on the need for additional gypsy and traveller pitches.

Other issues arising from the consultation were the following:

- Better access to quality homes
- Ensuring sustainable development
- Increase supply and access to affordable housing
- Tackling empty homes
- Adequate housing and appropriate healthcare is available for our Black and Minority Ethnic, Gypsy and Traveller communities
- Prevent and tackle homelessness
- Ensure older people and vulnerable groups have access to a range of housing and housing related services

General points on the Housing Strategy were that it was ambitious; needed specific and measurable targets and actions; should contain less jargon; should demonstrate links to other strategies and be monitored and reported regularly. These points have now been addressed in the draft strategy.

Taking into account all of the above, we have developed a vision and 4 key priorities, which encompass what we hope to achieve as a direct outcome of the new Housing Strategy.

Key Strategic Priorities
1. Economic development and sustainable communities
2. Using council controlled land assets to aid the delivery of growth and housing
3. Meeting the accommodation and support needs of Elderly and Vulnerable People
4. Providing housing options for the whole community

The Housing Strategy was drafted with these 4 Key Strategic Priorities as key themes and action plans within each theme. An Equalities Impact Assessment was drafted and went through the Equalities Forum on the 17th June 2010 and then again on the 30th September 2010.

Second Consultation Process

The second consultation on the draft Housing Strategy started on the 4th January 2011 and went on for 12 weeks until the 31st March 2011. A formal consultation was open to the entire public and this included a web based questionnaire, attending a number of meetings, including a Citizen's Panel and Tenants Panel and various other meetings. The draft Housing Strategy was also available in all Libraries across CBC. Two open days were also held one at Priory House, Shefford and one At Watling House, Dunstable where the public were invited to come in and voice their opinions and ask questions. There were 131 consultation responses. Along with the Public Consultation 7 schools in total were consulted. This included 4 Middle Schools and 3 Upper Schools in the CBC area. There were 189 responses from Upper school pupils.

The webs based questionnaire consisted of questions regarding the Key Strategic Priorities and if respondents were in agreement with the Priorities.

The results below show that the majority of respondents were in favour of the Key Strategic Priorities.

Priority 1: Economic development and sustainable communities

Encourage economic growth through the provision of new homes in sustainable locations with access to local employment.

Q2.How far do you agree or disagree with priority 1			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	40	31	31
Agree	61	47	48
Neither agree or disagree	18	14	14
Disagree	6	5	5
Strongly disagree	3	2	2
Total	128	98	100
Missing	3	2	
Total	131	100	
% Strongly agree + Agree		79	

Priority 2: Using council land to aid the delivery of growth and housing

Ensure land and resources are maximised to deliver housing in rural and urban areas.

Q3.How far do you agree or disagree with priority 2			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	33	25	26
Agree	59	45	46
Neither agree or disagree	21	16	16
Disagree	8	6	6
Strongly disagree	7	5	5
Total	128	98	100
Missing	3	2	
Total	131	100	
% Strongly agree + Agree		72	

Priority 3: Meeting the accommodation and support needs of Older Persons and Vulnerable People

Provide housing options for the vulnerable and those most in need.

Q4.How far do you agree or disagree with priority 3			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	61	47	47
Agree	60	46	46
Neither agree or disagree	5	4	4
Disagree	2	2	2
Strongly disagree	2	2	2
Total	130	99	100
Missing	1	1	
Total	131	100	
% Strongly agree + Agree		93	

Priority 4: Providing Housing options for the whole community

Ensure a variety of housing options are available for all to meet demand and tackle homelessness.

Q5.How far do you agree or disagree with priority 4			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	44	34	34
Agree	69	53	53
Neither agree or disagree	10	8	8
Disagree	4	3	3
Strongly disagree	2	2	2
Total	129	98	100
Missing	2	2	
Total	131	100	
% Strongly agree + Agree		88	