

Chelmsford Policy Board Agenda

3 March 2022 at 7pm

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Chelmsford

Membership

Councillor I Fuller (Chair)

and Councillors

H Ayres, D Clark, W Daden, J Galley, N Gulliver, G B R Knight,
G H J Pooley, R J Poulter, A Sosin, N Walsh, R T Whitehead
and T N Willis

Local people are welcome to attend this meeting remotely, where your elected Councillors take decisions affecting YOU and your City.

There is also an opportunity to ask your Councillors questions or make a statement. These have to be submitted in advance and details are on the agenda page. If you would like to find out more, please telephone Brian Mayfield in the Democracy Team on Chelmsford (01245) 606923

email brian.mayfield@chelmsford.gov.uk

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CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD

3 MARCH 2022

AGENDA

PART 1

Items to be considered when members of the public are likely to be present

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

All Members are reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting.

3. Minutes

Minutes of meeting on 17 February 2022

4. Public Questions

Any member of the public may ask a question or make a statement at this point in the meeting. Each person has two minutes and a maximum of 20 minutes is allotted to public questions/statements, which must be about matters for which the Board is responsible. The Chair may disallow a question if it is offensive, substantially the same as another question or requires disclosure of exempt or confidential information. If the question cannot be answered at the meeting a written response will be provided after the meeting.

Any member of the public who wishes to submit a question or statement to this meeting should email it to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk 24 hours before the start time of the meeting. All valid questions and statements will be published with the agenda on the website at least six hours before the start time and will be responded to at the meeting. Those who have submitted a valid question or statement will be entitled to put it in person at the meeting.

5. Housing Strategy

6. Policy Board Work Programme

7. Urgent Business

To consider any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

PART II (EXEMPT ITEMS)

NIL

MINUTES
of the
CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD
held on 17 February 2022 at 7:00pm

Present:

Councillor I Fuller (Chair)

Councillors H Ayres, W Daden, S Dobson, G H J Pooley, R J Poulter,

A Sosin, N Walsh and T N Willis

Also present: Councillors L Ashley, A Davidson, C Davidson and M J Mackrory

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors D Clark, J Galley, N Gulliver and G B R Knight.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. If the interest was a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting. Any declarations are recorded in the relevant minute below.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 13 January 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Public Questions

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

5. Health and Wellbeing Working Group - Update

The report to the meeting gave an update on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Working Group and the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The implementation of the Plan was monitored by way of an action plan and took into account Essex County Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and its Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy. The Council's Plan informed both Essex County Council and the NHS, through the Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, and showed how it contributed to the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and wider health system strategies and plans. Delivery of the Plan's priorities was monitored by Livewell Chelmsford, a forum of organisations which aimed to promote, facilitate and encourage members to work collaboratively to improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of everyone in Chelmsford.

It was recognised that there was considerable overlap between the roles of the Health and Wellbeing Working Group and Livewell Chelmsford. It was therefore proposed to merge the two groups by disestablishing the Health and Wellbeing Working Group and to nominate a Member of the Policy Board to attend Livewell Chelmsford.

The Policy Board was fully supportive of the proposal and expressed appreciation for the work of members and officers of the Health and Wellbeing Working Group.

RESOLVED that:

1. the update to the meeting on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Working Group be noted and that the disestablishment of the Working Group in favour of its responsibilities being undertaken by Livewell Chelmsford be approved; and
2. Councillor Nora Walsh be nominated as the Council's representative on Livewell Chelmsford.

(7.02pm to 7.10pm)

6. Masterplan for Site of Former St Peter's School

(M8, CPB3, 2021) At its meeting on 5 July 2021 the Policy Board had given initial consideration to a masterplan prepared by Essex Housing for Strategic Growth Site Policy 1b, the former St Peter's School site, Fox Crescent. It had asked that the officers discuss with Essex County Council the access, parking and other issues raised at the meeting on the masterplan and requested that, depending on the results of those discussions, a revised masterplan be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

Essex Housing had since submitted a Masterplan Addendum which covered vehicular access to the site, parking in Fox Crescent, widening of the footway on Fox Crescent, the footpath link to Canberra Close and independent living and affordable housing. The report to the meeting reviewed each of those issues and set out the changes expected to be made to

the masterplan document in order to align it with the Council's aspirations for this site. With those changes, it was the view of officers that the Masterplan Addendum would address the previous concerns of the Policy Board and would not prejudice the compliance with the site policy requirements of this strategic site.

Ward councillors for the area attended the meeting and said that the proposed changes to the Masterplan generally met the main concerns of local residents. Those concerns centred on traffic and parking and the proposed dual access to the development site and the provision of additional parking would help alleviate potential problems. Residents' preferred option for additional parking was a layby but they were happy to accept the recommended layby and parking court option if more than five spaces was provided in the layby. The increased traffic would exacerbate visibility problems on the bend in the southern part of Fox Crescent and this issue needed to be thought through, possibly with the loss of one or two parking spaces on the bend to improve sightlines and enable vehicles to pass safely.

The ward councillors were pleased that most of the hedges and trees on the site would be retained but asked that thought be given to creating a wild flower area. A member of the Board asked whether there were adequate linkages for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians between the site and other areas and whether there was a potential for a car free zone within the development, as there were in other development sites.

In response to those issues officers said that:

- The bend in Fox Crescent provided a degree of traffic calming but the details of any additional measures would need to be considered at the planning application stage and dealt with under a Traffic Regulation Order.
- A large area in the south-west corner of the development site offered the potential for the creation of a wild flower area and it was suggested by a member present that such a site could extend into the grounds of the educational facility. Some elements of the residential part of the development could also be increased in density, enabling more space to be allocated for ecological and recreational purposes.
- The original and amended Masterplan provided cycling and pedestrian linkages from the site to residential areas to the north and west and there would be shared cycle/footway at each of the two accesses. It was the view of officers that there would be good permeability within and beyond the site. Whilst a bus route could not be provided within the site, there was a service to the city centre from Langton Avenue which the residents could be encouraged to use.
- The potential for a car free zone within the development site would be addressed at the planning application stage, when the opportunity for less parking would be considered as part of the final design, taking into account the balance between lower car usage without precluding car ownership.

In welcoming the changes to the Masterplan set out in the addendum, the Board asked that officers work with the developer to provide a minimum of six parking spaces in the proposed layby in Fox Crescent.

RESOLVED that:

1. It be recommended to the Cabinet that the Masterplan is amended to reflect the content of the Masterplan Addendum (in part), officers' recommendations set out in the report to this meeting and the points made by the Policy Board set out above.
2. The Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair of the Board and the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, be authorised to agree any subsequent changes to the Masterplan ahead of the consideration by Cabinet.
3. The Cabinet be recommended to approve the Masterplan once the changes from 1 and 2 are implemented.

(7.10pm to 7.47pm)

7. Chelmsford Policy Board Work Programme

The Board received the latest version of its Work Programme for 2021-22. It was advised that only the Housing Strategy had been confirmed as an item for the meeting on 3 March 2022 and that it was likely that an additional meeting would be required in April to begin the process for the review of the Local Plan.

RESOLVED that the latest Work Programme of the Board, as amended at the meeting, be noted.

(7.47pm to 7.48pm)

8. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.48pm

Chair



Chelmsford Policy Board

3 March 2022

Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022-2027

Report by:

Director of Sustainable Communities

Officer Contacts:

Paul Gayler, Strategic Housing Services Manager, paul.gayler@chelmsford.gov.uk
01245 606375

Jeremy Potter, Spatial Planning Services Manager, jeremy.potter@chelmsford.gov.uk
01245 606821

Purpose

To consider the Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022-2027 ahead of its referral to Cabinet.

Recommendation

That the documents set out at Appendix 1 and 2 of this report be referred to Cabinet for approval and that any subsequent textual or presentation changes are delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Fairer Chelmsford and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Housing Working Group, formed by the Chelmsford Policy Board, has been assessing the main housing challenges facing Chelmsford as the local housing authority.

- 1.2 A consultation document that set out their initial findings and included feedback from Registered Providers, was approved for wider consultation at a meeting of the Chelmsford Policy Board on 5 July 2021, see link below.

www.chelmsford.gov.uk/resources/assets/inline/full/0/6121550.pdf

- 1.3 Feedback from this consultation has been used to inform the final version of the Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027, attached at **Appendix 1** of this report.
- 1.4 The Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027 is supported by a Statistical Appendix, attached at **Appendix 2** of this report, which provides more detailed information on the supply of, and demand for, a range of affordable homes.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 The consultation on the emerging draft Housing Strategy ran from 14 July 2021 to 15 September 2021.
- 2.2 In total, 71 comments were received from a wide variety of groups and individuals including residents, developers, Registered Providers, voluntary and charitable organisations, statutory bodies, and Parish/Town councils.
- 2.3 There was a good response to the range of questions asked but most comments were made in response to questions about the supply of affordable homes in general and the need for larger affordable homes for rent.
- 2.4 A range of suggestions were made as to how the Council could increase the supply of affordable homes, including making better use of existing affordable homes through extensions, and introducing more flexibility and innovation in planning policy for new housing developments.
- 2.5 There was recognition and support for the role of the private rented sector and support for additional affordable housing to meet specialist housing needs for a range of people.
- 2.6 There was support for ongoing engagement on the implementation of the Strategy from a range of stakeholders / partners.
- 2.7 A summary of the key comments received, and details of how the Council has taken these comments into consideration in the final version of the Strategy, is set out in Appendix 2 of the Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027.

3. Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 -2027

3.1 The Strategy sets out the Council's vision:

“To address the housing needs of all Chelmsford residents so everyone can reasonably aspire to having a home that meets their needs.”

3.2 The vision is supported by six strategic priorities that are required to achieve a better, more balanced supply of homes that meet the Council's statutory duties and the City's strategic housing needs. These are set out below:

- 1) Increasing the supply of affordable homes with a focus on larger units.
- 2) Increasingly the supply of affordable homes from the existing housing stock.
- 3) Supporting landlords and tenants of privately rented homes.
- 4) Enabling the right supply of specialist housing to meet local need.
- 5) Developing effective partnerships.
- 6) Monitoring trends and performance to inform future actions.

3.3 The strategic priorities are all supported by a range of initiatives and interventions, which the Council are seeking to implement with its partners and is summarised in Appendix 3 'Action Plan and Outputs' in the Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027 document.

3.4 Beginning in 2022, the Strategy will be delivered over the next five years. Progress will be reported to Chelmsford Policy Board through updates to the Action Plan and Outputs section of the Strategy and updating of the Statistical Appendix.

3.5 The Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 - 2027, along with the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, will form the future focus of the Council's Strategic Housing Service.

4 Next steps

4.1 The Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027 has been widely consulted on and now includes a series of actions and interventions to support a better supply of homes to meet the City's strategic housing needs.

4.2 It is recommended that the documents set out at Appendix 1 and 2 of this report be referred to Cabinet to be approved and that any subsequent textual or presentation changes are delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Fairer Chelmsford and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027

Appendix 2 - Statistical Appendix March 2022

Background papers:

Chelmsford Housing Strategy Consultation July 2021

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional:

There is no legal requirement to produce a housing strategy but by having one, it will be easier to engage with partners to assist the Council in meeting other legal duties which depend on an adequate supply of affordable homes.

Financial:

There will be financial implications which have yet to be fully detailed, but these will be based on the principle that any investment will have a positive impact to the Council's overall financial commitments, for example reducing the need and cost of temporary accommodation or helping secure more funding from external sources.

Potential impact on climate change and the environment:

The Strategy will encourage the development of homes that can reduce the use of energy in their production and use. Encouraging best possible use to be made of existing properties may also be more sustainable in some cases than redevelopment.

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030:

The Strategy will encourage and support landlords and homeowners to take steps to reduce energy use especially in older, less efficient properties bearing in mind the majority of homes will continue to be provided from the housing stock that is already in existence.

Personnel:

None

Risk Management:

The limited supply of affordable homes, especially those that are larger to meet the needs of those who are homeless or currently inadequately housed is a recognised corporate risk for the Council and cannot be managed without intervention.

Equality and Diversity:

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was prepared to accompany the Consultation Document on the Housing Strategy and will be finalised ahead of any final changes to the Housing Strategy prior to its consideration for approval by Cabinet.

Health and Safety:

Most of the supply of homes will be from partners who will have responsibility as the landlord and occupier, but the Strategy will seek to support the role of the Council in encouraging homes to be adequately maintained and managed, with recourse to enforcement where breaches are not rectified to protect residents.

Digital:

None

Other:

None

Consultees (formulation of Housing Strategy):

CCC Housing Working Group

Registered Providers of Social Housing

Representatives of private landlords

Developers

Local housing and homelessness charities

Statutory Bodies

Parish/Town Councils

Residents

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Our Chelmsford Our Plan

Chelmsford City Council Local Plan 2020

Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing Plan

Chelmsford City Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy

Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 - 2027

March 2022

Foreword



Stephen Robinson
Leader of the Council
Stephen.Robinson@chelmsford.gov.uk
01245 605888

Stephen Robinson



Graham Pooley
Cabinet Deputy for Affordable Housing
Graham.Pooley@chelmsford.gov.uk
01245 606913

Graham Pooley

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*Photos pages 4, 6, 7, 10, 15, 16 and contents page, City Park West, courtesy of Notting Hill Genesis
Photos pages 3, 8 and front cover, Beaulieu, courtesy of L&Q
Photos pages 5, 12, 15 and 28 courtesy of CHP*

Introduction

We face an unprecedented challenge in meeting the need for affordable homes for rent in Chelmsford. Despite maintaining a good supply from new-build homes in recent years, overall affordable supply is not keeping up with demand and there is a chronic undersupply of larger three- and four-bedroom affordable homes for rent. In addition, supply from the existing 10,000+ affordable homes in the City Council's area through relets has reduced in recent years.

Together these factors have created a backlog of urgent housing need amongst families in Chelmsford, whether due to homelessness or overcrowding. We now face a supply lower than anticipated when we last assessed the need for affordable homes in 2015/16. Consequently, there is more reliance on temporary accommodation to address this gap and the time spent in temporary accommodation before a settled permanent property becomes available is increasing. Creating an increase in the overall supply of affordable homes, in particular the supply of larger homes, is therefore the focus of this Strategy to meet the needs of those who are homeless or overcrowded.

Over the last decade the private rented sector was able to help in providing a supply of homes as an alternative to affordable homes through the public sector. The private rented sector has grown to replace conventional affordable housing as the second largest type of tenure in Chelmsford. Unfortunately, due to rising house values and rental levels, this sector is now becoming too expensive for most people on lower incomes and its potential to provide an alternative to affordable homes is reduced. What has previously been a substitute for undersupply of affordable housing, has now become another cause of need. Improving the links between housing need and the privately rented sector as the second most affordable option in Chelmsford, is another priority of this Strategy.

Our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has helped to mitigate some of the need for affordable housing through the prevention of homelessness, but this is a constant challenge, as the local housing market becomes more expensive compared with local incomes and benefit levels. Since the summer of 2020, we have worked with a range of partners to increase

the supply of supported accommodation to reduce rough sleeping in the City. This work has been a major success for the Council and its partners. Some particular areas of support, such as for mental health, domestic abuse, and young people, which in some instances are more prevalent than rough sleeping in Chelmsford, also need to be addressed, but have been overlooked by national policies and opportunities for funding and development.

Meeting the needs of the City's ageing population is also a major challenge. This can include a range of options and possibilities, from helping people remain in their homes to demand for very specialist provision, which is part of health and care commissioning rather than housing. Working with partners to create a better strategic approach to our ageing population, including the possibility of improving the supply of homes by helping people move to homes that are more appropriate to both their needs and aspirations, whether for the short or longer term, is a priority. This will require a high degree of understanding as well as working with a range of partners.



As a stock-transfer authority, the Council is reliant on the cooperation of partners to meet its range of housing needs. It is important we help them understand our local housing need, in particular those aspects that are more unique to Chelmsford than some of our surrounding districts. It is our intention to use this Strategy to inform and influence partners who work at local, regional and national levels, aligning the plans of others as best we can to the housing needs of Chelmsford. A Statistical Appendix to this Strategy provides more detailed information on housing need and supply in Chelmsford.

To make best use of opportunities in the future, we also need to reflect on the way that we work as an organisation to make sure that we can innovate and collaborate to meet our residents' needs. We have already begun to make changes to support a new approach, applying to become an investment partner with Homes England and bringing our Strategic Housing Service under the same directorate as Planning.



Our Vision

To address the housing needs of all Chelmsford residents so everyone can reasonably aspire to having a home that meets their needs.



What do we want to achieve through this Strategy?

We want a better supply of homes that best meet the needs of those who are homeless, overcrowded or living in homes that are unsuitable for their needs. This doesn't just mean more affordable homes, although we must address the current deficit in affordable housing supply overall, but especially homes of a particular size and type that will also help speed up the supply from the existing housing stock, which has been slowing down in recent years.

An increased supply and better mix of additional affordable homes will reduce the number of people waiting to be housed and the time they spend waiting. This increased supply of affordable housing also reduces reliance on temporary accommodation.

We also want to support the private rented sector. The private rented sector is now the second most common type of tenure in Chelmsford and despite the recent increase in rental levels, it still represents the next most affordable option for those on lower incomes. Supporting this sector will continue to help reduce the demand for affordable housing.

This Strategy, along with our Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, will form the future focus of the Council's Strategic Housing Service and sets out a comprehensive package of initiatives and interventions aimed at tackling the range of local housing issues faced in Chelmsford.

The Council's own resources will not be enough to bring forward the changes we want to see, so better collaboration with Registered Providers, local community groups, housing developers, government agencies and other local authorities is essential. We want to work with partners that will help us all make best use of land, properties, funding, and expertise. Some of the aims of this Strategy are intended to create a more innovative and effective environment for all these organisations to collaborate on turning our vision into reality.

To achieve this, we need to keep our partners and residents informed about the changes in the need for and supply of affordable and specialist housing in Chelmsford, including the gaps we have identified between what has been planned for and what is now needed.

For partners, we hope to encourage more focused and enhanced investment in new homes and the better management of existing homes.

For residents, this Strategy will help explain what the Council is seeking to achieve.



Our Strategic Priorities

We have set the priorities of this Strategy based on the actions that are required to achieve a better, more balanced supply of homes that meet the Council's statutory duties and the City's strategic housing needs.

- 1) **Increasing the supply of affordable homes with a focus on larger units**
- 2) **Increasing the supply of affordable homes from the existing housing stock**
- 3) **Supporting landlords and tenants of privately rented homes**
- 4) **Enabling the right supply of specialist housing to meet local need**
- 5) **Developing effective partnerships**
- 6) **Monitoring trends and performance to inform future actions**



Policy Context

As indicated earlier, this Housing Strategy and our Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy form the priorities for the Council's Strategic Housing Service. It will also play an important role in supporting our wider aims, set in our Corporate Plan, Local Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, and Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Further details highlighting the important links between these, and other documents, are included in Appendix 1.

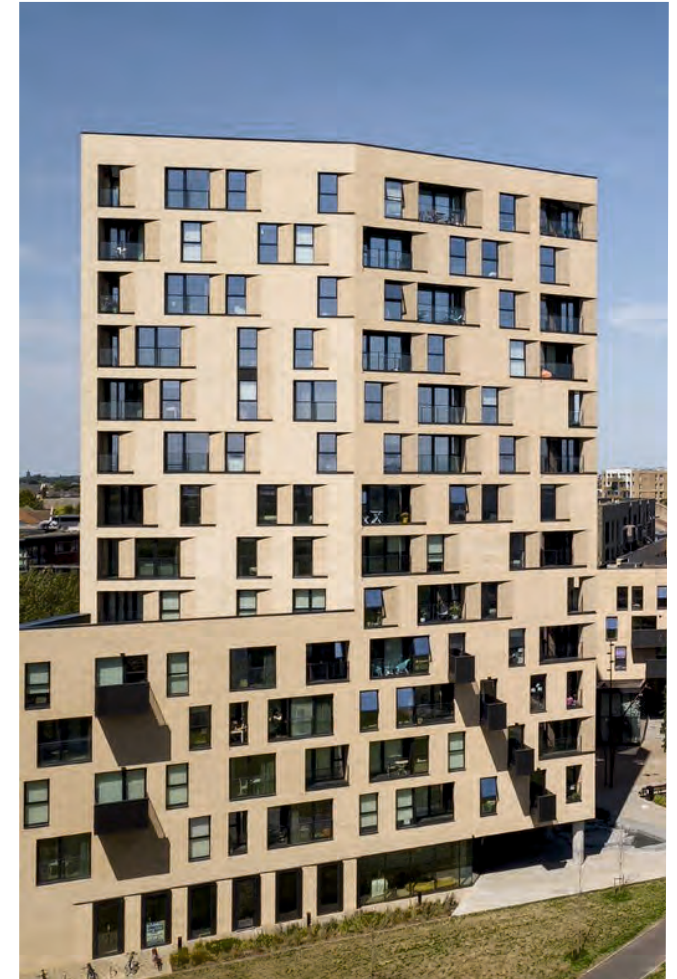
Preparing this Housing Strategy has highlighted the need to review and update housing-related evidence and data such as that which informs the Local Plan and other corporate documents. This will be actioned as these documents are reviewed themselves.

Consultation

During Summer 2021, we consulted on a draft outline of a Housing Strategy. This helped us understand the issues which were most important to residents, local organisations including key employers, local community groups and housing organisations.

This has helped us set the priorities for this Strategy and will influence some aspects of its delivery, as well as how we communicate its progress.

More information about the response to this consultation and changes to the final version of this Strategy can be found in Appendix 2.



The Way Forward

For each of our Strategic Priorities we have set out a range of initiatives and interventions which we would like to implement with our partners.

1) Increasing the supply of affordable homes with a focus on larger units

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) last updated in 2015, identified an annual net need for 175 affordable homes for rent. This figure made assumptions about the turnover from within the existing stock of affordable homes. Since the publication of this assessment, the proposed level of supply from new build is now not sufficient to meet the current levels of demand, partly because the supply (relets) from the existing stock of affordable homes is much lower than anticipated in the assessment.

The SHMA identified an annual net need for 29 affordable four-bedroom homes and 113 affordable three-bedroom homes. Over the last 3 years (2018-2021) the average annual supply, whether new-build homes or relets, has been 51 three-bedroom homes and only 3 four-bedroom homes.

In addition to achieving the annual net need identified in the SHMA, an additional supply of 10 three and 8 four-bedroom affordable homes for rent each year throughout the lifetime of this Strategy will create the following outcomes:

- A reduction in the number of families in temporary accommodation and the length of time they spend waiting.
- A reduction in the cost to the Council in having to provide temporary accommodation.
- An improvement in the supply from the existing stock as families are helped to move.

Action:

- 1a Ensure compliance with the dwelling mix identified in the Council's current SHMA to help achieve the aim of increasing the supply of larger affordable dwellings for rent.

The Council's SHMA identified that 9.7% of all new affordable homes for rent should be four-bedroom properties to meet the housing need; over the last few years, this has been much lower. Achieving the percentage of four-bedroom homes for affordable rent identified as required could provide three times as many four-bedroom homes from the third year of this Strategy compared with the past few years. Whilst delivery through this action would not occur until 2024/25, it would create a sustainable supply of larger homes, without compromising any other affordable housing supply.



Action:

- 1b As part of the future review of the Local Plan, explore the option of increasing the current level of 35% of affordable homes, including 22% affordable housing for rent, from new development sites with need evidenced through the preparation of a new SHMA.



It is important for the Council to address the current imbalance between the supply and demand for affordable homes. The Council will review our planning policies to ensure we maximise delivery of new affordable homes for rent through the planning system.

Action:

- 1c Maximise First Homes sites to meet local housing needs.

National planning policy requires a proportion of homes on 'exception' sites to provide First Homes which must be no more than 70% of market value. The remaining homes on these sites could be three- and four-bedroom affordable homes for rent. Exception sites are those where the need for housing outweighs the prevailing planning policy presumption against development. The Council has approved a new First Homes Planning Advice Note which sets out our local priorities whilst implementing the national policy requirements.

Action:

- 1d Seek a more strategic mix of affordable homes on planning gain sites.

The Council will seek to increase the proportion of larger affordable homes for rent where the overall number of homes exceeds the original Local Plan number for sites. Also, the Council may use its discretion to reduce the number of additional homes than would currently be required if there was a larger proportion of four-bedroom affordable homes for rent delivered than identified in the SHMA, helping to reduce the existing backlog more quickly and achieving a better overall balance of affordable homes.

Action:

- 1e Identify smaller sites that could provide additional larger affordable homes.

There are a number of small sites owned by the Council and others which could be redeveloped to provide larger affordable homes. One of these sites is expected to be completed in 2023, the others in following years.



2) Increasing the supply of affordable homes from the existing housing stock

As we now face a supply lower than anticipated when the Council last assessed the need for affordable homes in 2015, we also need to create a better supply from the existing stock of affordable homes. In 2015, the available level of relets was approximately 6% but by 2021 has reduced to approximately 3%. This represents a reduction of around 200 units per annum. An increase in the supply of affordable homes can in part be achieved through an increased supply of larger new build affordable homes for rent but there are other actions that could also improve the supply of larger affordable homes.

Action:

- 2a Make better use of existing housing stock owned by Registered Providers.

There may be a small number of existing homes that could be extended and refurbished, e.g., two- to three-bed and three- to four-bed. This is unlikely to produce more than one or two additional homes each year but should be less expensive and quicker than building new homes.

Action:

- 2b Reduce the number of vacancies and long-term voids in stock owned by Registered Providers.

Whilst this technically does not constitute new stock, there are at present in the region of 160+ vacant units within Chelmsford and bringing these units back into use more quickly would help to meet the needs of residents on our housing waiting list.

Action:

- 2c Reduce the number of empty homes.

Most property owners either live in their property or rent it to others. A small number will have homes that are empty whilst undergoing repairs, renovation or pending sale or transfer. An even smaller number may become empty for longer periods, possibly even falling into disrepair as a result. The Council will continue to monitor empty homes, encouraging owners to bring them back into use and taking enforcement action including the option of compulsory purchase.

Action:

- 2d Convert other tenures to affordable homes for rent.

The outputs relating to actions 1a – 1e above are not immediate, therefore, it is prudent to consider how additional larger affordable homes for rent can be delivered within a shorter timescale. One option is to convert new homes that are planned for other tenures, such as shared ownership, to affordable rented homes.

Action:

- 2e Work with partners, in particular Registered Providers, to identify sites that have an existing planning permission and that could be developed to provide a better mix or increased level of affordable homes.

This will take time to identify, plan and redevelop, and in some cases might not be delivered in the next five years. It is important that the momentum for improving the supply of affordable homes extends beyond the five-year lifespan of this Strategy, taking into account the possibility that needs may change in the future.

Action:

2f Explore ways to make best use of the Council's housing policies for the allocation of homes.



The Council already gives priority to anyone in affordable housing who wants to move to a smaller home, freeing up a much needed larger, affordable home. As well as working with partners to promote this, we also want to explore the possibility of working with neighbouring

districts to improve choice and mobility to increase the 'churn' of the existing housing supply. We will also continue to monitor the allocation of homes to ensure the Council has the right number of properties available to nominate families to, and if possible, exceed this number to help reduce a backlog.

The combination of these actions will result in a better supply of larger affordable homes, which in turn will increase the supply of smaller homes, as well as addressing the current backlog of families in temporary accommodation. Most of these actions though will not create an immediate improvement within the next 12 months so we also need to plan how to meet the most urgent need in the meantime.

Action:

2g Improve the supply and cost of temporary accommodation.

Creating more larger homes that can be used for temporary accommodation will be necessary in 2022, bridging the gap between current and future supply. The Council is purchasing an additional number of larger homes to be used as temporary accommodation. This is the only way to make sure it can meet its statutory duties to homeless families during the first year of this Strategy. We will also look for suitable sites on which to place additional pre-fabricated homes ('modular units') as these are the most

cost-effective solution. Even with a reduced construction time, they will still take months.

More information about the types of temporary accommodation used by the Council, the costs and need can be found in the Statistical Appendix to this Strategy.

3) Support for landlords and tenants of rented homes

Despite the rising cost of local rents, privately renting a home in Chelmsford is still less expensive than other types of 'intermediate' affordable housing such as First Homes and shared ownership. To supplement the limited supply of affordable homes to rent, we therefore need to work as closely as possible with landlords and tenants in the private rented sector to help those on lower incomes access and retain homes. It is also important that all rented properties are maintained to a good standard.

Action:

3a Produce and make available clear guidance to private landlords and tenants to help improve understanding of their rights and duties, including how to resolve problems.

This will help drive up the quality of accommodation and reduce the risk of tenants losing their homes through lack of understanding.

Action:

3b Launch a forum for private landlords.

It can be difficult for landlords to keep up to date with their legal duties, find out about local and national sources of help and support, and understand and follow local housing trends. Most do not have the resources available to Registered Providers and yet this sector is larger and has been growing faster than the social housing sector. The Council needs to recognise the strategic contribution it makes and establish what support we can provide it.

Action:

3c Introduce routine monitoring and reviews with Registered Providers operating in Chelmsford.

Feedback from those Registered Providers we have consulted has been very positive and most have said that they would like to continue to have further contact to improve partnership working. We will continue to collect and assess data from Registered Providers, for example the number of new homes, lettings, complaints, and local issues. This will allow the Council to review performance.

Action:

3d Provide clear guidance and information for local councillors and others to help them understand the roles and responsibilities of the Council and landlords (both social and private) to support them when dealing locally with housing issues.

Being able to provide information quickly and clearly can help reduce the risk of problems escalating and in some cases the risk of homelessness.

4) **Enabling the right supply of specialist housing to meet local need**

Some people need more than just a home they can afford; there is a need for some homes to be designed or adapted to meet the need of those with physical disabilities, including homes for families with children and those needing temporary accommodation. Disabled Facilities Grants provide an option for existing homes to be adapted, preventing the need to move.

For others, there is a need for support linked to the provision of a home. This could be to help them overcome issues such as mental health or domestic abuse, enabling a move to live

independently in the longer-term. Others will need an increasing level of help and support to live as independently as possible, for example those with enduring support needs like learning disabilities or old age.

Since 2020 the Council has worked with the Government's request to provide accommodation to everyone at risk of sleeping rough. The Council has worked with partners to create an additional 38 units of accommodation with support for single people, with 35 more places planned up until the end of 2021/22. We want to maintain this momentum, with partners, to include a wider range of support needs as part of this Strategy.

The Statistical Appendix provides more detailed information on the need for additional specialist residential accommodation to meet the need identified in this Strategy.

Action:

4a Maximise opportunities through existing planning policy to meet the additional specialist housing needs identified in this Strategy.

Adopted Local Plan Policy DM1 allows the Council to secure specialist residential accommodation on new development that exceeds 100 homes. Although the need for various groups has been identified (see Actions



4c-4g), some needs may be so urgent that other options will be needed for some groups in the meantime.

Action:

- 4b Complete the programme for providing supported accommodation for those at risk of rough sleeping.

This has largely been funded by grants from central government, providing around an additional 40 bedspaces since summer 2020, with another 30 or more to be in place by March 2022. We will then review our plan to eliminate rough sleeping and as part of the review of the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, identify which other gaps may still need addressing and plan accordingly.

Action:

- 4c Identify opportunities and bring forward plans to meet the needs of those who need support and accommodation due to mental ill-health.

The existing provision has not grown in line with current needs. There is a need for accommodation with support that can help those who have yet to have a formal diagnosis and may

struggle to access services without more settled accommodation. This could help prevent the escalation of problems for those with moderate support needs.

Action:

- 4d Provide suitable temporary accommodation for those with physical disabilities and publicise the Disabled Facilities Grant.



There are planning policies to provide some new affordable homes that are specifically designed to meet the needs of households with physical disabilities, but there is a gap in meeting the needs of those households who become homeless and need a suitable property as temporary accommodation, including families

with disabled children. The Council also wants to publicise Disabled Facilities Grants, which can provide assistance for those with an existing home which is no-longer suitable for their needs. However, there is a gap in meeting the needs of those households who become homeless and need a suitable property as temporary accommodation, including families with disabled children.

Action:

- 4e Ensure there is an adequate supply of specialist accommodation for those experiencing domestic abuse.

Both this Council and Essex County Council have new legal duties under the Domestic Abuse Act to provide accommodation with support to anyone who is at risk of homelessness because of domestic abuse. Once Essex County Council's Domestic Abuse Strategy is available, the requirements it identifies will be incorporated into both this Strategy and our Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy.

Action:

- 4f Improve the provision of temporary accommodation for young people.

Essex County Council, as the social care authority, has responsibility for the care of young

people under the age of 18 but district councils have duties to anyone over 18 when they leave care. There are also a number of young adults who may never have been in care but may be vulnerable and need support. From 2022, Chelmsford City Council will be working in partnership with Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council to provide a night stop scheme which will provide temporary accommodation with support for young people who become homeless. This will help establish more clearly the need for more settled accommodation, with support, for those between 18 and 25 years old.

Action:

4g Improve the provision of existing accommodation for young people.

The Council will continue to work with Registered Providers already providing supported housing for young people to support them to improve and increase their offer where possible.

Action:

4h Work with partners to improve our joint understanding of the housing issues for an ageing population and whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.

There is a large demographic change in the proportion of older people which has not been fully assessed nor addressed at either a local or national level. A number of our partners such as Essex County Council and CHP are already reviewing some aspects of these changes, but these will understandably relate to their particular areas. As the local housing authority, this Council needs to understand how this will affect the need and demand for homes locally. From consultation we have identified a number of local organisations such as parish councils who may be interested in also working to deliver a better supply of homes for this purpose, which could also help improve the overall supply of homes in the area.

5) Developing effective partnerships

The Council is not a stock-holding authority. It can only be successful in achieving the actions outlined in this Strategy through working with key partners, whether Registered Providers, housebuilders, private landlords, local district councils or other governmental bodies. Levering-in new investment to our area will be essential to meet our future housing needs and the Council will work with all public agencies to achieve this. Similarly, the Council will look to deploy its own resources, whether land or funding, through partnership working to deliver the maximum impact. There are some new partnerships we want to create which will help deliver some of the actions already mentioned above in this Strategy

and would also create a better framework for further innovation.

Action:

5a Seek Homes England Investment Partner Status.

This will open up more opportunities for funding on sites the Council may want to develop in the future for a range of affordable homes as well as more specialist provision including a dedicated site planned for Gypsies and Travellers.

Action:

5b Join the Gateway to Homechoice Scheme

As a stock-transfer authority, Chelmsford relies on our arrangements with Registered Providers to deliver offers of settled accommodation to residents on our Housing Register. Most of the surrounding districts in Essex (Braintree, Maldon and Rochford) are stock-transfer authorities like Chelmsford. The Gateway to Homechoice Scheme operates a common policy for the allocation of homes through a choice-based lettings system, where social housing properties are advertised in the local authority areas of Babergh, Braintree, Colchester, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Maldon and Mid Suffolk. Joining the Gateway to Homechoice Scheme expands

opportunities to find settled accommodation for residents on Chelmsford's Housing Register.

Action:

5c Explore new housing partnerships to maximise additional affordable housing supply.

There is a growing number of 'for profit' as well as 'not for profit' Registered Providers who may have the financial capacity to compete for sites on the open market to provide a higher proportion of affordable homes. In some cases, these 'for profit' Registered Providers will work with existing 'not for profit' Registered Providers for the allocation and management of new homes, creating the possibility of a new kind of framework for the development and management of additional homes.

Working with a wider range of local housing authorities through the Gateway to Homechoice Scheme will also create opportunities to work with other local authorities that have a mutual interest in developing more affordable homes across a wider geographical area.

Action:

5d Develop community-led housing partnerships working with Eastern Community Homes.

The Council is supporting the Rural Communities Council of Essex (RCCE) as part of Eastern Community Homes and others to work with local community groups interested in developing homes to meet the housing needs of specific local groups, who may otherwise be marginalised by more conventional developments.

Action:

5e Seek targeted partnership working with Essex County Council.

Essex County Council has a statutory role to ensure the housing needs for vulnerable people and those with special requirements are met. There are several housing issues and challenges that overlap between the housing strategies of our two councils. Continued partnership and collaboration is vital to address these matters, for example the housing issues of younger people, older people and those suffering domestic abuse.

Action:

5f Explore issues and benefits of developing joint ventures and local housing companies to improve the supply of affordable homes.

Some local authorities have developed local housing companies and established new joint

development ventures. The structures and motivations for this vary. We will consider whether there would be advantages to either that would deliver tangibly more affordable homes in the medium-to-longer term.

6) Monitoring trends and performance to inform future actions

The Council's Strategic Housing Service will continue to monitor its performance in meeting housing need, including the number and breakdown of households needing temporary accommodation, details of those seeking homes through the Housing Register, and how accessible the privately rented sector is for those in housing need.

We shall routinely review and report on the progress of this Strategy and will continue to speak with those we have worked within developing this Strategy.

There will be new policies, ideas and examples of good practice at national and local levels that we do not want to exclude from our strategic approach to meeting housing need in Chelmsford during the lifetime of this Strategy. So, whilst we want to start implementing the Strategy's action plan from the beginning of 2022, we shall also consider other options as part of our ongoing commitment to innovation and collaboration.

Conclusion

Beginning in 2022, this Strategy will be delivered over five years and will put in place a more strategic approach to understanding and responding to housing need. This will continue beyond the life of this Strategy.

It will take time to create opportunities to enable larger new-build affordable homes through changes to the implementation of our existing planning policies and the future review of policies within the Local Plan.

Over the next five years, there are six strategic priorities that the actions identified in this Strategy should enable us to deliver and develop. Whilst the outcomes will not be delivered at the same time, it is essential that all actions identified in this Strategy commence immediately.

In the first year of this Strategy, we will need to continue to respond to the growing need for temporary accommodation, finding the most cost-effective solutions until other longer-term outcomes are realised.

Improving choice and options for existing tenants of affordable homes can happen sooner, as can some conversions of existing homes, improving the supply of the homes that are most needed. Understanding and providing targeted support for residents and landlords in the private rented sector can also commence quickly and help sustain the strategic role it plays in reducing demand for affordable housing.

During years two and three (2023 and 2024), we would expect to see some additional homes becoming available, which will begin to address the gap between need and supply. Our continuous monitoring of housing need will also help inform any changes that may be needed to policies when we review our Local Plan.

By years four and five (2025 and 2026), the additional supply planned for in this Strategy will begin to improve the supply from the existing stock, the backlog of larger families in temporary accommodation will be cleared and new policies will be in place to secure an ongoing additional supply from new development that should have the same effect on speeding up the overall supply, leading to more homes being available each year.



Annex 1 Glossary

Affordable Homes – defined by the National Planning Policy Framework in 2021 as: “housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market - including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers”. The National Planning Policy Framework then provides further definitions of the following types of affordable housing - Affordable housing for rent; Starter Home; Discounted market sales housing; Other affordable routes to home ownership.”

Affordable Rented Homes – often used as an alternate description of social housing, homes usually owned and managed by housing associations which charge a slightly higher level of rent, this also includes any service charges. The rent should be no more than 80% of the local market rent for a similar property but often it is required that the rent will not be above local benefit levels to make sure that a loss of income does not lead to homelessness.

Allocations Policy – the policy and process for allocating homes to those known by the council to be in housing need. People need to register for housing (on a local Housing Register) and will be given priority based on the urgency of their situation.

Benefit Cap – a maximum amount of benefit payment a person or household is entitled to receive. For a couple or single parent outside of London this is set at £20,000 including housing costs / rent.

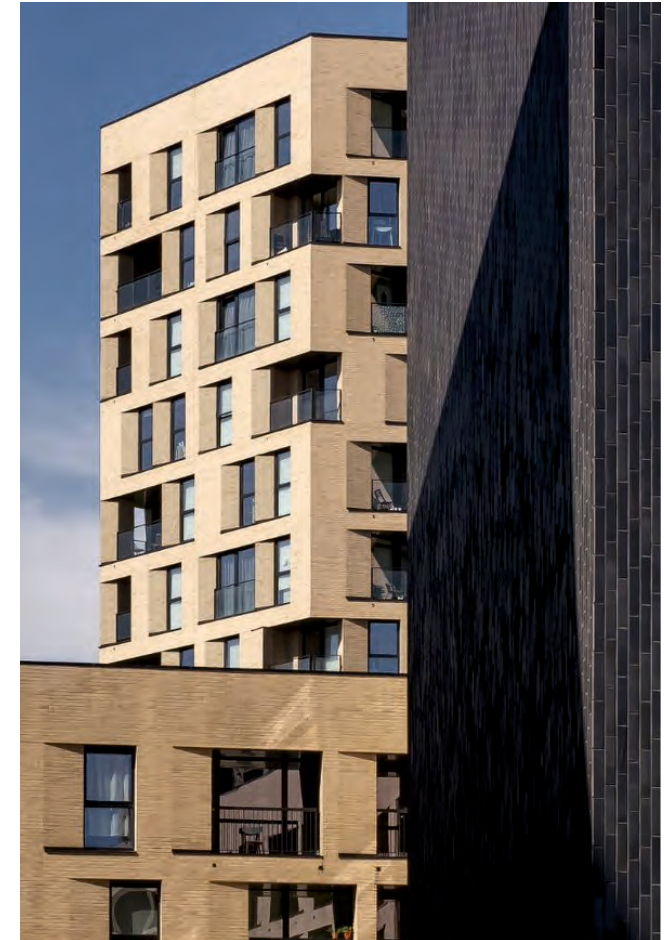
Community Led Housing – housing developments, instigated and led by local community groups to provide homes for local people, often from a particular area such as a village, or a particular group such as ex-services, or older people.

Choice Based Lettings – a way in which affordable homes are allocated to those in greatest need, by advertising homes that are available to be let. Applicants choose which ones they would like to be considered for, making the allocation of homes more transparent and giving choice to those who are eligible to apply.

Disabled Facilities Grants – funding provided by district councils as a grant to help with the cost of adapting homes for people with a disability. The grants are means-tested and often based on the recommendation of an occupational therapist.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities – department of central government that gives directions and support to local councils responsible for housing and homelessness, previously known as the Ministry

for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).



First Homes – a recent type of affordable housing, sold by developers with a discount of at least 30% to first time buyers with a price cap of £250,000 after the discount is applied. In Chelmsford this limits the homes to one- and two-bedroom properties at the 30% discount. 25% of affordable homes in each district will have to be First Homes.

Homes England – a national government organisation that provides funding to Registered Providers to help them meet the cost of providing affordable homes where they are either providing more than is required by local policies, or in some cases where it is not otherwise financially viable to meet local policies for affordable homes.

Housing Register – a list of people needing affordable housing in Chelmsford, managed by the Council. Applicants are given priority according to their circumstances. Often still referred to as a 'waiting list' but this is no longer accurate as those with lower level of need may never be offered accommodation however long they may wait.

Intermediate Homes – homes for sale or rent provided at a cost above social rent but below market levels.

Local Housing Allowance – benefit that is paid to help meet the cost of renting a home.

Local Housing Authority – the local council responsible for ensuring housing needs, including statutory duties to those who are

homeless, are identified and met. In two-tier areas (where there is a county council) the district council is the local housing authority. In Chelmsford, this is the City Council.

Local Plan – plans made by the local planning authority for the development of new homes and infrastructure in the area, based on the National Planning Policy Framework.

National Planning Policy Framework – sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Ombudsman – a government organisation that reviews the way complaints have been dealt with and can make orders to rectify problems and award compensation. The Housing Ombudsman is responsible for landlords and Registered Providers, local councils are overseen by the Local Government Ombudsman.

Registered Providers – shortened from Registered Providers of Affordable Housing, often these are what were previously known as housing associations which operate on a not-for-profit basis reinvesting any surplus into the management and development of affordable homes but now includes some organisations including property developers that have shareholders and generate profits.

Section 106 Agreements – agreements made between housing developers and the local council agreeing how they will meet the council's

policy for affordable homes. Compliance will vary from site to site, for example it is less likely that the development of apartments will be able to provide larger homes. Sometimes it may not be financially viable to meet all obligations, due to the need to mitigate flood risk, contamination of land, or unforeseen market changes.

SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) – a study carried out to identify the need for affordable homes in an area. This is part of the evidence used to inform the policies in a council's local plan. The assessment takes account of the supply from the existing affordable homes, local income levels and the cost of buying or renting on the open market, and the number of households in housing need, including those who are homeless, to calculate how many and what type of affordable housing will be needed in the future.

Stock-Transfer Authority – where a council has transferred ownership of its rented housing stock to a Registered Provider.

Temporary Accommodation – where a council has a duty to provide settled housing, but no suitable homes are available, they must provide suitable alternative accommodation until permanent housing becomes available. In cases of emergency this may be bed and breakfast or hostel accommodation but only for a very short term. If a home is not available within 6 weeks, families must be provided with suitable, self-contained accommodation for rent.



Appendix 1 - Chelmsford: the housing and policy context

The Housing Strategy that we develop based upon this consultation will play an important part in supporting the wider aims of our corporate plan:

Our Chelmsford Our Plan

- Fairer and inclusive Chelmsford– “Develop and implement a new strategic approach to improve the supply and accessibility of affordable homes”. This is the purpose of this Strategy.
- A safer and greener place – “Develop a new environment plan, promoting a sustainable approach to growth, development and everyday living and a low carbon future and ensure that residents feel safe and adequately protected”. We can contribute to reducing carbon use by setting standards for the construction of new homes, making better use of existing properties and working with landlords to improve energy efficiency in existing homes.
- Healthy, active and enjoyable lives – “Promote activities and initiatives to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of Chelmsford residents”. Specialist and supported housing provides a better environment for those who are vulnerable due to old age, disabilities, or poor mental health, to retain their independence.

- Connected Chelmsford – “Bringing people together, empowering local people and working in partnership to build community capacity, stronger communities and secure investment in the city”. This Strategy seeks to encourage a range of people and organisations to build stronger communities, for example community-led housing, and increase the level of investment in the City.

Chelmsford Local Plan

Identifies the current and future need for homes in Chelmsford and policies that will help provide affordable homes and specialist housing:

- Policy DM1 – developments of 11 or more homes should provide a mix of homes that reflect local need and demand, 5% of new affordable homes should be suitable for users of wheelchairs, and developments of more than 100 homes are expected to make a contribution towards the provision of specialist housing in addition to the need for affordable homes.
- Policy DM2 – developments of 11 or more homes must provide or make a contribution to affordable homes of which 22% should be affordable homes for rent and 13% some other form of intermediate affordable homes, e.g. First Homes and shared ownership.

- Supplementary Planning Documents and Planning Advice Notes provide more detailed information to help implement our policy requirements.

Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing Plan

- Improving poor housing, including fuel poverty, enabling people to age well and alleviate loneliness and isolation – we will work with Registered Providers and private landlords to address fuel poverty, and help them make links with others who can support those tenants at risk of isolation.
- Addressing the need for support for those experiencing domestic abuse and other households in need of temporary accommodation – this also links to our plans to develop more supported and specialist housing, reducing the need for temporary accommodation.
- Providing help and assistance to those who need adaptations to their home through the Disabled Facilities Grant programme – as well as making best use of available funding, we want to also create a better supply of homes that may be more suitable to meet the needs of those with disabilities, especially where adaptations to the existing home may be unfeasible.



Chelmsford City Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy

- Reducing the need and cost of temporary accommodation – this can be achieved by improving the supply of the right type of affordable homes.
- Enabling the development of specialist and supported accommodation for those at risk of homelessness – this is one of the priorities of this Strategy.
- Increasing the supply of accommodation for rough sleepers and those at risk of having to sleep rough in Chelmsford – this is already being achieved through the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, but this supply can only be maintained by ensuring there is an adequate supply of more settled, affordable homes for people to move on to.

Chelmsford Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

- Chelmsford City Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in July 2019.
- The declaration represents a commitment to take appropriate action to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030.

- The action plan focuses on 15 priority areas of work for the Council which include integrating on-site renewable energy within new developments in particular the role the Council can have to help deliver low carbon affordable housing – this will set standards for the construction of new homes.

The Council also has a range of powers and duties that relate to this Strategy:

Planning Acts – require the Council to assess current and future housing requirements and create a Local Plan that will meet these needs and demands.

Building regulations – ensure that new and existing homes are safe and meet current standards including the reduction of carbon.

Housing Acts – give the Council powers and duties to regulate landlords, ensure there are suitable policies for the allocation of social housing that are effective in prioritising those in greatest need and develop a strategic response to homelessness.

Homelessness Reduction Act – expanding the duty of the Council and others to prevent and relieve homelessness across a wider group.

Localism Act – enables and encourages local authorities and communities to adopt more flexibility and innovation including making better use of buildings to meet local need.



Appendix 2 - Chelmsford Housing Strategy Consultation

The consultation on the emerging draft Chelmsford Housing Strategy ran from 14 July 2021 to 15 September 2021. There were 71 comments in total from a wide variety of groups and individuals including residents, developers, Registered Providers, voluntary and charitable organisations, statutory bodies, and Parish/Town Councils. All responses were considered in detail and can be read in full at <https://consult.chelmsford.gov.uk/kse/>

This document presents a summary of the key comments received and details how we have taken them into consideration in the final version of the Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027.

Table 1 below shows the questions and issues that received the most comments. Table 2 provides a summary of all comments received in the order in which the questions were set out in the consultation document.

Table 1 - Most popular issues (10 or more)

Consultation Question Number	Consultation Question	Number of comments
3	Additional comments about the supply of affordable homes	21
1	Supply of larger affordable homes	20
23	Any other comments about the strategy?	19
17	Tackling empty homes	18
14	Helping people become homeowners	17
11	Other groups in need of specialist housing	16
16	Promotion of intermediate affordable housing	16
15	First Homes – who should be prioritised?	15
22	Keeping people informed of progress with the strategy	14
9	Housing for older people	11
19	Which partners to work with?	11

Table 2 - Summary

Question	You said...	We did...
<p>Question 1: Do you have any suggestions as to how the Council could provide more larger affordable homes?</p>	<p>Introduce more flexibility and innovation in planning policy for new developments, along with making better use of existing buildings through extensions, bringing back into use empty homes and maximising/incentivising housing delivery on brownfield sites.</p> <p>Increase intensification including 'building up' and better sized rooms, with a focus on enabling a higher occupancy in all sizes of dwellings.</p> <p>Help older people 'right-size' may help free up larger homes and the need for financial subsidy if there is a need to develop a higher proportion of larger homes on some sites or fewer homes overall but a higher proportion of larger affordable homes.</p> <p>Improve partnership working with Registered Providers and exploring new delivery vehicles/partnerships to improve supply.</p>	<p>Include a new action to seek a more strategic mix of affordable homes on planning gain sites and publish a planning advice note on this.</p> <p>Include a new action to reduce the number of vacancies and long-term voids in stock owned by Registered Providers.</p> <p>Include a new action to make better use of existing housing stock owned by Registered Providers.</p> <p>Continue to act to reduce the number of empty homes.</p> <p>Include a new action to explore housing issues relating to an ageing population and explore whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.</p> <p>Include a new action to join the Gateway to Homechoice Scheme and a separate action to explore new housing partnerships to maximise the additional affordable housing supply.</p>

<p>Question 2: If you are a housing association, how could you help improve the supply of the existing stock and how could the Council help you develop larger family homes?</p>	<p>Improve data collection relating to people prepared to downsize to make it more attractive to existing tenants under-occupying homes.</p> <p>Prioritise under-occupiers on new build sites and introduce a more flexible allocations policy to make downsizing more attractive to existing tenants.</p> <p>Extend existing affordable housing, tenure conversions from other affordable home ownership / market products with financial support from the Council.</p> <p>Prioritise housing for local residents.</p>	<p>Include a new action to explore housing issues relating to an ageing population and explore whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.</p> <p>Include a new action to make better use of existing housing stock owned by Registered Providers.</p> <p>Include a new action to convert other tenures to affordable homes for rent.</p> <p>Include a new action to reduce the number of vacancies and long-term voids in stock owned by Registered Providers.</p> <p>Include a requirement for an applicant to have a location connection to Chelmsford to qualify to join the Housing Register.</p> <p>Publish a First Homes Planning Advice Note which includes local eligibility criteria for a period of 3 months from when a home is first marketed.</p>
<p>Question 3: Is there anything else you would like to add?</p>	<p>Consider the importance of the type of tenure, design, and policies for the allocation of homes.</p> <p>Manage competing priorities, in particular the Council's statutory duties to those in greatest need, including those in temporary accommodation / homeless and other demands such as key-workers, local Parish-wide need and developing sites with a balanced mix of affordable housing.</p>	<p>Include a new action to explore ways to make best use of the Council's housing policies for the allocation of homes.</p> <p>Include a new action to improve the supply and cost of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Commit to undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment which will review a range of needs.</p>

	<p>Provide further guidance on First Homes and improving neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Update the Strategic Housing Market Assessment to inform decisions on balance of need.</p> <p>Consider better targeting of temporary accommodation with appropriate support to release more settled accommodation.</p> <p>Focus on the role of a good private sector that offers longer tenancies.</p> <p>Increase provision of affordable housing through the planning system and monitor delivery through the Local Plan and consider a different definition of affordable housing.</p> <p>Provide clearer information to a wider audience on need and policies.</p>	<p>Publish a First Homes Planning Advice Note.</p> <p>Include a new action to increase a range of specialist housing that includes support.</p> <p>Publish a Statistical Appendix which provides more detailed information on the Vision and Actions in the Strategy.</p> <p>Retain focus on working with private sector landlords and blended support for the rented sector and its tenants, to recognise the equally important functions of the private and public rented housing sectors.</p> <p>Commit to review the affordable housing policies in the Local Plan review commencing this year, which will include an assessment of different affordability levels within the definitions of Affordable Housing set out in national planning policy.</p>
<p>Question 4: If you are a private landlord or letting agent, what type of support would you like to see from the Council?</p>	<p>Guarantee rent to private landlords to make them more willing to consider housing applicants needing Housing Benefit.</p>	<p>Retain a focus on working with private sector landlords and blended support for the rented sector and its tenants to recognise the equally important functions of the private and public rented housing sectors.</p>
<p>Question 5: If you are a tenant renting from a private landlord, how would you suggest the Council could help you manage your tenancy?</p>	<p>Continue working with us to support management and sustainment of tenancies, promoting schemes and support already in place to those who need it.</p>	<p>Retain a focus on working with private sector landlords and blended support for the rented sector and its tenants to recognise the equally important functions of the private and public rented housing sectors.</p>

<p>Question 6: Do you have any other ideas or suggestions as to how the Council could help support this sector to meet local housing need?</p>	<p>Provide private rented sector incentives and limits on level of rent in this sector.</p> <p>Give priority to local residents for affordable housing and balancing demand to include lower paid public sector workers.</p>	<p>Retain focus on working with private sector landlords and blended support for the rented sector and its tenants to recognise the equally important functions of the private and public rented housing sectors.</p> <p>Publish First Homes Planning Advice Note which includes local eligibility criteria for a period of 3 months from when a home is first marketed.</p> <p>Include a requirement for an applicant to have a location connection to Chelmsford to qualify to join the Housing Register.</p>
<p>Question 7: Is there anything else you would like to add?</p>	<p>Recognise important role of private sector to a range of households and the long-term role it will play for households in the future.</p> <p>Increase the profile and provision of purpose-built private rented housing as a mainstream form of housing delivery.</p>	<p>Retain focus on working with private sector landlords and blended support for the rented sector and its tenants to recognise the equally important functions of the private and public rented housing sectors.</p> <p>Commit to undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment which will review a range of needs, including demand for purpose-built private rented homes.</p>
<p>Question 8: If you are a landlord, what could the Council do to improve the ability to use Disabled Facilities Grants to make homes more accessible?</p>	<p>Review the financial limits, especially when an extension is required which is more often the case with specialist adaptations.</p> <p>Consider greater flexibility on the type of works eligible for grant funding and early collaboration on new build wheelchair accessible dwellings.</p>	<p>Include a new action to make better use of existing housing association stock, reduce the number of empty homes and publicise the Disabled Facilities Grant. When applied in combination, there is potential to achieve greater flexibility and impact for individual households in need.</p> <p>Publish a Wheelchair Accessible Homes Planning Advice Note which summarises the need for wheelchair accessible affordable homes for rent using information from the Housing Register and will be updated annually.</p>

<p>Question 9. Do you think it would be helpful if the Council worked with others to develop a more strategic approach to meeting the housing needs of older people?</p>	<p>Ensure partnerships extend to charitable organisations as well as statutory bodies.</p> <p>Develop more flexible approaches and offer a range of support and appropriate accommodation options.</p>	<p>Commit to continue to speak with those we have worked with in developing the Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Include a new action to explore housing issues relating to an ageing population and explore whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.</p>
<p>Question 10. If you are a landlord or provider of specialist accommodation what are the issues the Council should be aware of regarding the development of specialist accommodation?</p>	<p>Consider having a joint protocol/approach with Essex County Council over the provision and management of specialist and supported housing and review planning policy requirements on s106 sites, so that specialist housing is provided on larger sites. Also, CCC could consider whether any revenue funding, void indemnity cover or enhanced DFG can be provided.</p>	<p>Include a new action to explore housing issues relating to an ageing population and explore whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.</p> <p>Include a new action to seek targeted partnership working with Essex County Council.</p>
<p>Question 11. Are there any other groups that should be considered? If so, what evidence should the Council look at to understand this need?</p>	<p>Provide a more positive approach and clearer guidelines regarding the implementation of planning policies to increase the supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots.</p> <p>Address needs of homeless people and rough sleepers that require more support.</p> <p>Address the need for specialist accommodation for autistic adults in collaboration with adult social care.</p> <p>Address the need for move-on accommodation for care leavers.</p> <p>Secure more flexible and suitable housing options for older people.</p>	<p>Include a new action to explore housing issues relating to an ageing population and explore whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.</p> <p>Include a new action to seek targeted partnership working with Essex County Council.</p> <p>Include a new action to seek a more strategic mix of affordable homes on planning gain sites and publish a planning advice note on this.</p> <p>Publish a Specialist Residential Accommodation Planning Advice Note which provides a method for calculating a commuted sum in lieu of on-site specialist residential accommodation that provides a flexible way to meet the variety of needs identified in the Housing Strategy.</p>

	<p>Apply a more flexible approach to the application of planning policies and provide equal recognition to the care element within the accommodation.</p> <p>Provide additional support for tenants that are experiencing mental ill health but have a home.</p>	<p>Commit to undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment and update the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment which will review a range of needs, including specialist residential accommodation.</p> <p>Publish a Statistical Appendix which provides more detailed information on the Vision and Actions in the Strategy, and which will be updated annually. This includes information on the needs for Specialist Residential Accommodation from households in the greatest housing need.</p>
<p>Question 12. If you are a local community group, would you be interested in the possibility of helping to develop affordable homes to meet local need, e.g. within a local area or for a particular group?</p>	<p>Recognise that neighbourhood plans offer more local information on need and point to a greater need for smaller market homes.</p>	<p>Retain an action to develop community-led housing partnerships working with Eastern Community Homes who liaise with Parish Councils and neighbourhood groups.</p>
<p>Question 13. Is there anything else you would like to add?</p>	<p>Provide more accessible new build accommodation and accessible park homes for older people.</p> <p>Better integrate support solutions for those with dual diagnosis that are not currently clean/abstinent.</p> <p>Increase provision for those fleeing domestic abuse.</p> <p>Improve joint working and maximise technological support, as well as dwelling design, to improve safety.</p> <p>Recognise a role for Registered Providers to work with homeowners needing specialist accommodation to increase rented provision.</p>	<p>Publish a Wheelchair Accessible Homes Planning Advice Note which summarises the need for wheelchair accessible affordable homes for rent using information from the Housing Register and will be updated annually.</p> <p>Commit to undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment which will review a range of needs, including specialist residential accommodation.</p>

		<p>Include a new action to complete the programme for providing supported accommodation for those at risk of rough sleeping and identify what other gaps may still need addressing in the review of the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.</p> <p>Include a new action to explore housing issues relating to an ageing population and explore whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.</p>
<p>Question 14: Do you think the Council should be using its resources (land and money) to help people become home-owners as a priority if it means it is less able to meet its duties to those who are homeless?</p>	<p>Only if resources would free up existing affordable housing stock.</p> <p>Not necessarily a binary choice - needs of vulnerable homeowners should not be ignored or those in private rented sector unable to access homeownership but not homeless.</p> <p>Focus on those who are homeless/severely overcrowded.</p> <p>Provide more flexible options such as community-led housing for existing social housing tenants.</p>	<p>Include a new action to explore housing issues relating to an ageing population and explore whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this.</p> <p>Include a new action to seek targeted partnership working with Essex County Council.</p> <p>Retain focus on working with private sector landlords and blended support for the rented sector and its tenants to recognise the equally important functions of the private and public rented housing sectors.</p> <p>Include a new action to improve the supply and cost of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Include a new action to seek a more strategic mix of affordable homes on planning gain site and publish a planning advice note on this.</p>

		<p>Commit to reviewing the affordable housing policies in the Local Plan review commencing this year.</p> <p>Retain an action to develop community-led housing partnerships working with Eastern Community Homes who liaise with Parish Councils and neighbourhood groups.</p>
<p>Question 15. If the Council is able to nominate people to schemes such as First Homes, who should be prioritised, for example key workers, those moving on from social housing, those wanting to move into Chelmsford to access employment? Any other groups?</p>	<p>Consider key workers, existing residents, existing social tenants, lower income households and those employed in Chelmsford in different orders of priority depending on the respondent.</p>	<p>Publish a First Homes Planning Advice Note which includes local eligibility criteria for a period of 3 months from when a home is first marketed.</p>
<p>Question 16. Do you think the Council should do more to explain and promote 'intermediate' affordable homes such as shared-ownership and rent-to-buy?</p>	<p>Do not promote products but focus on providing more information about the availability and the advantages and disadvantages of the products.</p>	<p>Improve information/links on the Council's website.</p>
<p>Question 17: How would you like to see the Council tackle empty homes – what ideas or suggestions do you have for how they could be used to meet local need and demand? What information would you like to know about empty homes?</p>	<p>Tackle empty homes and provide better information on the scale and reasons for long-term empty dwellings, financial incentives, financial penalties, temporary housing solutions, skills training, compulsory purchase, sub-division of empty property, £1 homes scheme as operated in Liverpool.</p>	<p>Continue to act to reduce the number of empty homes.</p>
<p>Question 18. Is there anything else you would like to add?</p>	<p>Consider more self-build homes, impact of First Homes and need for additional private rented homes.</p>	<p>Retain an action to develop community-led housing partnerships working with Eastern Community Homes who liaise with Parish Councils and neighbourhood groups.</p> <p>Publish a First Homes Planning Advice Note.</p>

		<p>Retain focus on working with private sector landlords and blended support for the rented sector and its tenants to recognise the equally important functions of the private and public rented housing sectors.</p> <p>Commit to undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment which will review a range of needs, including demand for purpose build private rented homes.</p>
<p>Question 19: Are there any other partners the Council should be working with?</p>	<p>Registered Providers, companies supplying greener building products, local wildlife groups, a cross-section of charitable organisations, neighbouring councils, park home site owners, joint ventures with developers, NHS, neighbourhood plan groups and other community groups.</p>	<p>Include a new action to make better use of existing housing stock owned by Registered Providers.</p> <p>Include a new action to explore new housing partnerships to maximise the additional affordable housing supply.</p> <p>Commit to continuing to speak with those we have worked with in developing the Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Retain an action to develop community-led housing partnerships working with Eastern Community Homes who liaise with Parish Councils and neighbourhood groups.</p>
<p>Question 20: Any other comments or suggestions?</p>	<p>Secure greater participation in the development and monitoring of the Housing Strategy by the public/external bodies, local consultation through meetings.</p>	<p>Commit to continuing to speak with those we have worked with in developing the Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Commit to routinely reviewing and reporting on the progress of the Housing Strategy.</p>

	<p>Consider environmental grants to accommodation providers and how the council can support the move to Net Zero Carbon.</p> <p>Regularly review the strategy, include impact of Right to Shared Ownership, changes to shared ownership leases and raising mobility standards on new developments.</p> <p>Prioritise homes for healthcare workers.</p>	<p>Undertake to review any new environmental, sustainable, and accessible housing standards that are introduced at national level in the review of the Local Plan.</p> <p>Commit to undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment which will review a range of needs, including the need and demand for key worker housing.</p>
<p>Question 21: Are there any other indicators you think the Council should consider?</p>	<p>Include support and employment targets to aid move on from temporary to settled accommodation.</p> <p>Include housing and quality of life.</p> <p>Review demand for housing from younger persons living with parents.</p> <p>Record hidden homelessness.</p> <p>Secure customer satisfaction feedback on the Housing Service.</p> <p>Include national policy reviews.</p> <p>Involve community groups and associated housing outputs.</p> <p>Provide more efficient monitoring of processes and trends i.e., time spent in temporary accommodation.</p>	<p>Review all the actions in the Housing Strategy and include relevant targets where possible.</p> <p>Show expected outputs on an annual basis.</p> <p>Publish a Statistical Appendix which provides more detailed information on the vision and actions in the strategy and will enable better monitoring of progress made.</p> <p>Commit to continuing to speak with those we have worked with in developing the Housing Strategy.</p>

<p>Question 22: How do you think the Council should keep you informed of the progress of delivering this strategy?</p>	<p>Emails, website, social media, leaflets, performance reports, meetings, liaison with Parish Councils and Registered Providers were all suggested.</p>	<p>Commit to continuing to speak with those we have worked with in developing the Housing Strategy – this will include the variety of methods suggested.</p>
<p>Question 23: Any other comments?</p>	<p>Include better research and evidence on the sustainability of new housing.</p> <p>Improve infrastructure to support new homes.</p> <p>Secure greener building with more sustainable features and demonstrate better links in the strategy to Local Plan Policy DM25.</p> <p>Remove the aim to reduce energy consumption as this is better addressed in the Local Plan given the standardisation of building regulations and government targets are evidenced through the latter.</p> <p>Provide better links with neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>Provide more clarity on plans to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>Improve standards/size of new homes and access to private open space.</p> <p>Include fewer platitudes and provide clearer policy interventions with more explicit constraints.</p> <p>Initiate a better public debate on wider issues of land ownership to tackle wider inequalities of the housing market and artificial shortages in land supply for housing.</p>	<p>Undertake to review any new environmental, sustainable, and accessible housing standards that are introduced at national level in the review of the Local Plan.</p> <p>Include a new action to explore new housing partnerships to maximise the additional affordable housing supply.</p> <p>Review all the actions in the Housing Strategy and include relevant targets where possible.</p> <p>Include a new action to complete the programme for providing supported accommodation for those at risk of rough sleeping and will identify what other gaps need addressing in the review of the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.</p> <p>Commit to undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment which will review a range of needs, including the need and demand for key worker housing.</p> <p>Commit to reviewing the affordable housing policies in the Local Plan review commencing this year.</p>

Removal of Capital Gains tax exemption for housing and public subsidy for rental payments to address structural inequalities longer-term.

Secure more starter homes and affordable homes for rent and reduce the loopholes for developers to escape these obligations in the planning system.

Provide better references to Building for a Healthy Life, the Essex Design Guide and Livewell Development Accreditation Scheme in the Housing Strategy.

Retain a summary of the wider aims of our corporate plan and other key documents in Appendix 1 of the Housing Strategy.

Appendix 3 - Action Plan and Outputs

Activity	In place by	Resources	Output
1. Increasing the supply of affordable homes with a focus on larger units			
1a. Ensure compliance with the dwellings mix identified in the Council's current SHMA to help achieve the aim of increasing the supply of larger affordable dwellings for rent	2022 – outcome will be from year 3	Officer time	Higher proportion of larger family homes from 2023 – estimate increase of 6 4-bed homes pa. 2022= 0 2023 = 0 2024 = 4 4b 2025 = 4 4b 2026 = 4 4b
1b. As part of the future review of the Local Plan, explore the option of increasing the current level of 35% of affordable homes, including 22% affordable housing for rent, from new development sites with need evidenced through the preparation of a new SHMA	2022 – outcome will be from year 5	Officer time	Increased proportion of affordable homes for rent and higher proportion of larger family affordable homes for rent from 2025
1c. Maximise First Homes sites to meet local housing needs	Sites identified in 2022 onwards	Officer time and land acquisition through existing capital programme	Increase in number of planned 3 bed homes from 2023+ estimate increase of 4 3-bed homes pa 2022 = 0 2023 = 0 2024 = 4 3b 2025 = 4 3b 2026 = 4 3b

1d. Seek a more strategic mix of affordable homes on planning gain sites	Sites identified in 2022 onwards	Officer time	Estimate increase of 1 4-bed and 1 3-bed pa from 2023 2022 = 0 2023 = 0 2024 = 1 4b 1 3b 2025 = 1 4b 1 3b 2026 = 1 4b 1 3b
1e. Identify smaller sites that could provide additional larger affordable homes	Planning granted for sites in 2022/2023 Completion of Woodhall Road in 2023	Officer time	Additional 5 4-bed and 2 3-bed in 2022/2023 11 3-bed and 8 4-bed 2023/2024 onwards 2022 = 5 4b, 2 3b 2023 = 5 3b, 4 4b 2024 = 6 3b, 4 4b 2025 = 0 2026 = 0
2. Increasing the supply of affordable homes from the existing housing stock			
2a. Make better use of existing housing stock owned by Registered Providers	Starting 2022 onwards	Use of commuted sums	1 4-bed and 1 3-bed p.a. 2022 = 1 4b, 1 3b 2023 = 1 4b, 1 3b 2024 = 1 4b, 1 3b 2025 = 1 4b, 1 3b 2026 = 1 4b, 1 3b

2b. Reduce the number of vacancies and long-term voids in stock owned by Registered Providers	Starting 2022 onwards	Use of commuted sums	5 additional 3-bed homes 2022 = 1 3b 2023 = 1 3b 2024 = 1 3b 2025 = 1 3b 2026 = 1 3b
2c. Reduce the number of empty homes	From 2022	Officer time and capital resources	2 additional 3-bed homes 2022 = 0 2023 = 0 2024 = 0 2025 = 1 3b 2026 = 1 3b
2d. Convert other tenures to affordable homes	During 2022 / 2023	Use of commuted sums	5 additional 3-bed homes 2022 = 5 3b 2023 = 5 3b 2024 = 0 2025 = 0 2026 = 0
2e. Work with partners, in particular Registered Providers, to identify sites that have an existing planning permission and that could be developed to provide a better mix or increased level of affordable homes	From 2022	Use of commuted sums	5 additional 3- and 4-bed homes 2022 = 0 2023 = 0 2024 = 0 2025 = 2 3b 2026 = 3 4b

2f. Explore ways to make best use of the Council's housing policies for the allocation of homes	From 2022	TBC – depends on decision to join Gateway to Homechoice	TBC
2g. Improve the supply and cost of temporary accommodation	From 2022	Capital programme	20 3-bed 2022 and 2023 14 3-bed 2023 5 4-bed 2023 2022 = 15 3b 2023 = 19 3b, 5 4b 2024 = 0 2025 = 0 2026 = 0
3. Support landlords and tenants of rented homes			
3a. Produce and make available clear guidance to private landlords and tenants to help improve understanding of their rights and duties, including how to resolve problems	2022/2023	Officer time	Improved engagement including reduction in under-used affordable homes 1 3-bed p.a. 2022 = 1 3b 2023 = 1 3b 2024 = 1 3b 2025 = 1 3b 2026 = 1 3b
3b. Launch a forum for private landlords	2022	Officer time < £1,000	Better access and retention of PRS

3c. Introduce routine monitoring and reviews with Registered Providers operating in Chelmsford	From 2022	Officer time	Improved engagement including reduction in under-used affordable homes 1 3-bed p.a. 2022 = 1 3b 2023 = 1 3b 2024 = 1 3b 2025 = 1 3b 2026 = 1 3b
3d. Provide clear guidance and information for local councillors and others to help them understand the roles and responsibilities of the Council and landlords (both social and private) to support them when dealing locally with housing issues	2022	Officer time	Improved response to housing problems, best use of resources
4. Enabling the right supply of specialist housing to meet local need			
4a. Maximise opportunities through existing planning policy to meet the additional specialist housing needs identified in this Strategy.	Ongoing from 2022	Use of commuted payments for specialist housing / on-site provision on allocated strategic sites	Improved supply of specialist housing
4b. Complete the programme for providing supported accommodation for those at risk of rough sleeping	Completed by 2023	Use of DLUHC grant	33 additional 1-bed places with support

5. Developing effective partnerships

5a. Seek Homes England Investment Partner	2023	CCC resources	CCC become investment partners
5b. Join the Gateway to Homechoice Scheme	Ongoing from 2022	TBC	TBC
5c. Explore new housing partnerships to maximise additional affordable housing supply	From 2022	RP resources, CCC grant	Development of additional homes
5d. Develop Community-led Housing partnership working with Eastern Community	2022 ongoing	CLH Grant	Community led housing developments
5e. Seek targeted partnership working with Essex County Council	2022 ongoing	Public owned land	Independent Living scheme for older people – 60 units
5f. Explore issues and benefits of developing joint ventures and local housing companies to improve the supply of affordable homes	2022/2023	Officer time	Ensuring best use is made of available resources

4. Enabling the right supply of specialist housing to meet local need

4c. Identify opportunities and bring forward plans to meet the needs of those who need support and accommodation due to mental health	Ongoing from 2022	Use of commuted payments for specialist housing / on-site provision on allocated strategic sites and combined funding from other partners	26 or more additional units with support
4d. Provide suitable temporary accommodation for those with physical disabilities and publicise the Disabled Facilities Grant	By 2023	DFG / Use of commuted payments for specialist housing / on-site provision on allocated strategic sites and combined funding from other partners	2 or more adapted family homes
4e. Ensure there is an adequate supply of specialist accommodation for those experiencing domestic abuse	From 2022 onwards	ECC Commissioning	14 units
4f. Improve the provision of temporary accommodation for young people	Ongoing from 2022	Combined funding from CCC and other partners	15 units
4g. Improve the provision of existing accommodation for young people	Ongoing from 2022	Use of commuted payments for specialist housing	20 units
4h. Work with partners to improve our joint understanding of the housing issues for an ageing population and whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this	2023	Joint commissioning with partners	Consistent understanding of housing need and development requirements

Outputs	Year 1 - 2022	Year 2 -2023	Year 3 – 2024	Year 4 - 2025	Year 5 - 2026
Actions					
1a. Ensure compliance with the dwellings mix identified in the Council’s current SHMA to help achieve the aim of increasing the supply of larger affordable dwellings for rent	0	0	4 4b	4 4b	4 4b
1b. As part of the future review of the Local Plan, explore the option of increasing the current level of 35% of affordable homes. including 22% affordable housing for rent, from new development sites with need evidenced through the preparation of a new SHMA	0	0	0	0	Increased proportion of affordable homes for rent and higher proportion of larger family affordable homes for rent from 2025
1c. Maximise First Homes sites to meet local housing needs	0	0	4 3b	4 3b	4 3b
1d. Seek a more strategic mix of affordable homes on planning gain sites	0	0	1 4b 1 3b	1 4b 1 3b	1 4b 1 3b
1e. Identify smaller sites that could provide additional number of larger affordable homes	5 4b 2 3b	5 3b 4 4b	6 3b 4 4b	0	0
2a. Make better use of existing housing stock owned by Registered Providers	1 4b 1 3b	1 4b 1 3b	1 4b 1 3b	1 4b 1 3b	1 4b 1 3b

2b. Reduce the number of vacancies and long-term voids in stock owned by Registered Providers	1 3b	1 3b	1 3b	1 3b	1 3b
2c. Reduce the number of empty homes	0	0	0	1 3b	1 3b
2d. Convert of other tenures to affordable homes	5 3b	5 3b	0	0	0
2e. Work with partners, in particular Registered Providers, to identify sites that have an existing planning permission and that could be developed to provide a better mix or increased level of affordable homes	0	0	0	2 3b	2 4b
2f. Explore ways to make best use of the Council's housing policies for the allocation of homes	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
2g. Improve the supply and cost of temporary accommodation	15 3b	19 3b 5 4b	0	0	0
3a. Produce and make available clear guidance for circulation to private landlords and tenants to help improve understanding of their rights and duties, including how to resolve problems	Better access and retention of PRS	Better access and retention of PRS	Better access and retention of PRS	Better access and retention of PRS	Better access and retention of PRS
3b. Launch a forum for private landlords	Better access and retention of PRS	Better access and retention of PRS1	Better access and retention of PRS	Better access and retention of PRS	Better access and retention of PRS
3c. Introduce routine monitoring and reviews with Registered Providers operating in Chelmsford	1 3b	3b	1 3b	1 3b	1 3b

3d. Provide clear guidance and information for local councillors and others to help them understand the roles and responsibilities of the Council and landlords (both social and private) to support them when dealing locally with housing issues	Improved response to housing problems, best use of resources	Improved response to housing problems, best use of resources	Improved response to housing problems, best use of resources	Improved response to housing problems, best use of resources	Improved response to housing problems, best use of resources
4a. Develop plans for the use of resources secured through Local Plan Policy DM1 (c) (i) to meet the additional specialist housing needs identified in this Strategy.	Improve supply of specialist housing	Improve supply of specialist housing	Improve supply of specialist housing	Improve supply of specialist housing	Improve supply of specialist housing
4b. Complete the programme for providing supported accommodation for those at risk of rough sleeping		33 additional 1-bed places with support			
4c. Identify opportunities and bring forward plans to meet the need for those who need support and accommodation due to mental health		2 or more adapted family homes			26 or more additional units with support
4d. Provide suitable temporary accommodation for those with physical disabilities and publicise the Disabled Facilities Grant		2 or more adapted family homes			
4e. Ensure there is an adequate supply of specialist accommodation for those experiencing domestic abuse					14 units
4f. Improve the provision of temporary accommodation for young people					15 units
4g. Improve the provision of existing accommodation for young people					20 units

4h. Work with partners to improve our joint understanding of the housing issues for an ageing population and whether there is a need for a new strategy to deal with this		Consistent understanding of housing need and development requirements	Consistent understanding of housing need and development requirements	Consistent understanding of housing need and development requirements	Consistent understanding of housing need and development requirements
5a. Seek Homes England Investment Partner Status		CCC become investment partners			
5b. Join the Gateway to Homechoice Scheme	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
5c. Explore new housing partnership to maximise additional affordable housing supply	Development of additional homes	Development of additional homes	Development of additional homes	Development of additional homes	Development of additional homes
5d. Develop Community Led Housing partnership working with Eastern Community	Community led housing developments	Community led housing developments	Community led housing developments	Community led housing developments	Community led housing developments
5e. Seek targeted partnership working with Essex County Council					Independent Living scheme for older people – 60 units
5f. Explore issues and benefits of developing joint ventures and local housing companies to improve the supply of affordable homes	Ensuring best use is made of available resources	Ensuring best use is made of available resources			

Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022-2027

Statistical Appendix

March 2022

1. Statistical Appendix

1. Introduction

This Statistical Appendix provides information on the supply of and demand for affordable housing for rent, specialist residential accommodation, intermediate homes, and temporary accommodation in Chelmsford. The information in this Appendix has been used to formulate the Vision, Priorities, and Actions in Chelmsford City Council's Housing Strategy 2022-2027.

2. Affordable Homes for Rent

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update 2015 provides a summary of the affordable homes needed, based on the assessed supply of homes (re-lets of existing stock and planned new homes being completed) compared with information on households in housing need (becoming homeless, over-crowded and living in temporary accommodation).

Table 1: Size of additional units required to meet housing need in Chelmsford SHMA

	Gross annual need	Gross annual supply	Net annual need	As a % of total net annual need	Supply as a % of gross need
One bedroom	339	300	39	22.5%	88.4%
Two bedrooms	283	190	94	53.6%	67.0%
Three bedrooms	113	88	25	14.2%	78.0%
Four or more bedrooms	29	12	17	9.7%	41.9%
Total	764	589	175	100.0%	77.1%

Source: Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update (2015)

In all cases, the gross annual supply has been lower in recent years than that identified in the SHMA. Between 2018/19 and 2020/21 there has only been 50% of the gross annual supply for 1- and 2-bed homes, 40% of the gross annual supply for 3-bed homes and 30% of the gross annual supply needed for 4-bed homes.

The time households in Band 2 (urgent / homeless) on the Council's Housing Register wait for settled affordable housing for rent, shows local variation between the need and supply of homes depending on household size.

Table 2: Band Two Waiting Time

Bedroom size	Months waiting
1 bed	5.8
2 bed	12.6
3 bed	22.2
4+ bed	43.4

Source: Chelmsford City Council Housing Register (December 2021)

Table 2 shows that all households in Band 2 needing 1-bed homes have their housing need met within a year, demonstrating that there is an adequate supply of affordable 1-bed homes, supporting the information in Table 1 above¹.

Although there is a gap between the need and supply of 2-bedroom homes according to the SHMA, Table 2 shows that in practice most households are accommodated within one year. The waiting times for households needing larger 3- or 4-bed homes are considerably longer.

Table 2 also shows gross annual need, as recorded by applications to the Housing Register, is slightly higher than identified in the SHMA, at 818. This may be due in part to the backlog of larger families unable to move on from temporary accommodation.

Most of the gross annual supply should be from the re-letting of existing affordable homes, topped up by a smaller proportion of new-build affordable homes. Since 2015, when the SHMA was reviewed, the proportion of re-lets has declined, explaining why the gross annual supply shown is now lower. This seems to be a problem that is particularly relevant to Chelmsford, compared with neighbouring authorities in mid and north Essex as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Existing Social Housing Stock Lettings

District	Social housing stock 2018/19	Percentage of lettings from existing stock 2021/22
Braintree	10,640	6.2%
Chelmsford	10,450	3.5%
Colchester	11,120	5.9%
Maldon	3,020	5.0%

Source: Continuous Recording of Lettings in Social Housing (CORE) 2018/2019

In other districts, the proportion of re-lets is higher and broadly comparable, regardless of the actual number of homes available. If the proportion of re-lets in Chelmsford was the same as Maldon, this would create an additional supply of over 150 homes a year.

¹By the end of 2021, an additional 38 one-bed spaces had been provided for single homeless, achieving a balance between 1-bed gross need and supply.

Of equal relevance is the number of housing association properties that are recorded as being empty or not available for letting. Table 4 below compares long term empty and unavailable housing association homes in Chelmsford with three other stock-transfer districts. Maldon and Rochford have a much smaller number of social housing homes in their districts, whereas Braintree has a number closer to that of Chelmsford. All three of these other districts have a considerably smaller number of longer-term empty and unavailable homes since 2018.

Table 4: Long-term empty and unavailable housing association homes

District	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Long term empty homes					
Chelmsford	44	52	73	125	186
Braintree	51	58	51	35	63
Maldon	19	16	14	20	29
Rochford	8	13	10	12	27
Not available for letting					
Chelmsford	12	20	28	69	71
Braintree	41	41	45	29	35
Maldon	8	1	7	6	9
Rochford	4	10	7	8	13
Total					
Chelmsford	56	72	101	194	257
Braintree	92	78	79	64	98
Maldon	27	21	21	26	38
Rochford	12	23	17	20	40

Source: MHCLG Live Tables

Increasing the proportion of larger affordable rented homes to address over-crowding would help improve the supply or churn from the existing housing stock.

Tables 6 -7 show how enabling an additional supply of larger homes over a five-year period (whether new build or through other means) can help improve the supply from the existing affordable housing stock.

Table 5: Number of applicants on Housing Register due to over-crowding or other housing need other than homelessness by bedroom size (Bands 3 and 4) Supply Comparison

Bedroom size	Number of households in Bands 3 and 4	Less available supply from meeting need of those in TA	Net outstanding need	Average gross supply 2019 to 2021 ²
1	152	79	73	107
2	123	16	107	156
3	100	(9)	109	52
4+	29	(18)	47	3

Source: Chelmsford City Council Housing Register (September 2021)

Table 5 above shows how for those needing a 1-bed home, even when giving priority to those who are homeless and in temporary accommodation, there is an adequate supply through the Housing Register to meet the needs of others. These would not be households that are over-crowded but those households that can be prevented from becoming homeless and / or offered move-on from supported housing in Chelmsford.

Table 5 shows that only 16 2-bedroom homes are available to those who are over-crowded (in 1-bedroom homes), or otherwise inadequately housed.

For those needing a larger, 3- or 4-bedroom home, the current shortage means that even those in temporary accommodation will not have their needs met within a year, as also shown above in Table 2. This means that there is a risk of an ever-growing backlog if supply does not improve, even if there is a reduction in need.

Tables 6 – 7 below show the cumulative effect of an additional 10 3-bed and 8 4-bed affordable homes for rent per annum for 5 years has on the number of households in housing need:

Table 6: Impact of Additional Four-bedroom Supply on Housing Need

4 Bed	Households in TA	Reduction in TA ³	Number of Households in Band 3 and 4	Increase in relets
Year 1	10	0	29	0
Year 2	2	8	29	0
Year 3	0	2	23	6
Year 4	0	0	15	8
Year 5	0	0	7	8
Total supply = 40 + 22 additional				22

Source: Chelmsford City Council Housing Register (December 2021)

²Calendar year. ³Reduction appears in the following year.



Table 6 shows that an increase in the supply of 4-bed homes would reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation which have become homeless for the first two years, before it then begins to help those households which are over-crowded. This means that in addition to an additional supply of 40 4-bed homes as planned, there is potential to also create an additional supply from relets of 22 3-bed homes for families living in over-crowded conditions.

Table 7: Impact of Additional Three-bedroom Supply on Housing Need

3-bed	Larger homes becoming available (carry forward relets from Table 6)	Households in TA	Reduction in TA ⁴	Number of Households in Band 3 and 4	Increase in relets
Year 1		49	0	100	0
Year 2		39	10	100	0
Year 3	6	23	16	100	0
Year 4	8	5	18	100	0
Year 5	8	0	18	87	13
Total supply = 50 + 13 additional	22				13

Source: Chelmsford City Council Housing Register (December 2021)

For those needing a 3-bedroom home, despite providing more additional homes a year, it takes longer to clear the backlog of those in temporary accommodation but by Year 4 this does begin to cascade down to those who are over-crowded, creating an additional supply from relets of 13 2-bedroom homes.

Tables 6 – 7 demonstrate that enabling an additional development of 90 affordable homes for rent consisting of 50 3-bed + 40 4-bed, has the potential to create a gross supply of 125 homes (90 new build and 35 relets), as well as reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation.

3. Specialist Residential Accommodation

By reviewing the support needs of those who become homeless and / or are currently needing temporary accommodation, we can obtain a clear estimate of the level of specialist residential accommodation required. Providing specialist accommodation for these groups will help reduce the future risk of homelessness, create a better pathway to independent living and reduce both the need and cost for temporary accommodation.

⁴Reduction appears in the following year.



Domestic Abuse

As a cause of homelessness, Chelmsford has the second highest level of any district in Essex. Not all cases require specialist support but 15% of those accepted as homeless require support as well as a safe place to live. Plans are already in place with partners to increase the provision for those who are single with complex needs and for male survivors. However, there is a need for at least 14 additional larger units of accommodation with support for families (at least 2-bedroom).

Mental Health

Mental health is the most common support need identified for homeless households. In many cases this support can be secured through accessing existing community-based services provided by primary care. There is an identified need for enhanced support provided through existing services that cater for single homeless who may have other needs as well. There is an average annual net need for 26 additional units of one bed accommodation to enable more independent living with support for those in need of specialist help to recover from mental ill health. Part of this identified need could be delivered as bedspaces (up to 12) solely for those in housing need who need more intensive specialist help to recover from mental ill-health. This type of provision (bedspaces) will be reviewed as part of the review of the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy.

Young People

There is no specialist residential accommodation for this group and the current net need is for 20 units of accommodation with support for young people (18 to 25) who need housing and require support to plan and manage living independently. This is in addition to the planned 15 additional, short-term bedspaces provided by the night-stop scheme jointly commissioned by Chelmsford City Council with Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council due to be delivered in Spring 2022.

Physical Disabilities

Physical disabilities are mainly met through the Disabled Facilities Grant programme (DFGs) but there is a need for some of the temporary accommodation used by the Council to be adapted to meet the needs of both single people and families with physical disabilities. Two family size (3 or 4 bedroom) homes and two smaller (1 or 2 bedroom) units should be adapted specifically for use as temporary accommodation.

Older People

Understanding and responding to the housing need of an ageing population is something several partners and residents have expressed an interest in, working with the Council to explore and develop a more strategic and responsive approach in the future. The Housing Strategy will support continued work to meet this broad objective over the next five years.



4. The Need for Intermediate Affordable Homes

These are homes that cost more than social or affordable rented homes but are less than similar homes to buy or rent on the open market. Over the last 20 years the cost of buying a home in Chelmsford has quadrupled, as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: House price affordability Two Bed Terrace House

Year	House price	Monthly mortgage payment per month	Required household income per month
2021	285,000	1,516	5,306
2016	233,000	1,240	4,340
2011	172,500	918	3,213
2006	157,995	840	2,940
2001	79,995	425	1,487

Source:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/medianhousepriceforationalandsnationalgeographiesquarterlyrollingyearhpsdataset09>

The SHMA concluded that although helpful to meet some demand for housing, there was no housing need that could be met through this type of housing. Recent comparisons of shared-ownership and fixed equity homes, like First Homes, are all more expensive than lower quartile market purchase homes and sometimes average rent levels for privately rented homes in Chelmsford.

Based on 35% gross income spent on housing costs; the following monthly incomes would be required to secure a two-bedroom terraced home in Chelmsford currently:

- First Homes (30% discounted sale) – the gross monthly household income would need to be £4,154.
- Shared ownership (part buy/part rent) the gross household monthly income would need to be £3,976.
- Private rent (median rent) gross monthly household income to secure a private rented dwelling (median rent) would need to be £3,675.

The average gross monthly household income for the CM2 area in Chelmsford is £2,833.

⁵Based on acquiring 40% equity with a 25-year mortgage at 5% interest rate and paying a rent calculated as an annual cost of 2.75% of the 60% of the unsold equity.

⁶Based on median private rent levels sourced from Rightmove for Chelmsford Dec 2021.

⁷This figure includes all households, some of which may be single people or retired people.



5. The Need for Temporary Accommodation

Local housing authorities may need to use temporary accommodation for cases of urgent need when there are no suitable settled affordable homes available. Nationally, the need for temporary accommodation has doubled over the last ten years and this corresponds to the rise in use of temporary accommodation in Chelmsford. Through the development of the Housing Strategy, and increased monitoring of housing need, we have a better understanding of the type of temporary accommodation that is needed in the short term.

The Council relies on various sources to access temporary accommodation for households whilst waiting for more settled, suitable affordable homes to become available. The most expensive options are those that are leased by the council from private landlords - these require a rent to be paid even when void (so the council is not receiving any income) and are properties of varying age, condition, and type.

Nightly lets and Bed & Breakfast (B&B) accommodation is also more expensive than the average cost, but these have the advantage that they can often be accessed (and agreements ended) at short notice and include an element of management from the provider.

Homes that are managed by Registered Providers that also provide support are also more expensive than average. However, these have the advantage that for some households, this may be the only option that is reasonable, especially if they have more complex support needs and may otherwise struggle to live independently.

The least expensive form of temporary accommodation is those that are owned by the Council, especially 'modular units', which have lower maintenance costs compared with conventional build properties. This also reduces the void time between lettings and rent loss. Although more cost effective than more conventional properties bought by the Council, the latter do provide a longer-term investment opportunity to offset higher revenue costs.

In the short-term, we expect to see a rising need for temporary accommodation and propose to increase the supply of council owned homes used as temporary housing, through a combination of market purchases and the development of more modular units.



Table 9 below, shows the use of and cost to the Council of different types of temporary accommodation in October 2021:

Type	Number households accommodated	Average annual net cost to the Council
Nightly lets	88	£6,517
Private Sector Leased	61	£11,556
RP owned	57	£3,480
B&B	34	£6,799
Council owned	24	£4,161
Modular homes	18	£2,084
RP with support	14	£8,836
Total	296	£6,204

Source: Chelmsford City Council.

The overall supply of 1-bed temporary accommodation has increased since the start of the Covid pandemic in early 2020. However, the Council is on track to meet the required supply set by the SHMA for settled accommodation and aim to be able to use some of the additional supply of supported housing to prevent and relieve homelessness, reducing the need for temporary accommodation for single people in the future.

The need for 2-bed temporary accommodation continues to be high. This is in part because households with a 3-bedroom plus housing need, may also have to use smaller two-bedroom accommodation on a temporary basis due to limited supply of larger affordable homes for temporary accommodation as well as general needs affordable homes. It is less expensive to work with private landlords to help prevent and relieve homeless for families of this size, as few if any will be affected by the benefit cap, so there are some private rented options that can still be used as temporary accommodation for those households with a two-bedroom need.

The most expensive temporary accommodation is 3- and 4-bed temporary accommodation because of the size and cost of the properties needed and the long wait in temporary accommodation households requiring this accommodation are likely to face before being offered a settled home. It therefore makes sense to increase the supply of 3-and 4 bed temporary accommodation. The provision of additional larger modular units will avoid the need in future to use B&B for families. In addition, acquiring more homes on the open market for use as temporary accommodation in the short to medium term, will create an investment opportunity which the Council can realise in the future, once a better supply of affordable homes is in place.

6. Conclusion

The information in this Statistical Appendix has been used to inform the Vision, Priorities, and Actions in Chelmsford City Council's Housing Strategy 2022-2027. The information presented in this Statistical Appendix will be reviewed on an annual basis to assist in the monitoring of the Action Plan and Outputs set out in the Appendix of the Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027.



CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

3 March 2022

Date of Meeting	Report Subject
3 March 2022	Housing Strategy – To consider representations and final Housing Strategy for referral to Cabinet for approval.
Additional meeting in April	<p>Waterways Working Group – Update on the proposed programme to increase access to and improve the environmental quality of the rivers and waterways of Chelmsford</p> <p>Local Plan Review – To consider the options for carrying out the review of the Local Plan</p>
26 May 2022	
30 June 2022	
<i>Standing or other items not currently programmed</i>	<p>Masterplans – Land at Great Leighs - To consider final masterplan of site allocated in Local Plan ahead of consideration by Cabinet.</p> <p>Public Realm SPD – New replacement SPD for consultation</p> <p>Chelmsford Garden Community - Development Framework Document (Masterplan), Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Planning Framework Agreement – For consideration before referral to Cabinet for decision</p> <p>Chelmsford Local Plan Review – Consideration of Issues and Options consultation.</p> <p>Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report – To seek approval to consult on the Scoping Report</p> <p>Special Expenses – To consider the conclusions of the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Groups on its review of the retention of the Special Expenses mechanism</p> <p>Updates for Working Groups – Chairs of the Working Groups to report on their recent activities</p>