



**DRAFT Housing Policy Working Party
Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 17th
May 2017 at 2pm in the Kasen Room**

Present

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| Councillors | Tony Boto (Chair) | CllrTB |
| | Richard Lewis | CllrRL |
| | Steven North | CllrSN |

Also in attendance

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| Executive Director | Sharn Matthews | SM |
| Head of Planning Services | Paul Bland | PB |
| Planning Policy and Conservation Manager | Richard Palmer | RP |
| Housing Strategy and Delivery Manager | Carol Conway | CC |
| Housing Services Officer | Louise Bagley | LB |
| Housing Enabling Officer | Aine Cooper | AC |
| Environmental Protection Manager | Jenny Walker | JW |

Present for item 1

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| Housing Vision | Richard Turkington | RT |
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| | | <u>ACTION</u> |
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| 1. | Housing Mix Project - presentation of Draft Report Richard Turkington, Housing Vision | |
| 1.1 | The Housing Working Party Members received a presentation from Richard Turkington from Housing Vision who is undertaking research into the required housing mix for East Northamptonshire. In summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Whilst housing need in the district is mainly for smaller dwellings there is unmet demand for larger dwellings, together with population gain due to in-migration and a growing demand for downsizing options. b) In terms of family housing, 'higher value' properties were assessed as £360,000 and above with 8% of all properties (78) sold between 2014 and 2016 in this bracket i.e. about 25 p.a. Doubling output of | |

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| | <p>higher value homes would therefore imply only about 50 homes p.a.- so increased supply is likely to be small and the effects dispersed.</p> <p>c) Meeting demand for premium downsize dwellings (not trading down) would in turn free up higher value family housing. Demand is estimated to be about 50 p.a although this could be higher as existing supply is minimal.</p> <p>d) The premium product is not generally 'estate' housing but small, exclusive developments in desirable locations. Consumers are willing to travel and are looking for exclusivity, quality and high performing schools. Demand is met by specialist developers.</p> <p>e) Volume housebuilders are developing larger sites such as the SUEs to achieve higher volumes at lower values per m2. There is lower demand for higher value homes in these locations.</p> <p>f) The perception of developers is that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the LPA is unwilling to consider development in the more desirable locations ii. controls on small sites in villages and small towns in the north of the district should be relaxed iii. the presumption against larger dwellings should be softened iv. the emphasis on smaller dwellings in the JCS could support the provision of downsize dwellings in higher value locations.. <p>g) There is more potential for 'custom build' than 'self build' at the premium end of the market i.e. turnkey packages for bespoke properties.</p> | |
| 1.2 | <p>A discussion took place following the presentation including Members views on:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing development opportunities in the Rushden East SUE and Tresham Garden Village • sharing information with neighbourhood plans and working together with villages to avoid initial resistance to development. • the suitability of sites for development and how to get the location right • the effects of relaxing planning restrictions in villages including village envelope/boundaries • ensuring balance between higher value and affordable properties across the district • availability of bungalows and updating designs to encourage downsizing and accessible properties in all tenures | |
| 1.3 | <p>The next stage of the project will be to undertake an employer's survey to establish if the house types available in the district are inhibiting economic growth and whether there is scope for the council to positively intervene.</p> | RT |
| 2 | Apologies | |
| 2.1 | <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Helen Harrison and Councillor Sarah Peacock.</p> | |

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| 3 | Minutes of the Meeting of 12th April 2017 | |
| 3.1 | The minutes were approved and signed by the chairman. | |
| 4 | Matters arising | |
| 4.1 | 5.1.1 the final draft of the older peoples accommodation study for Northamptonshire would now be presented at the HPWP meeting on 5 July 2017. | CC |
| 5 | Updates | |
| 5.1 | No updates on Housing or Welfare Reform were reported. | |
| 6 | Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and Additional Funding <i>Draft Report to be presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 10 July 2017</i> | |
| 6.1 | <p>The Working Party Members noted that the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, due to be implemented in 2018 will place significant new duties on LA's. Increased duties to applicants include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A duty once a household is threatened with homelessness within 56 days (currently 28 days) • Provision of temporary accommodation for intentionally homeless households for 56 days (currently 28 days) • Increased duties to 'non-priority' applicants • A duty to ensure services are designed to meet the needs of groups at increased risk of becoming homeless • A requirement to provide all applicants with Personal Housing Plans. | |
| 6.2 | <p>CC advised that the Housing Team and Midland Heart are exploring what would be required in order to fulfil the new statutory duties. An initial consideration had indicated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A substantial increase in homelessness applications (50%) • An increase in the time taken for each homelessness application interview • A commensurate increase in B&B costs • Changes to IT systems to meet the new reporting and monitoring requirements • Additional administrative and on-going work with applicants. | |
| 6.3 | <p>Members noted that the Government had recognised cost implications for local authorities and would be making funding available:</p> <p>Flexible Homelessness Support Grant will replace the Temporary Accommodation Management Fund (TAMF). Whilst ENC did not receive TAMF, the allocation formula for FHSG means the council has received £45,521 in 2017/18 and will receive £48,403 in 2018/19. This funding is ring-fenced for homelessness prevention and relief. It will be available initially for 2 years but it is uncertain if it will continue thereafter.</p> | |

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| | <p>Additional Burdens Funding will also be available for 2018/19 and 2019/20. Although it is not yet known how much ENC will receive, if it is an equivalent allocation in line with the level of Flexible Homelessness Support Grant, it is only likely to be approximately £7,000 per annum. Again, this funding will be ring-fenced, will be available initially for 2 years, and funding arrangements after the initial 2 years are uncertain.</p> | | | | |
| 6.4 | <p>Members noted the Recommendation at the end of the report:</p> <p><i>The Committee is requested to recommend that full Council</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Approve the additional resources required to enable Midland Heart Housing Association to employ an additional Homelessness Prevention Officer for the remainder of the existing contract, together with any additional office accommodation.</i> 2. <i>Approve the establishment of a Spend to Invest One-Off Payments Fund to be used to prevent and alleviate homelessness.</i> <p>Members considered that, should the One-Off Payments Fund be established, regular reports on expenditure should be included in the quarterly Homelessness Statistical Report to the Policy and Resources Committee. This would be added to the recommendations .</p> | CC | | | |
| 6.5 | JW asked if the contract would be re-tendered and CC confirmed that this would need to be discussed at a future HPWP meeting. | | | | |
| 7 | Homelessness Monitoring Statistics and Temporary Accommodation Costs <i>Draft Report to be presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 10 July 2017</i> | | | | |
| 7.1 | CC briefed members on the contents of the report including the homelessness statistics at 2.2 of the report and the reasons for homelessness at 2.6 of the report. | | | | |
| East Northamptonshire Council Homelessness Statistics | | | | | |
| Year | No. of Homeless Applications | No. of Homeless Acceptances | % of Applications Accepted | No. of Homelessness Preventions | Acceptances plus Preventions |
| 2014/15 | 114 | 42 | 37 | 242 | 284 |
| 2015/16 | 125 | 48 | 38 | 240 | 288 |
| 2016/17 | 135 | 59 | 44 | 281 | 340 |

| Reason for homeless acceptances 2016/17 | | Number |
|---|--|---------------|
| Parents no longer willing to accommodate | | 10 |
| Other relatives/friends no longer willing to accommodate | | 2 |
| Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner | | 6 |
| Violent breakdown of relationship with partner | | 7 |
| Other forms of violence | | 1 |
| Harassment, threats, intimidation | | 1 |
| Mortgage repossession | | 0 |
| Rent arrears – registered provider | | 0 |
| Rent arrears - private sector | | 1 |
| Loss of rented through termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy | | 24 |
| Loss of private rented other reason | | 5 |
| Left hospital | | 2 |
| Total | | 59 |
| 8 | Work Plan Update | |
| 8.1 | Members discussed and noted the updates to the work plan. | |
| 9 | Housing Policy Working Party Risk Review | |
| 9.1 | Members reviewed the risks as detailed in CC's report. No changes were noted. | |
| 10 | AOB | |
| 10.1 | Apologies were noted from SM & SN for the meeting scheduled on 5 July 2017. | |
| 11 | Future meeting dates: | |
| | Wednesday, 5 th July 2017, 2pm Wednesday, 13 th September 2017, 2pm | |