



**Housing Policy Working Party
Minutes of meeting held on
Wednesday 5th July 2017 at 2pm
in the Kasen Room**

Present

Councillors	Tony Boto (Chair)	CllrTB
	Richard Lewis	CllrRL
	Steven North	CllrSN
	Sarah Peacock	Cllr SP
	Helen Harrison	Cllr HH

Also in attendance

Head of Planning Services	Paul Bland	PB
Housing Enabling Officer	Aine Cooper	AC
Housing Services Officer	Louise Bagley	LB

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	Appointment of Chairman	
1.1	Councillor Tony Boto was appointed as Chair of the Working Party	
2	Appointment of Vice-Chairman	
2.1	Councillor Helen Harrison was appointed as Vice Chair of the Working Party	
3	Planning for Larger & Higher Value Housing : Employers' Survey and Final Overview <i>Presentation of Final Report Richard Turkington, Housing Vision</i>	
3.1	<p>Paul Bland presented the results of the Employers Survey on behalf of Richard Turkington who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.</p> <p>The Employers Survey had attempted to gather employer's views in relation to the supply of higher value housing and establish whether its adequacy may be acting as a brake on the economic wellbeing and growth of the area.</p> <p>The survey had focused on:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers who had moved to the district in the past 12 months or who were planning to do so • Employers who had expanded their business in the past 12 months or who were currently expanding • 21 Employers had been approached and of those, 14 named contacts then followed up with a telephone interview. • 250 Chamber of Commerce members in East Northamptonshire approached by questionnaire and a reminder. 	

3.2	<p>Members discussed the responses and noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been difficulty gaining any kind of response from some employers • 11 businesses did not have the information required – a ‘catch all response’ • 5 businesses did not respond, often after being referred to the HR department • 4 businesses completed the questionnaire • No response from the Chamber of Commerce Members 	
3.3	<p>Members discussed the results and noted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 businesses had no problems with supply • 1 business said too many high value homes being built • 1 business had no problem accessing high value new build housing because <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. ‘non locals’ in senior positions were not relocating, preferring to either retain a home elsewhere and rent or to commute. II. An example was given of one senior manager who lived in Yorkshire and was commuting from there daily III. An important finding confirmed by estate agents: senior managers were highly mobile. 	
3.4	<p>Members noted the conclusions from the survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence that the supply of high value new homes was a problem for senior managers • If a problem had existed then a higher response rate would have been received • Some evidence gathered of the type and scale of any problems • A highly mobile sector <p>A discussion took place and members agreed that it was important to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to develop a mix of housing • try to bridge the divide between the North and the South of the district • stretch policy on aspirational basis and focus on particular areas • justify aspirational policy with cross department working • Make Towns attractive enough for Managers • Work with smaller builders 	
3.5	<p>Cllr HH noted the loss of the Primary School in her ward, and potentially other community facilities, and the need for new development in the North of the district to assist with supporting and maintaining sustainable communities.</p>	
3.6	<p>The Working Party noted that there was no clear evidence emerging from the survey of employers, mainly because of the disappointing lack of response from them.</p>	
3.7	<p>The Working Party concluded that did not wish to have any further work done on the report and they regarded it is now complete and ready for presentation to the appropriate ENC Committee.</p>	

4	Apologies	
4.1	Apologies were received from Sharn Matthews, Carol Conway, Richard Palmer, Jenny Walker.	To note
5	Minutes of the Meeting of 17 May 2017	
5.1	The minutes were approved and signed by the chairman.	
6	Matters arising	
6.1	Item 6.4 - Finance Sub-Committee had agreed to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee that an additional Homelessness Prevention post be provided through the Housing Options Contract to assist with meeting the council's obligations in respect of its homelessness duties. The proposed invest to save homelessness prevention loan fund would be considered at the September meeting of the Housing Policy Working Party.	
7	Updates	
7.1	Housing: PB gave a brief update on work following the Grenfell Tower Fire, including risks in temporary accommodation such as bed and breakfast hotels and the night shelter..	
7.2	Welfare Reform:.. High court ruling changes for lone parents of children under two now not expected to work.	
8	Older People's Accommodation and Support Needs Report	
8.1	Working Party members noted the findings and recommendations of the study undertaken into the housing and support needs of older people by all the Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups in Northamptonshire.	
8.2	Members were concerned about the complexity contained within the huge Conclusions and Recommendations section of the report and on the obligations this placed on LA s and parishes preparing their Neighbourhood Plans. They requested that officers consult with the other authorities to gain their views on the activities/workloads involved. It was agreed to focus on the many recommendations in the report at the September meeting. In the meantime, a presentation would be prepared to explain the contents of the report. The presentation would be given prior to the Planning Policy Committee on 24 th July 2017 and would be open to all councillors	CC / RP
9	Work Plan Update	
9.1	Members noted the updates to the work plan	
10	Housing Policy Working Party Risk Review	
10.1	Members reviewed the risks as detailed in CC's report.	
11	Any other business	

11.1	Housing delivery monitoring report. It was reported that recent survey work had identified that 806 new dwellings were constructed in the year to March 2017, against a delivery target of 420 dwellings per annum and 245 of those were affordable dwellings (equating to 30% of the total).	
12	Next and Future Meetings - all 2pm in the Kasen Room Wednesday 13 September 2017 Wednesday 25 October 2017 Wednesday 13 December 2017	