



TOWNS & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB- COMMITTEE AGENDA

5.00 pm	Wednesday 16 December 2020	Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
----------------	---------------------------------------	--

Members 9: Quorum 4

COUNCILLORS:

Conservative Group (4)

Robby Misir (Vice-Chair)
Timothy Ryan
Carol Smith
Ray Best (Chairman)

Residents' Group (2)

Paul Middleton
Gerry O'Sullivan

Upminster & Cranham Residents' Group (1)

Christopher Wilkins

Independent Residents' Group (1)

Tony Durdin

Labour Group (1)

Keith Darvill

**For information about the meeting please contact:
Richard Cursons 01708 432430
richard.cursons@onesource.co.uk**

Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of the London Borough of Havering

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees and Cabinet, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

Reporting means:-

- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting is asked to advise Democratic Services staff on 01708 433076 that they wish to report on the meeting and how they wish to do so. This is to enable employees to guide anyone choosing to report on proceedings to an appropriate place from which to be able to report effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand.

What is Overview & Scrutiny?

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny sub-committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

The sub-committees have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers.
2. Driving improvement in public services.
3. Holding key local partners to account.
4. Enabling the voice and concerns to the public.

The sub-committees consider issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations. These are considered by the Overview

and Scrutiny Board and if approved, submitted for a response to Council, Cabinet and other relevant bodies.

Sub-Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups consist of a number of Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research or undertaking site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Sub-Committee that created it and will often suggest recommendations for the Overview and Scrutiny Board to pass to the Council's Executive.

Terms of Reference

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- Regulatory Services
- Planning and Building Control
- Town Centre Strategy
- Licensing
- Leisure, arts, culture
- Housing Retained Services
- Community Safety
- Social and economic regeneration
- Parks
- Social inclusion
- Councillor call for Action

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



AGENDA ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) - receive.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to declare any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

4 PROTOCOL ON THE OPERATION OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE (Pages 1 - 4)

Protocol attached.

5 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of 22nd September 2020 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them.

6 HOUSING STRATEGY (Pages 11 - 16)

Report attached.

7 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BRIEFING PLANNING UPDATE (Pages 17 - 26)

Report attached.

8 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other item in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the minutes, that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Andrew Beesley
Head of Democratic Services

This page is intentionally left blank



LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING

PROTOCOL ON THE OPERATION OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB- COMMITTEE MEETINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESTRICTIONS

1. Introduction

In accordance with the Local Authority and Police Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, all meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Sub- Committee held during the Covid-19 restrictions will take place in a 'virtual' format. This document aims to give details on how the meetings will take place and establish some rules of procedure to ensure that all parties find the meetings productive.

2. Notification of Meeting

Once the date for a meeting has been set, an electronic appointment will be sent to all relevant parties. This will include a link to access the virtual meeting as well as guidance on the use of the technology involved.

3. Format

For the duration of the Covid-19 restrictions period, Overview & Scrutiny Sub- Committee meetings will be delivered through video conference call, using Zoom software. Instructions sent with meeting appointments will cover how to use the software. Additional IT support will also be provided to any Member requesting this in advance of the meeting.

4. Structure of the Meeting

Although held in a virtual format, Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee Meeting will follow, as far as is possible, the standard procedure for these meetings, with the following principal stages:

- Chairnan's annoucnements
- Apologies for absence
- Disclosures of interest
- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Presentation and consideration of reports

5. Technology Issues

Agendas setting out the items for the meeting will be issued in advance in the normal way, to all parties, in accordance with statutory timetables. The agenda will also be published on the Council's website – www.havering.gov.uk in the normal way. The guidance below explains how the meeting is to be conducted, including advice on what to do if participants cannot hear the speaker and etiquette of participants during the meeting.

Remote access for members of the public together with access for the Press will be provided via a webcast of the meeting at www.havering.gov.uk.

If the Chairman is made aware that the meeting is not accessible to the public through remote means, due to any technological or other failure of provision, then the Chairman shall temporarily adjourn the meeting immediately. If the provision of access through remote means cannot be restored within a reasonable period as determined by the Chairman in consultation with the Clerk, then the remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman. If he or she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

6. Management of Remote Meetings for Members

The attendance of Members at the meeting will be recorded by the Democratic Services Officer clerking the meeting. The normal quorum requirements for meetings as set out in the Council's Constitution will also apply to a virtual meeting of Audit Committee.

Democratic Services Officers will monitor participant involvement during the virtual call to ensure that there are no drop outs. Members will be informed at the beginning of the meeting to use the chat function if they have missed part of the debate, and to request for the clerk or Chairman to recap briefly over what was said.

In the event that a Member's video feed has failed but he/she is able to hear what is being said then the Member should confirm as such using the chat function to the clerk.

In the event that a Member's audio and video feed has failed then the Chairman will invite the Committee to determine whether to proceed or adjourn the meeting to a later date.

7. Etiquette at the meeting

For some participants, this will be their first virtual meeting. In order to make the hearing productive for everyone, the following rules must be adhered to and etiquette observed:

- The meeting will be presided over by the Chairman who will invite participants to speak individually at appropriate points. All other participants must remain silent or muted until invited to speak by the Chairman;
- If invited to contribute, participants should make their statement, then wait until invited to speak again if required;
- If it is possible, participants should find a quiet location to participate in the Zoom meeting where they will not be disturbed as background noise can affect participants.
- If there are intermittent technological faults during the meeting then the Chairman will ask the speaker to repeat from the point where the disruption started. Whilst intermittent disruption is frustrating, it is important that all participants remain professional and courteous.
- The Committee Procedure Rules as shown in the Council's Constitution will apply to the meeting in the normal way, as far as is practicable.

8. Meeting Procedures

Democratic Services Officers will facilitate the meeting. Their role will be to control

conferencing technology employed for remote access and attendance and to administer Member interaction, engagement and connections on the instruction of the Chairman.

The Council has put in place a technological solution that will enable Members participating in meetings remotely to indicate their wish to speak via this solution. This will be via the 'raise hand' function in the Participants field of the Zoom software used for the meeting.

The Chairman will follow the rules set out in the Council's Constitution when determining who may speak, as well as the order and priority of speakers and the content and length of speeches in the normal way.

The Chairman, at the beginning of the meeting, will make reference to the protocol for the meeting.

Members are asked to adhere to the following etiquette during remote attendance at the meeting:

- All Councillors and participating officers are asked to join the meeting no later than twenty minutes before the start to allow themselves and Democratic Services Officers the opportunity to test the equipment.
- Any camera (video-feed) should show a non-descript background or, where possible, a virtual background relating to Havering and Members should be careful to not allow any exempt or confidential papers to be seen in the video-feed.
- During general discussion, rather than raising one's hand or rising to be recognised or to speak, Members attending remotely should avail themselves of the remote process for requesting to be heard and use the 'raise hand' function in the participants field of the Zoom software.
- Members may only speak when invited to by the Chairman of the meeting.
- Only one person may speak at any one time.
- All speakers and attendees, both Councillors and members of the public, are welcome to remain on the Zoom call until the conclusion of the meeting. The meeting will also be webcast so that it can be viewed by non-participants.
- When referring to a specific report, agenda page, or slide, participants should mention the report, page number, or slide so that all Members have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times

Any voting will be conducted by the Clerk asking Members individually of their voting intentions. The Democratic Services Officer will announce the result of the vote and the Chairman will then move on to the next agenda item.

A record of votes and how individual Members voted will be appended to the minutes, following the meeting.

Any Member participating in a remote meeting who declares a disclosable pecuniary interest, or other declarable interest, in any item of business that would normally require them to leave the room, must also leave the remote meeting. The Democratic Services Officer or meeting facilitator will move the Member to the Zoom waiting room until the item is complete, and then return them to the meeting.

9. Public Access to Meeting Documentation following the Meeting

Members of the public may access minutes, decision notices and other relevant documents

through the Council's website. www.havering.gov.uk

For any further information on the meeting, please contact
richard.cursons@onesource.co.uk, tel: 01708 432430

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
TOWNS & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB- COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL MEETING
22 September 2020 (7.30 - 9.45 pm)**

Present:

Councillors Keith Darvill, Paul Middleton, Gerry O'Sullivan, Christopher Wilkins, Robby Misir (Vice-Chair), Timothy Ryan, Carol Smith and Ray Best (Chairman)

Councillor Viddy Persaud was also present for the meeting

17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Christopher Wilkins declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 and absented himself from the meeting during discussion of the item.

18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

19 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The report before Members set out the Council's performance against indicators within the remit of the Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee for Quarter 1 (April to June 2020).

Due to COVID-19, performance was not reported according to the original reporting schedule in order to prioritise service delivery. Performance for Quarter 4 2019/20 would be reported with Quarter 1 2020/21 to provide the opportunity to understand performance in this period.

Officers advised that it was important to note that though service delivery was returning to business as usual, there would be still be an impact on performance due to COVID-19.

Q4 19/20 Performance ratings were available for 10 of the 11 indicators. 3 were Red (off target), 1 was Amber and 6 were Green (on target)

Q1 20/21 Performance ratings were available for 10 of the 11 indicators. 2 were Red (off target), 1 was Amber and 7 were Green (on target)

Appended to the report was the data for 10 of the 11 indicators.

Officers advised that there had been no housing complaints in Q1 as the complaints reporting procedure had been suspended. The complaints procedure had re-started at the end of August.

Rent arrears for Council owned properties had gone up during the Q1 this had mainly been due to a very large number of tenants claiming Universal Credit for the first time and the five week delay for tenants to start receiving payments.

Void properties turnaround had improved vastly. The Council had stopped the letting of properties at the beginning of April as per Government guidance.

Officers advised that there was a new lettings plan in place. Normally the Council would let approximately 5 or 6 properties a week. The plan would up the number to 10 per week which would free up some space in the temporary accommodation sector as it was expected that a number of evictions from privately rented properties would be happening over the coming weeks.

In response to a question relating to empty properties on the Waterloo Road estate, officers responded that people had been moved in to the properties but had now been moved out as demolition was due to commence in October.

At present the Council had access to approximately 20 properties in the private sector and approximately 50 units of Council owned stock.

Officers advised that during the lockdown the Government had changed the local housing allowance levels to a higher level so tenants could get their full rent paid by the housing element of Universal Credit. All new Universal Credit claimants had the option of having their housing element payable direct to their landlord.

Members also considered the performance indicators for major planning applications, minor planning applications and other planning applications

Members **noted** the contents of the report and appendix

20 **HOUSING REPAIRS & GAS SAFETY**

Members considered a report which sought to provide the Sub-Committee with an update on the provision of responsive repairs and carrying out gas safety checks to Council owned and managed housing stock. Following on from the initial report from July 2019.

With regards to responsive repairs the current contract with Breyer expired in March 2019 and approval was obtained to extend the contract for a further two years until March 2021 to enable re-procurement.

Through a more active contract management approach, focussing on the partnering approach which was originally envisaged for the contract, the Council had been able to see continued improvement in the repairs service.

The repairs completed right first time had continued to exceed target and demonstrated the commitment to improving the customer experience.

During the Covid=19 period the service moved to an essential repairs service only, ensuring all emergency health & safety works were completed and essential services were maintained to all residents

The contractors implemented all of the relevant safe working and PPE requirements and worked with residents to ensure the safety of tenants and the operatives was maintained throughout the lockdown period. Where residents expressed concerns, the service either worked with them to undertake works in a manner in which they were comfortable or rescheduled the works.

In relation to gas servicing the Council's contractors K&T and Stonegrove had continued to perform at high levels and the service had introduced some more proactive approaches to engaging with residents to help obtain access to properties.

Due to the health & safety nature of gas servicing the service continued to deliver the full programme throughout the lockdown period. K&T implemented the full safe working protocols going over and above to ensure residents safety.

The service was able to maintain extremely high levels of compliance and had very few residents who expressed reluctance for operatives to enter their homes to undertake the service.

Where residents were concerned the service worked with them, explaining exactly what would take place, the cleaning regimes, the social distancing regimes and the timescales involved and took into account any special concerns/request they had.

In response to a question relating to compliance policies, officers advised that the policies were currently going through the governance procedure and once completed would be placed on the website so residents and Members could view them.

The Sub-Committee **noted** the contents of the report.

**21 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT SCHEME TWO TO
EXPAND ADDITIONAL LICENSING FOR HOUSING IN MULTIPLE
OCCUPATION AND INTRODUCE SELECTIVE LICENSING**

The report before Members detailed the proposed introduction and operation of a selective private landlord licensing scheme in Romford Town and Brooklands wards and an additional, house in multiple occupation (HMO) scheme in Cranham, Emerson Park, Hacton, Hylands, St Andrews and Upminster based on the Private Rented Sector (PRS)

Following a period of public consultation and the evidence collated, which both supported the case for the introduction of a selective licensing scheme in these two wards due to poor housing conditions and anti-social behaviour.

There was also a significant proportion of smaller HMO's in the proposed area which were being poorly managed which led to one or more particular problems, either for those occupying the HMO's or for members of the public e.g. poor housing conditions and/or anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Licensing reduced overcrowding in HMOs by setting a limit on the number of tenants permitted. Landlords were provided with a set of conditions their properties should meet in return accommodation was managed better as a result of specific licence conditions and landlords would become more accountable as named licence holders.

Targeted enforcement action with financial penalties for non-compliance to drive out criminal landlords which would in turn create a 'more level playing field' for well behaved landlords and would make the market fairer for all

Since March 2018 the service had carried out 31 Multi-agency operations focusing on unlicensed properties, Issued 105 legal notices requiring improvements related to poor conditions, Issued 204 financial penalties for failing to licence and breaches in conditions and sent 2,500 letters to owners of unlicensed properties warning them to licence their property.

The report also detailed the fees payable for licences, Licences were issued a five year period.

Cabinet would consider the representations received in response to the consultation on the selective licensing and additional HMO licensing scheme

The report was welcomed by all Members and several Members had points that they wished to be considered within the report.

It was agreed that Members email officers direct explaining their comments which would be included in the final draft that would be considered by Cabinet in October.

Members **noted** the report and the appendices attached.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

TOWNS & COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

16th December 2020

Subject Heading:	Housing Strategy
Board Lead:	Patrick Odling-Smee, Director of Housing
Report Author and contact details:	Gill Butler, Head of Housing Strategy and Service Development

SUMMARY

The Council remains committed to doing everything we can to tackle the 'Housing Crisis' both in providing those much needed new affordable homes for local people in Havering and supporting vulnerable members of society to have a home that they can be proud to live in.

"Whether you live in a council home, rent privately, or own your own home, we understand people deserve to live in a place that they love."

Cllr Damian White, Leader of Havering Council

Current Housing Strategy covered a successful period of delivering valuable services to our residents, but now we need a new one to take into account the ever-changing environment.

Havering, like many local authorities, faces huge challenges not only in housing but also in social care, health and other public services. Councils' are under vast pressure to deliver excellent services at a time of increasing demand and financial restriction. This challenge is ever more demanding when we take into account the potential impact on the Council from the covid-19 pandemic!

However building new homes remains a high priority to meet the needs of our fast growing population in Havering. The Council is taking a pro-active approach to housing delivery, as it recognises the importance of ensuring that there is the necessary provision of genuinely affordable homes for local people.

We are doing this by working with partners to build new homes, with an ambitious 12 estates regeneration programme across existing Council estates to revitalise Havering's Housing and investing in building new communities.

Alongside our existing ambitious regeneration plans for Havering, we will set out our vision for those living in Council managed new and existing homes within the borough, and how we will work with local residents to shape sustainable communities, future proofing for the next five years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We are proposing that Havering Council deliver a new Housing Strategy to set out the strategic aims of Housing for the 5-year period 2021–26. This strategy will form

part of a joined up approach to tackling the housing challenges for all residents of Havering.

As part of the overall development of the strategy, it is recommended that the **Towns and Communities O&S committee input into the vision and draft objectives of the proposed Housing Strategy and consider the plans for consultation and proposed timetable.**

REPORT DETAIL

Our approach to developing a Housing Strategy

Councillor Joshua Chapman, Cabinet Member for Housing, says about the vision for a new Housing Strategy:

“Our ambition is to foster a positive culture that runs through our service with a commitment to engaging with our tenants and leaseholders across Housing – We understand that ‘home is where the heart is’ - It’s not just about the bricks and mortar, (although that is important), it’s also about how residents ‘feel’ about living in their home and local community.”

The Housing Strategy will define what ‘affordable’ housing actually means in a Havering context, based on: legislation, national and local government guidance and best practice, local and national demographic information, as well as changes to the planning regulations, and the review of the Local Plan and the GLA – revised London Plan.

Working with London Boroughs of Redbridge and Newham, we have commenced a new Joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Housing Needs Assessment. This will help direct robust cross-departmental housing strategies for the Boroughs, aimed at addressing local housing requirements. The study will also provide the analytical framework to inform Havering’s objective assessment of housing need.

The Housing Strategy will set out our proposed solutions to what type of housing is needed in our borough and how new housing relates to infrastructure planning and ‘place-making’, so making that crucial link with Social Care, Health care, Education and Employment, mental health and wellbeing of those living in our homes.

As a social landlord, Housing Services has a distinct responsibility to those living in Council managed homes. So Housing Services needs to focus on preserving and enhancing the borough’s valuable assets i.e. existing Council homes, but we also care about those living in our homes and their aspirations for the future.

We have just completed an extensive stock investment survey and will be developing an Asset Management Strategy that will sit alongside the Housing Strategy and inform residents about our programmes to invest in managing and maintaining Council homes over the coming years.

Other Housing documents will also contribute to delivery of the commitments contained within the new Housing Strategy: so a Supported Housing Strategy and our new Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, will be key to achieving that holistic approach to Housing in Havering, along with the Council’s Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

In order to produce a corporately owned document, it is important that the strategy be developed in conjunction with wider Council partners including Public Health, Adult Services, Children’s Services, Regeneration, Planning and Environmental

Services.

The Cabinet Member for Housing has indicated that the strategy should focus on four key priorities that will seek to enhance the lives of all our residents and drive our service delivery in Housing Services.

It is proposed that the underpinning principle to the new Housing Strategy remain a commitment to a borough that is **Cleaner, Safer, Prouder, Together.**

A presentation on the draft vision and objectives for the Housing Strategy was made to:

- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Housing Resident Participation Panel on 17 November 2020
- Elected Members 18 November 2020
- Health & Wellbeing Board 25 November 2020

Following this consultation, we have made some amendments to the original draft objectives previously submitted and this will form basis for further consultation with stakeholders and residents in December to February 2021.

We are proposing four statements of intent or 'aims', under which will sit the greater detail around our commitments to deliver the Housing Strategy objectives. An action plan will be included in the final draft, based on responses received as part of informal and formal consultation.

Statement of Housing's Aims to:

Aim 1: Deliver more genuinely affordable homes that meet the needs of Havering residents.

Priority objective: **We will –**

- *Work together with a wide range of partners to deliver the mix of homes that Havering needs.*
- *Aim to build 3,500 new homes, of which 50% will be affordable.*
- *Engage borough residents on our regeneration plans to ensure their views are considered – we want to build new homes for local people, whilst also creating sustainable communities where people want to live.*

Aim 2: Maintain good quality homes, prioritising safety and environment.

Priority objective: **We will –**

- *Make best use of new and existing homes, ensuring Council residents have a safe, secure and well maintained that is environmentally sustainable.*
- *We want Havering residents to be proud of their homes and neighbourhoods, ensuring that quality and safety is a priority for all our Council managed homes.*
- *Working with communities to develop improved environments for people to live in.*
- *Involve and engage with tenants and leaseholders in making sure that their homes, communities and environment are clean, safe and community-focused places.*
- *Work with the private housing sector to improve the quality and safety of the*



housing stock.

Aim 3: Support existing and future residents to live independently and well.

Priority objective: **We will –**

- *Prevent homelessness and end long term rough sleeping in the borough by providing pathways into appropriate housing and support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, to improve their opportunity to find a settled home.*
- *Work with our partners to actively support the improved **health and wellbeing** of our residents.*
- *Champion early intervention so that people in Havering can feeling included and supported to live independent lives.*
- *Support residents with a vulnerability by helping with housing related health and wellbeing initiatives across the Council, and within our Supported and Sheltered Housing.*

Aim 4: Deliver good quality housing services for all residents.

Priority objective: **We will –**

- *Communicate, engage and work in partnership with residents to ensure that in any interactions with Havering Housing Services, and the wider Council, residents are satisfied that we are delivering an excellent customer service.*
- *We will treat residents respectfully and be open and transparent with information, removing barriers to communication and engagement.*
- *We will also liaise with other borough landlords – private sector, housing associations, owner-occupiers – to ensure we provide good local information to all residents so they are aware of initiatives relating to their homes and communities.*
- *We will foster a culture of respect, understanding and respecting the needs of tenants and leaseholders, especially those with vulnerability.*

We would welcome discussion on whether these aims and objectives are the right ones to steer this important strategy and if there are any further objectives that should be considered.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

As part of the project delivery plan, we will be maintaining a risk register. At present the main risks identified are:

- Changes in National legislation: -
 - MHCLG has published its **Charter For Social Housing Residents** (Social Housing White Paper) 17 November 2020. The commitments in this long awaited document will need to be embedded into the Strategy. Particularly around changes to the Social Housing Regulator and Housing Ombudsman.
 - Changes to the planning system (Planning White Paper 2020) – which may lead to revisions to the ‘standard method’ for calculating the housing need minimum target for a local planning authority.



- Housing Strategy being defined solely in terms of building homes – Regeneration is an important part of the strategy in creation of sustainable communities.
- Lack of potential buy-in from private sector landlords and/or Housing Associations.
- Emphasis on linking to Havering residents' health and wellbeing as a way to support vulnerable residents living in our Council managed homes.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Draft project delivery plan timetable

The Housing Strategy and Service Development team is leading on the research and development of the new Housing Strategy and have proposed a project delivery plan based on five key stages, (the sixth being implementation), as below.

Council residents and other stakeholders will play a key role in feeding back their opinions throughout the development of the strategy. Although we have proposed formal resident consultation on the strategy vision and draft objectives takes place from December 2020 – February 2021, we have already commenced informal consultation with Tenants and Leaseholders and stakeholders. We will be keeping all stakeholders updated at each stage as to progress with strategy development against the milestones of the project plan.

Stage 1 - Evidence base development	Stage 2 - Scoping document	Stage 3 - Stakeholder Engagement & Strategy development	Stage 4 - Strategy final drafting	Stage 5 - Cabinet Approval Process	Stage 6 - Implementation and monitoring
2 weeks period / 26 Oct.2020 – 8 Nov. 2020	2 week period / 9 – 22 Nov. 2020	12 week period / 30 Nov. 2020 – 21 Feb. 2021	4 week period / 22 Feb. 2021 – 21 March 2021	10 week period / 22 March 2021 – 30 May 2021	June 2021 – ongoing
Including benchmarking, ONS data, locally held data (e.g. 'This is Havering' report).	Including: Project Plan, Project Tasks to Senior Mgt and Member for Housing.	Including: Director and staff Workshops, Public Consultation, Stakeholder Meetings.	Including reconciling outcomes of Stakeholder Engagement with Lead Member for Housing's vision.	Including: 'Theme Board' and Lead Member Final Briefings.	Including: monitoring of the action plan/ 'SMART' actions. Reporting and annual reviews.

This page is intentionally left blank

Planning Legislative Changes and the Planning for the Future White Paper

Briefing for Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing is to outline the key proposals and changes to the planning system that have come forward in 2020. The briefing covers:
- i. changes to planning legislation;
 - ii. the government's proposals for changes to the current planning system; and
 - iii. the Planning for the Future White Paper.

2. Changes to planning legislation in 2020

- 2.1. There have been a number of changes to planning legislation this year, as set out below:

Permitted development rights relating to takeaways – March 2020

- 2.2. This amendment allows a change of use from restaurants and cafes and drinking establishments (A3 and A4 uses) to a temporary use for the provision of takeaway food. This amendment was in response to the Covid19 pandemic and the restrictions placed on these businesses during lockdown. Initially this applied for a year but this has now been extended to 23 March 2022.

Permitted development rights relating to emergency development – April 2020

- 2.3. This amendment introduces a new permitted development right to allow local authorities and certain health bodies to carry out development of facilities required in undertaking their roles to respond to the spread of coronavirus. Initially this applied until the end of 2020, but it has now been extended until 31 December 2021.

Permitted development rights to support economic renewal - August 2020

- 2.4. In August the government made a number of amendments to permitted development rights to allow development to assist in supporting the Government's economic renewal package following the Covid19 outbreak. The amendments include:
- Enabling a local authority to hold a market for an unlimited number of days until 23rd March 2021.

- Temporary permission for local authorities to use any land for holding a market until March 2022
- Permanent permitted development right to allow additional storeys to be constructed on existing purpose-built blocks of flats to create new homes, subject to prior approval.
- Requiring new homes delivered through permitted development rights to provide adequate natural light for the occupants.

Business and Planning Act - August 2020

2.5. The Business and Planning Act 2020 aims to help restart the economy in response to the Covid19 pandemic. It introduced a range of new measures to help businesses to quickly adjust and adapt to changing circumstances. This includes:

- A streamlined consent route to allow businesses to obtain a licence to place temporary furniture, such as tables and chairs outside of cafes, bars and restaurants quickly. The licence negates the need to apply for separate planning permission. This applies up to 21st September 2021
- The extension of certain permissions and consents (such as listed building consents) recognising the potential delays resulting from Covid19. Permissions that would expire if they have not commenced before 31 December 2020 will have an extended period for commencement until 1 May 2021.
- Greater flexibility for construction working hours up until April 2021

Permitted Development rights relating upward extensions - August 2020

2.6. The amendment allows existing houses which are detached, semi-detached or in a terrace to be extended upwards to provide additional living space by constructing additional storeys, subject to prior approval.

Permitted development relating to demolitions - August 2020

2.7. This amendment allows the demolition of single detached buildings and the construction of new dwelling houses in their place, subject to prior approval. This applies to single purpose-built detached blocks of flats) other single detached buildings, established for Class B1(a) offices and/or Class B1(b) research and development and/or Class B1(c) industrial process.

Changes to the use classes - September 2020

2.8. Introduces three new use classes with the aim of supporting economic renewal and help businesses adapt to changing circumstances.

- Class E (Commercial, business and service) – including retail, restaurant, office, financial/professional services, indoor sports, medical and nursery uses along with any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business or service locality. The new class E subsumes the former use Classes A1, A2, A3, B1a, B1b, B1c and D1. Pubs, takeaways cinemas, concert halls, bingo halls and dance halls all became Sui Generis uses. (Sui generis buildings are those that do not fall within any particular use class).
- Class F.1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) – including non-residential educational uses, and use as a museum, art gallery, library, public hall, religious institution or law court; and
- Class F.2 (Local community) – including use as a shop of no more than 280 sqm mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop, and use as a community hall, area for outdoor sport, swimming pool or skating rink.

Removal of permitted development rights relating to demolition November 2020

- 2.9. The demolition of any building used as a concert hall, venue for live music performance or theatre is no longer classed as permitted development. This permanent change is to protect these venues, preventing their unnecessary loss as a result of having to close due to the Covid19 pandemic.

Nationally described space standards

- 2.10. From 6th April 2021 dwellings delivered by permitted development rights must meet the nationally described space standard. The standard sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling heights.

3. Proposed changes to the Current Planning System

- 3.1 In August 2020 the Government consulted on changes to the current planning system with the aim of improving its effectiveness. These changes were separate to those contained within the White Paper, which is explored in the next section of this report.
- 3.2 The Council submitted a formal objection in response to this consultation and raised serious concerns about the potential impact of the proposals. Details of where the Council's response can be viewed are set out in Annex 1.
- 3.3 The four main proposals in the consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System are:
- i. Changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need

- ii. Securing of First Homes through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system
- iii. Supporting small and medium-sized builders by temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing
- iv. Extending the current Permission in Principle to major development

Changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need

- 3.4 The standard method was introduced by the Government in 2018 through the revised National Planning Policy Framework. The intention was to make the process of assessing the local housing need simpler, quicker and more transparent. The standard method identifies the minimum number of homes that a local authority should plan for in an area. Through this consultation the Government is seeking to make amendments to the standard method with the aim of ensuring that the Government's target for 300,000 new homes per year will be met nationally.
- 3.5 Under the current standard method, Havering's local housing need is 1,638 homes per annum. The revisions to the standard method see this figure increase to 1,975 homes per annum. The proposed changes do not impact on the emerging Local Plan which seeks to meet the current London Plan housing target of 1,170 homes per annum. However, any future update to the Local Plan would need to take account of the standard methodology.

Securing of First Homes through developer contributions

- 3.6 Earlier this year the Government consulted on the introduction of the First Homes Scheme. This scheme will provide homes for first-time buyers with a 30% discount against market value. The consultation sets out detailed changes to the current planning system that are needed to support its delivery.
- 3.7 The detailed proposals include:
- At least 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contribution should be First Homes.
 - Where cash contributions to affordable housing are secured instead of onsite contributions, at least 25 per cent must be used to secure First Homes.
 - For the remaining 75% of affordable housing secured through developer contributions, two options are proposed:
 - Option 1: If the local authority has a policy on affordable housing tenure mix, the policy should be adhered to but with First Homes delivering a minimum of 25% of the affordable housing products.
 - Option 2: A local authority and developer can negotiate the tenure mix for the remaining 75% of units.

- The minimum discount for First Homes should be 30% from market price and local authorities will have discretion to increase the discount to 40% or 50% if it can be evidenced through the Local Plan making process
- First Homes will be exempt from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), in line with other affordable housing tenures.

Supporting small and medium-sized developers

3.8 The Government supports SMEs and has already introduced legislation that provides for local authorities to allow SMEs to defer Community Infrastructure Levy payments. The Government is now proposing to reduce the contributions required of SMEs in the short term to help economic recovery from Covid-19. This includes:

- Temporarily raising the threshold for when affordable housing contributions should be required from 10 units to 40 or 50 units. The intention is to encourage more small sites to come forward for development.
- Current policy sets a site threshold of at least 0.5 hectares below which affordable housing contributions should not be required. The Government proposes increasing this threshold in proportion to the number of homes threshold.

Extension of the Permission in Principle consent regime

3.9 Permission in Principle is a route to obtaining planning permission for housing-led development that separates consideration of matters of principle for the proposed development from the technical detail. The purpose of this approach is to provide more certainty to developers on whether a site is considered suitable for the proposed development by the Local Planning Authority.

3.10 Permission in Principle consists of two stages:

- Stage 1 (Permission in Principle): Establishes whether a site is suitable in principle based on use, location and the amount of development.
- Stage 2 (Technical details consent): Assesses technical details.

3.11 Permission in Principle by planning application was introduced for minor housing-led development in 2018. Local Planning Authorities also have the power to grant Permission in Principle for sites identified on Part 2 of its Brownfield Land Registers. Havering's register does not contain a Part 2 list.

3.12 The key changes include:

- Extending Permission in Principle to major developments that are not subject to Environmental Impact Assessments or habitats assessments.

- Lower application fees, preferably a banded fee structure, with a fixed fee per hectare and a maximum fee cap.
- Automatic granting of Permission in Principle for sites on Part 2 of the brownfield register.

4 Planning for the Future White Paper

4.1 In August 2020 the Government published a new White Paper “Planning for the Future” setting out their ambitions to make the planning system in England simpler, faster and more effective.

4.2 The Government have identified a number of concerns about the current planning system, and have stated that planning today feels outdated and unnecessarily complex, buried by legislation and case law. The view expressed in the White Paper is that decisions are based on a case by case basis rather than determined by clear rules. The White Paper goes on to say that adoption of Local Plans and policy documents take too long, the focus on documentation over data compromises quality and discourages engagement and the public does not trust local authorities to make the best decisions.

4.3 The White Paper proposes radical reforms to the planning system with the following overarching aims:

- i. To streamline the planning process with greater democracy taking place more effectively at the plan-making stage.
- ii. To digitalise and modernise the planning process
- iii. A new focus on design and sustainability
- iv. To improve infrastructure delivery through reform of developer contributions.
- v. To ensure more land is available for the homes and development people and communities need, and support renewal of our town and city centres.

4.4 The Council submitted a formal response to the White Paper consultation generally supporting the overarching aims but raising serious concerns about the proposals that sit underneath these aims. Details of where the Council’s response can be viewed are set out in Annex 1.

4.5 The key proposals in the White Paper include:

- Simplifying the role of Local Plans to identify land under 3 categories; *Growth* areas suitable for substantial development, *Renewal* areas suitable for development, and areas that are *Protected* (including green belt, conservation areas, local wildlife sites, flood risk areas and important greenspace). Growth areas would automatically be granted outline planning permission for the principle of development.

- Streamlining the Local Plan process by abolishing the duty to co-operate and sustainability appraisals and replacing the current tests of soundness with a single sustainable development test.
- Introducing a statutory duty for local authorities to adopt a new Local Plan 30 months from the legislation being brought into force, or 42 months for local planning authorities who have adopted a Local Plan within the previous three years. Reviews will then be required every 5 years. Failure to meet these targets would result in government intervention.
- Greater emphasis on engagement with the community at the Plan making stage and less so at the planning application stage.
- Creating a national standard method for establishing housing requirement figures, which ensures enough land is released in the areas where affordability is worst, to stop land supply being a barrier to enough homes being built. This would factor in land constraints and opportunities to more effectively use land.
- A greater focus on design and making design guides and codes a required aspect of development management, with a greater level of importance.
- A requirement for each local authority to appoint a chief officer for design and place-making.
- Introduction of a fast-track for beauty through changes to national policy and legislation to incentivise and accelerate developments which reflect local character and preferences.
- Ambitious improvements in the energy efficiency standards for buildings to help deliver our world-leading commitment to net-zero by 2050.
- A new 'all-in-one' Infrastructure Levy (replacing s106 and CIL) set at a national rate. The aim is to remove long negotiation talks and to deliver development more quickly, without missing out on developer contributions.
- Expanding the scope of the Infrastructure Levy to capture changes of use through permitted development rights
- Giving Local Authorities more spending power, with Infrastructure Levy payment off-set by in-kind delivery of affordable and/or First Homes on site; and
- Strengthened enforcement powers and sanctions with more fines and enforcement activity from local authorities.

- 4.6 The Government are currently considering the responses to the consultation and we await the outcome of the analysis and further detail on the Government's next steps.

Annex 1: Useful Links

- Changes to the Current Planning System:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system>
- The council's consultation response to Changes to the Current Planning System:
Doesn't appear to be published on the decisions pages of the web?
- Planning for the Future White Paper:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-the-future>
- The council's consultation response to the White Paper:
<https://democracy.havering.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=5801>

This page is intentionally left blank