



Energy Strategy

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Executive Summary

This document sets out Stroud District Council's (SDC) Strategy for improving the energy performance of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) properties and replaces the existing Tenant Services Energy Strategy (last updated in October 2012).

The key aims of this Energy Strategy are to:

- Relieve fuel poverty and
- Maximise carbon reduction in line with the Council's existing and future agreed targets.

It applies to all dwellings that are owned and managed by SDC, including communal areas of flats and sheltered housing schemes and shops where appropriate, but excludes garages.

The Strategy has been developed following the completion of a comprehensive energy scenario modelling exercise (of the domestic portfolio) to assess the best ways for SDC to improve the energy efficiency across its housing stock portfolio.

Many of the low-cost improvements have already been completed on the majority of homes where practicable. Therefore an increasing proportion of the improvements still required in the stock are to the more challenging "Hard to Treat" homes, which will now need significant and targeted investment.

With 5,200 homes for rent, around 340 of them were built prior to 1930, a further 600 have non-traditional wall construction, and a significant number of the estimated 1,000 homes with uninsulated cavity walls are likely to need some specialist treatment. These groups will require significant investment to improve their thermal efficiency.

Around 24% of the stock currently has no mains gas connection. While around 500 of these now have modern electric heat-pump wet heating systems, a further 700 need significant improvements to make their heating more affordable for occupants and reduce carbon emissions.

Improving the energy performance of the Council's housing stock presents a major challenge. This will be achieved by targeting our resources on measures which provides the Council, and tenants with the greatest return on investment. Encouraging behavioural change (around how energy and heating systems are used) can also contribute to efficiency and affordability, so tenant, staff and stakeholder education is an important additional factor towards reaching our objectives.

A vital component of this Strategy is a detailed list of actions that will be shown in a rolling **Five Year Action Plan** (Appendix Three). These actions along with a set of overriding Aims and Objectives have been developed by a cross-department stakeholder group (Appendix One). The implementation of the action plan will be overseen by the **Energy Strategy Steering Group (ESSG)**, who will monitor its progress and ensure that any changes made to the plan are appropriate in the context of the aims and priorities of this strategy.

This Energy Strategy complements the Corporate Asset Management Strategy, and the Non-Traditional Homes Strategy, as well as other key corporate and departmental

documents which underpin the Councils guiding principles and commitment to reducing carbon, and addressing environmental issues in a responsible way. It will also refer to a new Affordable Warmth Strategy which will be developed to complement existing and future aspirational aims.

Strategy Objectives

The overall objective of the Energy Strategy is to relieve fuel poverty and maximise carbon reduction in line with the Council's existing and future agreed targets.

This Strategy complements the Corporate Asset Management Strategy, which provides direction to overall investment decisions for the Council's housing stock. Significant investment will be required to ensure the necessary improvements to the energy efficiency of the housing stock. Decisions will need to be made prioritising homes for improvement, and target those which may not be able to be brought up to acceptable standards within the boundaries of any existing or future financial or technological constraints.

Direct funding will be utilised where available, alternatively we will seek finance from external sources where appropriate. We recognise that behavioural change will be key to the long term sustainability and viability of our stock, and will help to support investment in energy improvement works. Tenants may benefit from educational, or intervention strategies to help support them where new technologies (such as Air Source Heat Pumps) are installed.

We need an Energy Strategy for the housing we own and manage in order to:

- Ensure affordable warmth for current and prospective tenants
- Achieve compliance with legal and regulatory requirements for Housing
- Make progress towards meeting carbon reduction targets
- Contribute towards improving the health and well-being of tenants
- Ensure the effective usage of diminishing energy resources
- Allow for timely response to opportunities for drawing in external assistance
- Provide a framework for officers and stakeholders to ensure investment is targeted where the greatest need is required
- Develop the Councils capacity to understand and manage demand over time by identifying and sharing learning outcomes with all stakeholders
- Developing a preventative approach and be proactive in seeking opportunities to avoid demand arising in the first place by addressing the root-causes
- Ensure requirement is aligned with maintenance programmed works development and delivery
- Underpin and support strategic investment planning decisions

Action Plan

This strategy is supported by, and implemented according to a rolling five year Action Plan designed to ensure that the overall objectives of the strategy are being delivered. This Action Plan is attached to this Strategy as Appendix Three. Objectives will additionally be supported by ensuring alignment with the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and business objectives.

To maintain momentum and direction, the progress of each action will be reviewed on a six monthly basis. These reviews would also allow for minor revisions where they would provide appropriate response to changing conditions (e.g. additional external funding becoming available for certain measures, or if funding were to be reduced, programmes could be prioritised to minimise any detrimental impact).

In order to ensure relevancy, the strategy and Action Plan will be fully reviewed every two years by the Energy Strategy Steering Group. Any proposed changes to the Strategy or Action Plan other than those driven by legislation or regulatory requirement are to be brought back before the Housing Committee or relevant authorising body for agreement and ratification. Proposed changes will be appropriate in the context of the aims and priorities of this Strategy.

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Strategy Context

The Council's housing stock accommodates some of the most vulnerable people in our community. The cost of energy is rising and the long-term security of fuel supply for the UK is a major concern for UK Government.

The largest consumption of domestic energy is for heating, followed by hot water, cooking and lighting, followed by electrical appliances. To ensure maximum impact, we will therefore need to improve our stocks thermal insulation and the efficiency of heating systems, including switching fuels where it is viable and sustainable to do so. We will also need to help tenants contribute to reducing energy consumption through changing how they use it.

Most of the low-cost insulation measures possible to be undertaken on Stroud District Council's (SDC) housing stock have already been carried out. Most of what remains are within the sub category group "Hard to Treat" (HTT) homes which includes those which are:

- Off the gas network
- Of solid wall construction (such as Victorian terraced)
- Are of non-traditional construction
- Have no loft space (Such as flats)
- Those located within restricted locations (such as conservation or areas of outstanding natural beauty)

Approximately 1,700 (30%) of Stroud District Council (SDC) homes fall into one or more of these categories and will require significant investment to improve energy efficiency. The single most significant factor preventing affordable improvement is the large number of properties which are "off gas" and heated with night storage, oil or solid fuel. For these homes renewable solutions may be a viable, affordable alternative. Where the fabric of a building has a poor thermal performance, it can cost more to overhaul it than to replace it. New homes can be designed and built to very high energy efficiency standards. The performance of buildings, property, and performance is covered within the Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy, and New Build Development Client Brief.

Most initiatives are likely to be long term projects, but fuel poverty is an immediate concern for tenants, especially in "hard to treat" homes. The worst homes need to be prioritised but against the competing priority of maintaining and improving homes in other ways, and any significant investment on energy improvements must be measured as part of an Asset Performance Assessment as set out in the Corporate Asset Management Strategy.

The Energy Strategy will be implemented in the context of the legal and regulatory environment within which the Council operates, its strategic aims, and local and national targets to which Stroud is committed.

- The importance of physical assets in delivering organisational objectives and outcomes
- The quality of existing physical assets in terms of condition and asset performance
- The long term sustainability and viability of for Stroud, existing and future tenants

- The assets needed to meet or sustain current levels of service.

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Strategic Linkage

Environmental Policy 2017

Stroud District Council is committed to continuously improving the environment by protecting and shaping our high quality natural and built surroundings, reducing pollution, mitigating the impacts and adapting to the effects of climate change, while encouraging and supporting others to do the same, for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors to the Stroud District.

The Council has direct powers and responsibilities in planning and land use, environmental health, waste management, housing, leisure and economic development. It is also a significant resource user and employer. It therefore recognises that its operations and service delivery have a major impact on the environment.

Stroud District Council will achieve its commitment by maintaining an environmental management system - currently EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) - to continuously monitor progress.

The Council will also ensure compliance with all relevant environmental legislation, guidance and best practice principles to fulfil its statutory environmental responsibilities

Corporate Asset management Strategy (CAMS)

The Corporate Asset Management Strategy sets out how we will make the best use of existing assets and available resources to provide decent, affordable council housing. We provide affordable housing for many of the most vulnerable people in our communities, and statically this means that many of our tenants are likely to fall into fuel poverty. Energy efficiency needs to be a key consideration in determining the future viability of “hard to treat” properties.

It is essential therefore that there is clear and consistent process for integrating the objectives and actions from this Energy Strategy and the CAMS. A core aspect of this will be ensuring that work carried out by Stroud to model the domestic stock under different energy reduction measures; will be referenced in any asset management decisions regarding investment in the housing stock.

Non Traditional Homes Strategy (NTHS)

Properties of non-traditional construction form a significant percentage of Stroud’s overall stock make up, and are included within the sub category HTT. Stroud has redeveloped a number of sites where the worst performing units were located, however a significant number still remain within the portfolio which require attention.

Those remaining assets will require significant investment to increase the thermal properties up to an acceptable level. The NTHS has synergy and direct linkage into this strategy.

Assets

This strategy applies to all dwellings that fall within the HRA, including communal areas of flats and sheltered housing schemes and shops where appropriate, but excluding garages.

Newly built properties are constructed to current building regulations which include high energy efficiency standards and whilst they are included within the scope of this strategy they are not likely to be a priority.

A primary element of the Five Year Action Plan will be to ensure that maximum use is made of energy performance data already gathered, and that continual updating of this takes place.

Condition of Assets

The strategy requires comprehensive up-to-date information on the energy efficiency of our properties. The energy efficiency of homes can be measured using the Energy Performance Certificate rating (EPC). A higher EPC rating means a more energy efficient home. This will be used to measure the effectiveness of improvements in energy efficiency.

Energy information is currently obtained from stock condition surveys which are updated by the issue of an EPC whenever a property becomes void. The energy data will be updated for individual properties whenever they are subject to energy efficiency works either through repair/replacement of failed components or as part of a programme of works. The data will be held in the asset management system to facilitate resource planning.

In 2016 Stroud commissioned the development of an Energy Baseline and Scenario Modelling exercise with the objective of baselining the domestic portfolio using all available stock data to provide as accurate a representation as possible. Existing programmes were modelled to show the improvement in baseline, and to illustrate what might be achievable, a number of different scenarios were then modelled using the baseline as a reference point.

Figure 1 shows the baseline, broken down by average SAP, average fuel bill, average CO₂ emissions, and total CO₂ emissions. It should be noted that this is effectively a 'snapshot' in time and is only as accurate as the data used to develop it. In order to maintain an accurate picture of the existing energy performance of our domestic properties this should be reviewed regularly (ideally every year or when significant amounts of updated property data becomes available).

Average SAP	64.32
Average fuel bill	£1,105
Average CO ₂ emissions (Tonnes/yr)	3.1
Total CO ₂ emissions (Tonnes/yr)	15,620

FIGURE 1: SAP BASELINE - SDC DOMESTIC STOCK

Figure 2 shows the distribution of Stroud domestic properties in terms of SAP.

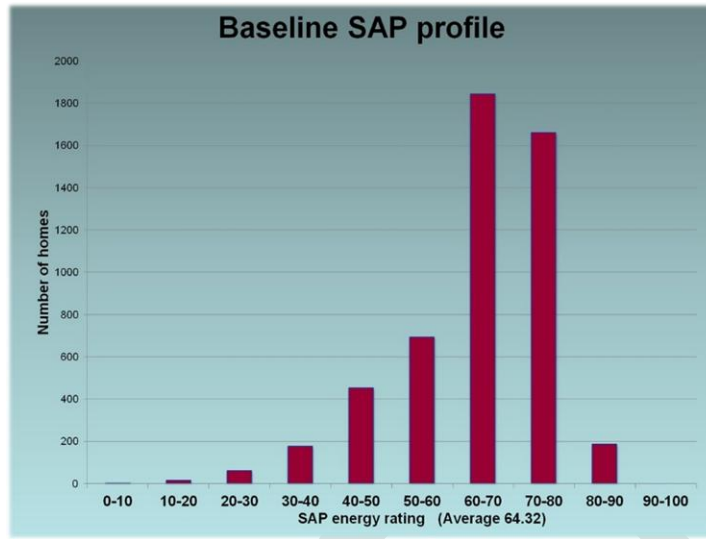


FIGURE 2: BASELINE SAP PROFILE

Drivers

Development of this Energy Strategy has involved a detailed stakeholder engagement exercise involving SDC staff (cross departmental representation), Councillors and Tenant representatives. The drivers outlined below are a summary of those identified during the stakeholders workshops in parallel with a review of the previous SDC Energy Strategy.

Fuel Poverty

Contributory factors that can create fuel poverty include:

- Low income
- High energy prices
- Poorly insulated home
- Inefficient heating systems & controls
- Under occupation

A simplified definition of fuel poverty is where a household has a low income so cannot afford to spend enough on fuel to achieve adequate “standard” temperatures in their home.

More precisely, it is defined by the Fuel Poverty Indicator England that now uses: the “Low Income High Cost” definition, which states that a household is in fuel poverty if:

- They have “standard” fuel costs that are above average (the national median level);
- Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

Unlike the previous indicator measuring fuel poverty (10% of income), the Low Income High Cost definition is a relative measure as it compares households to the national median bill and income - thereby measuring the contemporary trends and are reflected in both these measures.

Whichever definition is used, a household at risk of fuel poverty is likely to face a difficult choice between a cold home or unaffordable fuel bills. In reducing fuel poverty, Stroud is helping residents achieve Affordable Warmth and sustaining tenancies.

Health and Wellbeing

Fuel poverty has serious implications for the health of the households and communities it affects. Each winter, mortality rates increase by 19% in England (Department of Health, 2011), and whilst not all of this can be attributable to fuel poverty, it is important to note that,

“Countries which have more energy efficient housing have lower excess winter deaths”

(Marmot Review Team, 2011, p.9)

In a cold home, there is a close correlation between excess winter deaths, cardio-vascular disease, respiratory problems and mental health. Damp conditions also encourage dust mite and mould growth and can aggravate asthma and other allergies. Children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to cold conditions.

As well as physical health, social health is also affected as fuel poverty alleviation reduces anti-social behaviour, educational impacts and other associated social problems. Cold damp homes are less attractive to invite visitors into, tending to reinforce social isolation.

Homes with only one room being heated provide less opportunity for studying away from distractions, potentially hindering educational achievement. Poor health results in more absenteeism from school and work, having both learning and economic consequences.

In a home that is hard to heat, occupants are likely to have to choose between a cold home, and a warmer home but with high fuel bills, which can cause financial problems for households on low income. The direct financial problems of debt may also be compounded with mental health problems such as stress or depression arising from the debt.

Clearly fuel poverty can blight the lives of individual households in a number of ways, and therefore also affect the community they live in.

Sustainability

Supplies of fossil fuels are finite. The UK is already a net importer of gas and oil as North Sea reserves become increasingly depleted. Known global conventional oil reserves should meet projected demand for 20-30 years and gas reserves a little longer. Further reserves have been identified by exploration, although this will increasingly need to be in less accessible and more environmentally sensitive areas (such as US proposals to explore for oil in Antarctica).

Additional sources are potentially available but would require environmentally hazardous processes like gas from “fracking” or decimating large areas of land and inputting significant amounts of energy to extract oil from tar sands. Predictions of the global exhaustion of fossil fuels are uncertain and have regularly been revised as exploration identifies more reserves, but there is also a moral question of whether we should exploit such resources to exhaustion over a relatively short time, or leave some reserves for future generations.

Some energy will always be needed to meet our needs, but these needs can be met more sustainably in the long term by improving efficiency and shifting towards renewable energy with appropriate energy storage to compensate for any intermittency of production. As conventional fuels become scarce their price will rise. So a strategic shift towards more sustainable and renewable sources is also a long term Affordable Warmth Strategy.

We also acknowledge that due to the local topography and geology, the risk of flooding in the district is of significant concern, not only in the present day but even more so as the effects of climate change become more pronounced.

Carbon Reduction

While exploration may extend the known reserves of fossil fuels, scientists agree that burning fossil fuels on the current scale is affecting our climate, and this needs to be addressed urgently. The average global temperature is rising, giving us the rather benign sounding term “global warming”, but the effects of climate change are impacting in different and potentially catastrophic ways around the world. For example: low-lying land is prone to flooding in areas affected directly by rising sea levels.

In England we are likely to see higher risks of drought and heat stress in summer and flooding and wind-damage in winter, resulting in greater summer mortality, disruption, and insurance and repair costs. (For example, floods in autumn 2000 cost the UK £1bn whilst the August heat wave of 2003 is estimated to have resulted in 2000 deaths in England alone). Other risks which will have a direct impact on Stroud and its tenants are worsening air quality and increased subsidence as clay soils increasingly dry out in the summer months.

No single organisation has responsibility for these issues, yet we all suffer the consequences of climate change, and many organisations struggle to cope with the health and social impacts of fuel poverty.

Around 25% of energy used in the UK is used in housing and 50% of carbon emissions are generated by buildings and the processes within them. Therefore, Social Housing Landlords, who not only manage large housing stocks but also operate from large office buildings, are in a position to make a particularly significant impact.

By including lower carbon emissions as an important aim of this energy strategy, Stroud is playing its part in helping residents whilst also meeting other economic, environmental and social objectives.

Sustainable Re-investment

Stroud recognises that care needs to be taken not to re-invest in poor performing areas at the expense of all others, nor should high risk re-investment occur without due consideration, through an option appraisal. Stroud’s Obsolescence Procedure Guide sets out the framework and pathway which will need to be followed before investment is committed.

Generally investment will be prioritised with a bias toward those units identified through the appraisal process, which are considered to be low risk and high demand.

On simple analysis, when Stroud pays for improvements to its housing stock the only obvious benefit is for the tenants in the form of better thermal comfort and/or lower fuel bills. Of course, as a Social Housing Landlord, Stroud does not require strict financial “Return on Investment” to justify paying for improvements to housing stock although it is important to consider value for money. Appraisal will also take due regard of the Egan principles “Assessing Sustainable Communities”.

By providing homes people choose to, and aspire to live in, brings with it a number of indirect financial benefits, such as:

- Fewer voids and associated costs
- Fewer complaints and repairs call-outs
- Lower property maintenance costs (e.g. reduced mould/condensation damage)
- Tenants will have more disposable income to reinvest in the local economy
- Reduced rent arrears

Decent Homes Standard

When the Decent Homes Standard was introduced in 2000, it was to raise standards in social housing alone, but was later extended to vulnerable people living in private sector accommodation. The Decent Homes Standard is a technical standard which sets the minimum criteria to attain 'decency'. The criteria that make up the Decent Homes Standard are shown in Appendix Two.

The Decent Homes Standard has been a major driver for improving thermal insulation in social housing. This is important in reducing the heating energy consumption in all properties, but particularly in those that are off-gas.

Stroud has recognised that better standards of insulation are needed help improve the thermal properties of its homes, regardless of the types of primary heating systems which are installed. As a minimum, Stroud will be installing cavity wall insulation and improving the roof insulation of its homes to modern standards where it is possible to do so.

When carrying out refurbishment work on buildings owned by SDC, we will actively seek to go beyond the minimum level of insulation required to meet regulations where it is practically and economically feasible to do so.

Social Value

Social value remains an important part of our commitment to stakeholders notwithstanding the pressure of legislative changes within the Social Housing sector, and the continued drive to ensure value for money.

Social value is difficult to define as it goes beyond bricks and mortar, but we realise that the communities we work in need to be successful, economically, socially, and environmentally. We want our communities to be a place where people want to live and work as a matter of choice.

We will consider what is beneficial in the context of local needs or particular strategic objectives in determining the impact of investment decisions.

Tenant expectations

Not all the demands to improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock are derived through external drivers and internal policy. Growing competition to attract the best tenants, rising energy costs, and a more informed client has seen tenant expectations rise. Tenants are more aware of what is achievable from the information provided on Energy Performance Certificates (EPC).

Improving the energy efficiency of homes will mean that tenants will live in warmer homes with the potential to manage their energy consumption more efficiently, giving them the scope to reduce their fuel bills.

Creating jobs and stimulating economies through investment in the built environment

This strategy supports Stroud's Jobs and Growth Plan, through the delivery of local projects.

Stroud's Corporate Delivery Plan 2014-2018 has five key strands:

- **Economy:** Help local people and businesses grow the local economy and increase employment
- **Affordable Housing:** Provide affordable, decent and social housing
- **Environment:** Help the community minimize its carbon footprint, adapt to climate change and recycle more
- **Resources:** Provide value for money to taxpayers and high quality services to our customers
- **Health & Wellbeing:** Promote the health and well being of our communities and work with others to deliver the public health agenda

Helping our tenants to reduce their energy bills will enable them to have more disposable income which they may choose to spend locally. Building green and putting people first continues to prove itself important, past the immediate objectives of simply reducing costs.

Through sharing, collaboration, education, and training we aim to ensure that the energy solutions we provide are fit for the future.

Our Vision

To help meet the challenges we face both as an organisation, and for our existing and future tenants, Stroud will strive to become a leading Social Housing provider offering homes which are, warm, high quality, energy efficient, and which produce low levels of carbon in line with our overall target to reduce carbon emissions by 80% (compared to 1990 levels) as required by the 2008 Climate Change Act.

Reducing carbon through effective and efficient investment in our assets, for the benefit of tenants is a key aspiration for Stroud.

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Future Proofing

Innovation

New and emerging technologies will be a key component in transforming the UK's energy infrastructure from carbon intensive and fossil fuel focused to a less carbon intensive one that is in keeping with the CCA's 80% reduction target relative to 1990 levels. Grid electricity is likely to become less carbon intensive over time as large fossil fuelled electricity generators go off-line and the level and scale of renewables contributing to the national grid increases.

Stroud believes that the low-carbon future of heating our homes is likely to be predominantly electric with heating and hot water systems being designed so that the peak periods are smoothed out; this means less instantaneous generation and greater use of hot water storage, thermal mass and Passivhaus performance.

At a local level Stroud has a significant proportion of electrically heated dwellings that are not on main gas, and has already installed a number of electric air to water heat pumps. We will keep firmly abreast of innovations in the field of energy generation and energy efficiency and seek to apply these principles across our own building portfolio where possible.

Champions

In order to fulfil an aspiration to become one of the foremost social housing providers in providing low-carbon energy efficient homes, Stroud will need to demonstrate leadership in this area both internally to our tenants, external partners and associated organisations, but also to our peers in the social housing sector.

To do this we will actively seek out opportunities to talk and present at forums, exhibitions, conferences and produce written material about our projects and experiences. We will draw on external expertise/support where necessary but will establish a number of energy champions ourselves who can offer advice and support to our tenants in their homes about cutting out energy waste, and using existing technologies as efficiently as possible.

We are committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders, and to ensure focus is maintained on delivery of the vision we will ensure suitable monitoring and review processes are in place.

Risks

The Energy Strategy Steering Group will be tasked with reviewing potential risks to achieving the objectives in the Energy Strategy. Specifically, this will be potential risks set out in the following section, however others may arise that cannot be foreseen and all should be reviewed on a regular (quarterly) basis in order to assess the impact on this Energy Strategy.

Policy

The overarching policy underpinning this strategy is the Climate Change Act 2008 which is referred to in our vision. This is an Act of Parliament and makes it the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that the net UK carbon account for all six Kyoto greenhouse gases for the year 2050 is at least 80% lower than the 1990 baseline to help avoid dangerous climate change.

The Act aims to enable the UK to become a low carbon economy and gives Ministers powers to introduce measures necessary to achieve the targets. There is a risk therefore that different incentives/measures/technologies etc may or may not be introduced by the current or successive Governments in order to maintain this underlying trajectory.

Stroud should therefore keep well abreast of all Government consultations, policy statements on energy policy at a national level to ensure we are informed and can amend our own Energy Strategy accordingly.

Welfare reform

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit; in its place Councils were required to develop a local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS). Historical information shows a reduction in the number of individuals entitled to the LCTS thereby reducing the cost of the scheme to SDC. See Table 1.

Year	Case Count	Amount (£)
2013/14	7,116	£6,428,693
2014/15	6,891	£6,184,601
2015/16	6,582	£5,970,791
2016/17	6,343	£5,810,384

TABLE 1: LCTS HISTORICAL DATA

However there remains a risk that the costs of running the LCTS may increase in future years due to changes in council tax rates and caseload, and this may have an impact upon the financial resources SDC is able to commit elsewhere such as in implementing all objectives set out in our Energy Strategy.

Political

We would anticipate the most significant political risk over the next few years is likely to be BREXIT and this is addressed separately below. However, local elections and changes in Local and National Government all present possible risks through changes in policy and ambition primarily.

Brexit

We respect the UK's decision through a national referendum to withdraw from the European Union (EU). We will work collaboratively with the Local Government Association, District Council Network, our own Members of Parliament and others who are in direct contact with the UK Government to understand and plan for any impacts this may have on Stroud District Council.

We will also work closely with our partners in the public sector to examine the impact on public sector finances affecting all public services in the sector.

As a Local Authority, we have a primary role as community leaders and therefore a responsibility to ensure (as far as we are able to) that the economic, social, environmental and financial implications of this decision on our community and our businesses are managed well.

We understand that much will depend upon the pace and nature of negotiations between the UK Government and the EU. We are committed to the achieving the aims and objectives set out in this strategy - however we will need to review commitments in light of any decisions regarding the Government's BREXIT strategy as more information becomes available.

Review periods

The Energy Strategy Steering Group will meet twice a year as a minimum. The implementation of the Energy Strategy Action Plan will be reviewed in detail at these meetings, progress assessed against expectations, and risks discussed so a suitable risk management approach is developed.

Annually, the Energy Strategy will be reviewed in detail by the ESSG. The Energy Strategy should be considered a 'live document' and updated as required on an annual basis in order to ensure it reflects any changes that have occurred (maybe due to internal and external drivers or other influences) and have rendered a section of the document or an action as out of date.

Training for frontline staff

It will not be possible to achieve all the core aims and supporting objectives underpinning the Energy Action Plan unless awareness of energy efficiency is embedded throughout our staff structure, particularly in those that are front of house and are interacting with tenants regularly whether that is face to face, over the phone or through other indirect communications.

All front line staff will receive training to expand and develop their knowledge on reducing energy use, spotting energy saving opportunities and helping tenants to reduce their carbon footprint through behavioural change.

Behavioural change

Behavioural change is acknowledged by Stroud as being an important method of positively influencing our tenants to make changes to lifestyles to facilitate energy savings. Frontline staff that are going into tenants dwellings on a regular basis as part of normal duties have a fantastic opportunity to give advice and bring about positive change, by:

- Establishing tenant priorities and working with them to determine innovative ways to encourage lifestyle changes
- Using heating controls to provide optimum efficiency
- Understanding energy bills and where current practices could potentially be improved
- Feeding back information obtained from positive behavioural change results with tenants into the Tenants Handbook so this information is shared

Stroud understand that if we are to achieve our vision, we will need to tackle and reduce the energy use in all our buildings through a combination of direct energy saving measures and alternative methods of heat and power generation, but also through awareness raising in energy in our own staff and our tenants.

We also accept that any initiatives/programmes introduced need to be on a 'rolling' basis to reflect the fact that staff and tenants move on, and that this knowledge needs to be maintained and developed.

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Action Plan

This strategy is supported by a five year Action Plan (see Appendix) designed to ensure that the overall objectives of the strategy are being delivered. In order to ensure relevancy, the strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed and updated every 12 months by the ESSG.

The Action Plan is structured per measure as shown in Table 1.

Action	Party/Dept responsible	Start date	Finish/due date	Resources req'd	Desired outcome	Evaluation plan
<i>e.g to develop an SDC healthy homes standard to ensure correct tenant education and advice across the service</i>						

TABLE 2: ACTION PLAN FORMAT

Appendix One – Aims & Objectives

Tables 2 and 3 lists the agreed set of overarching aims and objectives that have been identified by the Energy Strategy Steering Group in order to drive the Action Plan for the next 5 years.

The aims state our intended direction and aspirations:

Aim No	Description
1	Provide healthy homes
2	Ensure effective and efficient use of council resources
3	Provide our tenants with affordable warmth
4	Reduce CO ₂ emissions in line with Government targets
5	Become a leading housing provider for energy management

TABLE 3: ENERGY STRATEGY AIMS

The objectives state how we will achieve our aims and what it will look like when we have achieved it.

Objective No	Description
1	Reduce condensation mould growth issues
2	Introduce a benchmarking and peer review scheme
3	Promote health and wellbeing
4	Increase average SAP rating of SDC SH stock
5	Identify new technologies/opportunities that can be implemented cost effectively
6	Co-ordinate across SDC to ensure joint working
7	Training and education for colleagues & customers
8	Develop an Affordable Warmth strategy
9	Adopt the 'Passivhaus' standard into new build and investigate integration into retrofit
10	Maximise funding opportunities for HRA

TABLE 4: ENERGY STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

The Action Plan shows the actions and steps we need to take in order to achieve the objectives in Table 3, and the overarching aims in Table 2.

Appendix Two – Definitions

SAP

The energy efficiency of homes can be measured using the SAP energy rating (UK Government's Standard Assessment Procedure). The SAP energy rating scale ranges from 0 to 100, where a higher rating means a more energy efficient home. It is a non-linear scale that indicates relative annual fuel costs (heating & lighting) per square metre of floor area. This scale is more useful than the SAP band A-G scale.

Although the assessment methodology is to a large extent standardised, a number of versions and revisions have come into use over the years, so it is important to ensure the same version has been used when comparing results. SDC currently uses SAP2012.

Decent Homes

The Decent Homes Standard has been a major driver for improving thermal insulation in social housing.

The four criteria which make up the Decent Homes Standard are:

- It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- It is in a reasonable state of repair
- It has reasonably modern facilities and services
- It has a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

Appendix Three – Action Plan

See attached document 'Energy Action Plan.doc'

DRAFT

Steering Group

AIMS

- Provide healthy homes
- Ensure effective and efficient use of council resources
- Provide our tenants with affordable warmth
- Reduce CO2 Emissions in line with Government targets
- Become a Leading Housing Provider for energy management

OBJECTIVE

1. Reduce Condensation Mould Growth Issues

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
To develop an SDC Healthy Homes Standard to ensure correct tenant education and advice across Tenant Services						
Carry out a review of existing communications on damp & mould						
Carry out a review of training on damp & mould, and look to get damp & mould on E-Training for all staff to provide awareness on the issues we may come across						

OBJECTIVE

2. Increase the average SAP rating of SDC stock

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Bring all properties where reasonably practicable to do so, up to sector average values as a minimum						

Increase the SAP by x amount, once worked out over an agreed period of x amount of years						
Fully utilize the energy module in Keystone, Quarterly reports on SAP improvements, develop planned programmes using SAP data						

OBJECTIVE

3. Training & Education for colleagues and customers

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Ascertain staff training gaps						
Develop and implement training programme						
Provide Energy Angels training to key SDC staff and tenants						
Encourage behaviour change by offering tenants ongoing, high quality and easy to understand advice						

OBJECTIVE

4. Maximise funding opportunities for HRA

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Carryout regular reviews of the annual Delivery Plan allowances, supply chain costs, and available grant						
Maximise resources through collaborative working with internal and external partners						

OBJECTIVE

5. Implement an energy benchmarking accreditation system (e.g. SHIFT)

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Agree what areas of the service need to be benchmarked within the strategy						
Identify members to form a working/steering group						
Research which benchmarking systems are out there and recommend which one(s) to adopt						

OBJECTIVE

6. Identify new technologies/opportunities that can be implemented cost effectively

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Market Research against new technologies against other housing providers						
Trials of new innovations/technologies on our stock & produce progress report to identify cost efficiencies						
Actively look for funding opportunities within energy improvement works						

OBJECTIVE

7. Develop an Affordable Warmth strategy

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Investigate SDC affordable warmth policy and how it links to SDC housing						
Integrate requirements of affordable warmth strategy into housing policies						

OBJECTIVE

8. Promote health & wellbeing

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
To work with SDC corporate Health & Wellbeing Team to promote a consistent approach across the whole of the district/healthy housing strategy						
Identify our Health & Wellbeing priorities through the Steering Group						
Investigate what Health & Wellbeing opportunities are available through voluntary partners/stakeholders						
To be mindful of the affordable warmth strategy, some actions may involve cross working						

OBJECTIVE

9. Co-ordinate across SDC to ensure joint working

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Put in place Energy Strategy Steering Group (EESG)						
Utilise internal staff as energy champions						
Set up training & briefing sessions to all client facing staff						
Procurement to all other SDC Departments & potential joint procurement ventures						

OBJECTIVE

10. Adopt the Passivhaus standard into New Build and investigate integration into retrofit

Action	PARTY / DEPT RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO BEGIN	DATE DUE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOME	EVALUATION PLAN
Where financially and technically practicable to do so adopt Passivhaus standards/principals for new housing and retrofit projects						

Use grants where available to help fund work streams						
Keep a watching brief on related low/zero carbon Government Policy and consultations						