

Report Title	STRATEGY FOR NEW COUNCIL HOMES			
Purpose of Report	To present the Strategy for New Council Homes and Action Plan.			
Decision(s)	<p>Housing Committee RESOLVES to:</p> <p>a. Adopt the Strategy for New Council Homes and Action Plan</p> <p>And</p> <p>b. Notes the delegation approved by Council in the Capital Strategy that land / property purchases, above the existing delegation of £500,000, will be presented to Strategy and Resources Committee for approval except for those occasions where insufficient time is available for a capital purchase to go through the full Committee cycle, and these decisions will be made by the Section 151 Officer and Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee. This only applies where there is an existing budget approved by full Council which may be used.</p>			
Consultation and Feedback	Consultation has taken place with officers from across the Council at a workshop event on the 11 November 2019 and at SLT and at Housing Review Panel on the 21 January and with the Chair and Vice Chair of Housing Committee.			
Report Author	Leonie Lockwood, New Homes and Regeneration Manager Email: leonie.lockwood@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	The Council could choose to not proceed with an ongoing programme of new affordable homes.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix A – Strategy for New Council Homes 2020-2024 Appendix B – Action Plan - Strategy for New Council Homes 2020-2024			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	No	No	Yes

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Affordable housing is a key priority for the Council and this has recently been reconfirmed in its new strategy – ‘Recover, reset and Renew: A Strategy for Stroud District Council 2020-21’ which sets out the Council’s approach post Covid 19 and lays the foundation for the longer term renewal. One of the four key external and community focused work streams that have been identified is Affordable Housing and Homelessness.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that everyone needs an affordable and decent home to live in, and ensuring everyone in the district can access decent housing must remain a top priority for the Council. This is even more important now as the economic downturn caused by the crisis will see many local people’s incomes suffer. The Council also needs to support people and families who have been immediately affected by the crisis and facilitate sustainable housing solutions.
- 1.3 The Council can contribute to the provision of these much needed affordable homes across the district by continuing with its New Homes and Regeneration Programme that has, in the last five years, seen 239 new homes added to its stock.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to present a strategy and action plan, attached at Appendix 1 and 2, which links closely with the Housing Strategy 2019-2024. It details the vision and objectives for the delivery of these new homes over the next four years, identifies the priorities for the purchase of more land and sets out the methodology for setting the type, tenure, location and standards of accommodation for the building of more Council homes beyond the current programme set out in the MTFP.

2. THE STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Council is committed to delivering its vision to ‘positively contribute to the provision of affordable, good quality, energy efficient homes that meet current and future needs.
- 2.2 The strategy sets out its approach to delivering the seven objectives, the building blocks of the New Homes and Regeneration Programme, which in turn will realise the Council’s vision.
- 2.3 The strategy has an action plan which sets out the timescales for the delivery of the seven objectives.
- 2.4 The action plan will be monitored and reviewed on a bi-monthly basis by the New Homes and Regeneration Manager, with progress on the action plan provided to Housing Committee on an annual basis.

3. THE PURCHASE OF LAND AND PROPERTY

- 3.1 Set out in the constitution, the Head of Property Services has an existing delegation to purchase property with an open market value up to £500,000 and includes the requirement for consultation with the Committee Chair and Ward Councillors and the s151 officer being satisfied that there is a robust business case for the acquisition.
- 3.2 The Council’s Capital Strategy was approved by Council on the 24 January 2019 and detailed the New Homes and Regeneration Programme as one of the existing capital

priorities, including the addition into the capital programme of a budget for the purchase of land for the building of new homes.

- 3.3 The Capital Strategy also sets out that in rare cases there may be insufficient time for a capital purchase to go through the full Committee cycle, such as in the case of an opportunity land purchase. In these instances, where it is above delegated powers of officers the decision will be made by the Section 151 Officer and Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee. This only applies where there is an existing budget approved by full Council which may be used.
- 3.4 For land/ property purchased in accordance with the Strategy for New Council Homes, in accordance with existing delegations and the Capital Strategy, for those purchases above the delegated figure of £500,000 a report will be presented to members for approval. In those circumstances where there is insufficient time for the purchase to go through the full Committee cycle, e.g. the window for the receipt of firm offers for land/property on the open market is very short, the decision will be made in accordance with the delegation stated above at 3.3.
- 3.5 One of the actions for the strategy is to review the governance structure for the monitoring of the programme and any land/property purchase would need to have been reviewed by a proposed new Project Board prior to purchase.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Committee resolves to adopt the Strategy for New Council Homes and the associated Action Plan and to recommend to Strategy and Resources that, in accordance with approved procedures, land/property purchases above £500,000 will be presented to Strategy and Resources Committee for approval except for those occasions where insufficient time is available for a capital purchase to go through the full Committee cycle, the decision will be made by the Section 151 Officer and Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee. This only applies where there is an existing budget approved by full Council which may be used.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly arising from this strategy.

Any budgets required for the implementation of the strategy will go through the standard budget setting process, with Council approval. All development schemes or purchases will continue to follow existing approval processes, as set out in the Capital Strategy.

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5.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications directly arising from this Strategy but legal advice and assistance will be provided at appropriate stages as the Strategy and Action Plan is implemented

Sarah Farooqi, One Legal

5.3 Equality Implications

An EIA is not required because there are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

5.4 Environmental Implications

The strategy sets out details of significant environmental implications in its third objective of designing good quality, sustainable, dynamic, energy efficient homes that address the Council's 2030 commitment.

The action plan sets out the Council's approach to delivering new homes that address this commitment with a fabric first approach and achieving minimum SAP 86 ratings on its next schemes and continually assessing each new project to establish the best value approach to delivering greater energy efficiency.