

HOUSING STRATEGY 2017 - PROGRESS REPORT (NUMBER 1)

Housing and Health Advisory Committee - 27 February 2018

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status For Information

Key Decision No

This report supports the Key Aim of delivering the District Council's Housing Strategy and which, in turn, supports wider community strategy as set out in the Community Plan.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Michelle Lowe

Contact Officer Gavin Missons, Ext. 7332

Recommendation to the Housing and Health Advisory Committee: That Members note the content of this report.

Reason for recommendation: To advise Members of progress against a wide-range of agreed objectives in the District Council's latest 'Housing Strategy 2017: *Wellbeing Starts at Home*'.

Introduction and Background

- 1 In July 2017, the District Council adopted its new 'Housing Strategy 2017: *Wellbeing Starts at Home*'. This sets out the District Council's key housing objectives for the coming years. In this latest edition, there is a particular focus on health outcomes through a wide-range of housing interventions - all of which will help to contribute to health and wider community strategy.
- 2 As set out under Governance and Monitoring, Officers are required to provide the Housing and Health Advisory Committee (HHAC) with bi-annual progress reports in order to monitor the effectiveness of the new Housing Strategy. A summary of progress across each of the three strategic objectives and in the first reporting period (Jul - Dec 17) is set out at Appendix A, therefore.
- 3 At present, there are no proposed adjustments to the approved Housing Strategy framework, though, as would be expected, operational activity has been continuing to develop.

Summary

- 4 In summary, there has been significant progress against the new Housing Strategy and across its three strategic objectives during its first 6-months of implementation.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no further financial considerations at this stage.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no further legal implications or risks to consider at this stage.

Equality Assessment

The Housing Strategy was subject to an equality impact assessment at its development stage and there are no further considerations required at present.

Appendices

Housing Strategy 2017: Wellbeing Starts at Home

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/1028/housing_strategy_2017

Background Papers None

Richard Morris

Chief Planning Officer

HOUSING STRATEGY 2017: PROGRESS REPORT (NUMBER 1) - APPENDIX A

Officer responsibility - GM: Gavin Missons / HB: Hayley Brooks / JC: James Cox

NO	OBJECTIVE		PROGRESS	STATUS
1.1	The Council will consider its surplus land for housing.	GM	<i>This is now a routine consideration and we have continued to explore opportunities on a number of District Council-owned sites in recent months. Where on-site provision has not been an option, we have been negotiating commuted sum payments to invest in affordable housing elsewhere and/or to deliver other supporting housing strategy. This will also be a key consideration of the proposed affordable housing company, should it proceed.</i>	Ongoing
1.2	The Council will seek to develop sites to maximise land use and inform future housing strategy.	GM	<i>Through the 'Issues and Options' stage of the Local Plan review, increased density is being put forward as a potential option to increased house building. In addition, the 'Call for Sites' process could potentially create other new opportunities to explore. We are also exploring the possibility of developing micro-homes and, in doing so, would be able to maximise land use through high-density development. Through working with social housing providers, we are also developing schemes to maximise available space and to minimise, where possible, under-used communal space through good design. In this financial year, we are expecting to complete 49 new affordable homes.</i>	Ongoing
1.3	The Council will promote housing that is technology-ready and with space to enable home working.	GM	<i>This is being factored into current developments and through the Local Plan review. For instance, we are considering targets for 'Lifetime Homes' on new development and this will also support technology-ready housing for older and vulnerable people. In respect of home working, we have explored modular units with workstation areas. Broadband provision continues to be taken forward corporately as a priority and will</i>	Ongoing

			<i>contribute to this area of our work. We are also continuing to explore potential pilot project funding for emerging technologies.</i>	
1.4	The Council will aim to pilot emerging IT-based assistive technologies as part of its emerging strategy and feed this into its new affordable housing work programme.	GM	<i>As above, this is a developing area of our work and we are exploring different systems and devices. In addition, the District Council's partners are starting to introduce plug-and-place telecare systems through a retrofit programme and the effectiveness of this all will be monitored. Monitoring is also underway on several energy savings devices installed in properties as part of a joint project delivered by the District Council with Dartford BC and Government's Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (at time of project delivery, DECC). With the potential for modern modular provision, again this is an opportunity to supply and test IT-based technologies.</i>	Ongoing
1.5	The Council will aim that all new affordable housing developments will be fit for life.	GM	<i>All new and planned affordable housing developments will meet related Building Regulations and where possible, other nationally prescribed standards - some of which have superseded the 'Code for Sustainable Homes', which was a previous target we applied to social housing. In addition, the Enterprise Way scheme in Edenbridge, which will include 120 x new units of affordable housing, will be to 100% 'Lifetime Homes Standard' (LHS). The Council's recently completed Local Housing Needs Study (LHNS) has recommended targets for LTH and fully wheelchair accessible housing. These recommendations have now been transferred across to the 'Issues and Options' stage of the Local Plan review and are to be considered in the new planning framework.</i>	Ongoing
1.6	To enable a better understanding of local recruitment and retention issues with local employers and to help identify any potential joint ventures for the provision of affordable housing with larger employers, an employer study will be commissioned (to be funded through S106 affordable	GM	<i>This study was completed in August 2017 and the results are being fed into relevant strategy. The study is also now available on the District Council's website. The results have been provided to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and will be used as additional evidence in the new economic development strategy. In addition, we created an online survey and undertook further consultation - and received good feedback. This work will also help to inform our intermediate housing work programme and the potential for a grant product to assist households into shared-ownership housing, which is</i>	Completed

	housing planning gains).		<i>currently being explored. We are also looking to develop planning policy for essential workers in response to the local employer survey.</i>	
1.7	To maximise take-up of new shared-ownership housing for those with a local connection to the District, the Council will undertake a wide-range of early promotional activity to raise local awareness.	GM	<i>All new housing is now being actively marketed by the District Council well ahead of completion to increase local take-up. Previously, marketing was the responsibility of the relevant provider. This was most recently undertaken on a new affordable housing development at the old Churchill School site in Westerham, which includes 38 new homes and 9 of those being for shared-ownership, where an advert was placed in the District Council's In Shape magazine. In addition, we actively promoted 8 new shared-ownership units at Gunpowder Cottages in Leigh, this time through the Sevenoaks Chronicle, and these were all secured for households with a local connection. In doing so, we have maximised local take-up of new housing units by making local people aware of housing well ahead of completion. Three shared ownership homes have also just completed on the United House site in Swanley and even without proactive marketing by SDC, these have all been sold to households with a local connection to SDC. Planned housing surgeries will also enable us to actively promote upcoming schemes. We have been approached several times by households wishing to explore shared-ownership housing and have provided relevant information. We have produced an information leaflet with intermediate housing options and these have been made available (due to be updated to take account of new products). We have also been in discussion with the Zone Agent and are looking at the option to include a promotional flyer with Council Tax bills or through a similar method.</i>	Ongoing
1.8	The Council will encourage housing associations to work towards the <i>Chartered Institute of Housing's Shared-Ownership: Charter for Housing Framework</i> to promote the benefits of shared-ownership housing.	GM	<i>This is to be further explored in 2018 and also on any District Council housing through its company, should this go ahead.</i>	Ongoing

1.9	The Council will seek to increase its list of preferred affordable housing providers including specialist providers and those with access to a wide-range of finance options, including private institutional investment and other cross-subsidy models.	GM	<i>We are increasingly working with a wider range of providers and will continue to identify others that operate with different models of delivery. For instance, we have recently started working with Hastoe Housing Association on a potential rural housing project and Clarion Housing Association was in the running for one of our new housing schemes. We have also met with Golding Homes to explore partnership working and the organisation is considering taking on a phase of an existing scheme. In doing so, we are increasing our chances of creating financially viable projects through different business models and this has already proven to be a successful approach. The requirement for any new landlord to provide a strong local customer base will be an important aspect of our negotiations.</i>	Ongoing
1.10	To help unlock unviable affordable housing projects, the Council will consider the use of S106 affordable housing funding to supplement projects in lieu of low or zero grant availability and/or where other viability issues may exist.	GM	<i>No projects have required additional funding during this reporting period, though we have considered several and which we are working up with partners.</i>	Ongoing
1.11	The Council will explore the possibility of a new shared-equity rural affordable housing product as a potential alternative and to overcome issues associated with the new 'Starter Homes' product.	GM	<i>We are still awaiting final guidance on 'Starter Homes' before making on a decision on this option. However, we have been in early discussions with English Rural Housing Trust about a potential alternative product. Current professional commentary is that the Starter Homes initiative has been effectively shelved.</i>	Ongoing
1.12	Through its company, the Council will seek to deliver a proportion of affordable housing on its own private developments as part of its growing property portfolio and objectives contained in its Economic Development	GM	<i>The Council is currently in the process of investigating the potential to set up a new arms-length affordable housing company. We have been exploring several models of delivery during this process. We have also secured commuted sums on sites where affordable housing has been deemed unsuitable. These funds are currently invested in other housing strategy objectives.</i>	Ongoing

	Strategy.			
1.13	Through the 2016-21 affordable homes programme, the Council will work with <i>Homes England</i> in order to identify any sites suitable for it to purchase directly for 'Starter Homes' provision.	GM	<i>We are still awaiting further guidance from Government on the new 'Starter Homes' product, though are already considering and modelling such provision when developing planned future scheme tenure mixes and with financial viability considerations. Current professional commentary is that the Starter Homes initiative has been effectively shelved.</i>	Ongoing
1.14	The Council will seek new investment opportunities for affordable housing through the <i>Kent & Medway Economic Partnership</i> .	GM	<i>No funding opportunities in this reporting period.</i>	Ongoing
1.15	The Council will cross-reference data from the <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> and undertake a review of its future approach to the provision of affordable housing in the District's rural areas having regard to the revised <i>Kent Rural Housing Protocol 2017</i> .	GM	<i>The Council's new LHNS has provided data down to ward level and this is being used, along with several completed bespoke rural housing needs surveys, to assess need. With two key sources of evidence, we can much more accurately assess need when working up potential housing projects in the District's rural areas. At present, there are several projects at various stages of progress and we have had considerable activity in this area of our work in recent months - which is quite rare. We are also exploring the potential for specialist housing on rural exceptions sites - for instance, to provide suitable downsizing market housing options for local older people and key worker housing. This, again, is being considered as part of the Local Plan review. The newly-formed 'Community Land Trust (CLT)' product, which we have set up in partnership with TMBC and TWBC, will also help to contribute to this objective in a positive way. We have continued to work with Kent partners to promote this work programme more widely and have also worked with 'Action with Communities in Rural Kent' to introduce its new 'Coffee Caravan Project' into a number of villages and to promote the support service more widely.</i>	Ongoing
1.16	The Council will review its remaining land in order to identify any possible	GM	<i>We are working with West Kent Housing Association to potentially develop a number of sites for new affordable housing, including some joint ventures. This is part of a drive to achieve additional affordable</i>	Ongoing

	development opportunities and any potential joint ventures with partners by combining sites.		<i>housing units through a supplementary small sites programme, e.g. old housing, garage and in-fill sites. Although small in scale, this work will create much needed additional affordable housing in areas where supply is typically limited. Examples are a scheme which will involve the demolition of 2 x homes and the potential 4 x new affordable homes in Sevenoaks Weald and another site which will provide 2 x new affordable homes in Seal.</i>	
1.17	Through the <i>Community Housing Fund</i> , the Council will work with <i>Action with Rural Communities in Kent</i> , and Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells borough councils to develop a West Kent community-led housing hub to promote development in rural areas and encourage the creation of CLTs.	GM	<i>We have progressed these two projects and have now agreed an SLA with Action with Communities in Rural Kent to deliver the CLT project. Through external funding from the then CLG, we have created a West Kent Hub branded and named 'Community Housing: West Kent' to promote the setting up of community land trusts with the aim of delivering rural housing. The idea of these schemes is to then potentially progress to looking at delivering and/or operating other community assets such as village shops. We are also continuing to work up a self-build agreement with additional funding received from the then CLG - again, potentially as a West Kent project and linked in with the CLT project. This area of our work is likely to grow through 2018 and we are already in contact with a number of parishes to explore options.</i>	Ongoing
1.18	Additional action to be considered in the Local Plan review: To adopt a rural policy that allows specialist housing on exceptions sites.	GM	<i>This was included in the Issues and Options paper as part of the Local Plan review and will potentially be put forward for formal consideration as formal policy.</i>	Ongoing
1.19	In partnership with the <i>South East England Council's Group</i> , the Council will request that Government reviews the District's Local Housing Allowance rates with a view to an increase across its two broad market rental areas.	GM	<i>This has been undertaken in several ways by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health and is also now being undertaken at Kent level through the Kent Housing Group. On a recently completed scheme, we managed to secure rents on 5 x new 4-bed houses (Ryewood) that were well below the relevant LHA levels and this enabled us to overcome affordability issues on larger 4-bed housing - something that has typically been an issue since the introduction of the Affordable Rent tenure back in 2012. Even so, rent levels are at £250</i>	Ongoing

			<i>per week so affordability for those in low paid employment is questionable. The Government's new grant programme for Social Rented housing will provide us with an opportunity to try to secure truly affordable larger family homes.</i>	
1.20	The Council will review related data down to ward level in the <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> and feed this into the review of the <i>Local Plan</i> .	GM	<i>As above, the Housing Strategy and supporting evidence has been fed into the Local Plan review. In addition, data is being overlaid with other evidence at local level to better enable us to understand current needs and, in doing so, much better plan over the long-term.</i>	Ongoing
1.21	To support the delivery of high standard private sector rented housing, the Council will work with providers to create policy-compliant schemes at the lower end of the market and seek to negotiate nominations agreements whereby those with a connection to the District will be prioritised.	GM	<i>We are continuing to explore options and seeking to develop the institutional private rented sector and we have already looked at 'Build to Rent' units on a particular site. There is also scope for this tenure, should the affordable housing company go ahead. This is likely to be a growing area of our work and one which could support those groups which do not typically qualify for affordable housing and may not be able to afford to buy, or those simply wanting an option other than home ownership. The revision to National Planning Policy Framework (expected Summer 2018) will clarify the status of private rented housing as an affordable housing tenure.</i>	Ongoing
1.22	The Council will work with its housing association partners to explore suitable cross-subsidy projects with an element of private rented housing.	GM	<i>No opportunities have arisen in this period, though this is being considered in the Local Plan review. Again, this is likely to be a growing area of our work, however, and one which will help us to create viable schemes which include an element of affordable housing.</i>	Ongoing
1.23	The Council will consult private landlords to identify other potential incentives and seek to develop a more attractive landlord package.	HB	<i>The Private Sector Lettings Scheme has been revised to include more incentives for landlords. A Letting Agent Business Breakfast is being held to see how the Council can work better with them on identifying rental properties. A new Landlord Liaison Officer is being recruited to proactively encourage and source landlords to offer housing options. Annual West Kent Landlords' Forum being held in March to gather</i>	Ongoing

			<i>information from landlords.</i>	
1.24	Through its company, the Council will explore direct provision of private rented housing.	GM	<i>As above, too early to progress.</i>	Ongoing
1.25	The Council will cross-reference local market intelligence with data from the <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> and feed this into the <i>Local Plan</i> review and with a particular emphasis given to the need for market housing for older people.	GM	<i>Again, this has been fed into the Local Plan review and market housing for older people has been identified as a priority to enable downsizing/rightsizing through a better choice of product and in areas where such housing is required. We are currently working on such a project in one of the District's villages and are already speaking to the provider to ensure that local marketing is undertaken to ensure those local to the village with have first choice.</i>	Ongoing
1.26	The Council will cross-reference specific <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> data on micro-homes with wider market research and feed this into local housing strategy and the emerging the <i>Local Plan</i> .	GM	<i>The potential for micro-homes was included in the Issues and Options paper and will be formally considered as part of the Local Plan review. However, we are researching several different types/products and building up in-house knowledge. We are also due to visit a scheme to view micro-homes. We are also monitoring provision with other local authorities that are increasingly turning to this form of housing, both as a temporary and/or permanent solution.</i>	Ongoing
1.27	Through its company, the Council will aim to develop a pilot micro-homes scheme on one of its housing developments and use this as a blueprint for similar development elsewhere in the District.	GM	<i>Until such time as a company is set up, this cannot be progressed.</i>	Ongoing
1.28	Should a pilot prove to be successful, the Council will also seek to work with	GM	<i>Again, as above, too early to progress.</i>	Ongoing

	<i>Homes England</i> , housing associations and other partners to deliver additional micro-homes schemes.			
1.29	The Council will explore external funding opportunities for modular housing, including Government's Accelerated Construction initiative.	GM	<i>No opportunities with this programme, though we will monitor this and any successor programmes for opportunities.</i>	Ongoing
1.30	The Council will explore other larger modular products with a view to widening its enabling role through alternative construction methods and related business models.	GM	<i>Investigations have taken place to identify different models and products which could be considered in upcoming developments. Again, this is all being considered in the Local Plan review.</i>	Ongoing
1.31	The Council will share any consequent best practice in this new area of modular housing provision.	GM	<i>As above, too early to progress.</i>	Ongoing
1.32	The Council will cross-reference data from the <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> with self and custom build registers and other local intelligence in order to determine the true level of need and develop a subsequent plan of action.	GM	<i>The District Council's Local Housing Needs Study has provided additional data and this will be considered as part of the development of a West Kent hub to take forward the delivery of this initiative. External funding has been received to do so. The District Council now operates a live register.</i>	Ongoing
1.33	The Council will also seek to work with <i>Homes England</i> , housing associations and other partners to explore the delivery of self-build and custom-build	GM	<i>As above, this will be progressed when the hub is set up. That said, we have already considered such provision on a number of sites as we seek to determine tenure/type options. We are also exploring the potential for 5 x self-build plots on a site in Swanley.</i>	Ongoing

	housing.			
1.34	The Council will work with the <i>Right-to-Build Taskforce</i> to further develop its current database and to prepare plans for land identification and allocation.	GM	<i>This is all in the early stages, though CLG funding has been secured to progress this objective and we are currently looking at a West Kent project. In addition, the Local Plan review and ‘Call for Sites’ process will also address this objective.</i>	Ongoing
1.35	Through its recent <i>Community Housing Fund</i> and additional <i>Self and Custom Build Housing</i> funding allocations, the Council will explore the potential to develop a joint West Kent approach with its partner local authorities.	GM	<i>Now we have set up the West Kent CLT project, work is underway to explore a similar arrangement with TMBC and TWBC.</i>	Ongoing
1.36	The Council will share any consequent best practice in this developing form of housing provision.	GM	<i>Too early to progress.</i>	Ongoing
2.1	The Council will review and update its <i>Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy</i> placing much greater emphasis on health outcomes.	JC	<i>A new Housing Assistance Policy came into effect on 22nd November 2017 and emphasis has been placed on speeding up the Disabled Facility Grant process, assisting in accelerated hospital discharge because of housing issues and providing financial assistance in preventive measures.</i>	Completed
2.2	The Council will review its enforcement role to identify any further potential regulatory interventions to improve the private sector housing stock condition.	JC	<i>Current enforcement activity is consistent with national guidance. However, the Council’s enforcement role is being increased with the introduction, in 2018, of an extension of mandatory Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).</i>	Ongoing

2.3	The Council will monitor progress on the Decent Homes Standard and also work with providers to explore any potential for a local housing standard.	GM	<i>From the latest stock modelling, 99% of social housing meets the Decent Homes Standard. Levels in the private sector are lower at 97%. With the current rent reduction programme and revenue being reduced, local social housing providers will be unable to invest in enhanced standards. This will be reviewed at a later date, therefore.</i>	Ongoing
2.4	The Council will develop local energy efficiency and fuel poverty strategy in the interim period and until such time as a new national initiative is introduced.	JC	<i>Activity regarding energy efficiency and fuel poverty is undertaken via the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership (KMSEP) and by contributing to the warm homes call centre residents can obtain advice and financial support to reduce fuel costs and fuel poverty.</i>	Ongoing
2.5	The Council will analyse results from its testing of modern retrofit technologies as part of its strategy to health-proof housing and produce an options report for the <i>Housing and Health Advisory Committee</i> to consider as potentially new energy initiatives.	JC	<i>A retrofit initiative is in its early stages and aims at providing modern technologies in improving energy efficiency to mobile homes. Once the initiative has been undertaken and the results collated then a report can be produced on its beneficial effects on health and wellbeing.</i>	Ongoing
2.6	The Council will, where required, integrate energy strategy with health strategy through the <i>Health Action Team</i> .	JC	<i>Energy strategy is already an essential component in the assessment of dwellings through the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Financial assistance has become accessible via the new Housing Assistance Policy to undertake small measures including new boilers that are essential to facility hospital discharge or prevent further GP/NHS costs.</i>	Ongoing
2.7	Once received, the Council will review EPC data from its recent stock condition survey and develop strategy	JC	<i>The overall EPC rating for the District is 56 although the rating for the private sector is 55. From the recent stock modelling survey, statistical evidence is available on the dwellings with low ratings so a targeted</i>	Ongoing

	to tackle properties with low ratings.		<i>approach can be devised.</i>	
2.8	The Council will undertake another campaign to help raise awareness of the <i>Sevenoaks Switch and Save</i> scheme.	JC	<i>Promotion of the service continues and is part of the overall assessment of a customer's needs or concerns. Further awareness raising will be undertaken through the One You advisors and HERO, along with articles in In Shape.</i>	Ongoing
2.9	The Council will cross-reference data relating to under-occupation in the <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> and update its existing <i>Under-Occupation Action Plan</i> .	HB	<i>This work is ongoing in partnership with West Kent Housing Association. The Council funds the 'Small is Beautiful' scheme with West Kent Housing to incentivise and support people to downsize. This scheme is being revised to be more effective and re-commissioned for 2018/19.</i>	Ongoing
2.10	The Council will undertake further investigations with estate agents in order to identify any ward-specific limitations and/or issues for older people wishing to downsize.	HB	<i>The new 'One You, Your Home' Adviser is working in the Edenbridge with targeted older people identified by the GP Surgery. As part of the holistic assessments for home adaptations and health and wellbeing, support will be available to assist people with housing needs into alternative housing including support to downsize if required by the customer. No work has yet been undertaken with estate agents.</i>	Ongoing
2.11	The Council will explore additional measures to help facilitate mutual exchanges with a view to reducing under-occupation and over-crowding.	HB	<i>This work is being progressed through the West Kent partnership with Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells borough councils. The Partnership is exploring options for a dedicated onsite service to support mutual exchanges and house shares.</i>	Ongoing
2.12	Through developer contributions, the Council will explore the potential for a new bespoke product to provide repayable grant assistance for first-time buyers to purchase long-term empty homes at the lower end of the	HB	<i>To be reviewed when action plan is updated.</i>	

	housing market.			
2.13	The Council will link up its long-term empty housing and commercial work programmes to identify joint solutions to return back to use premises such as empty shops with vacant accommodation above.	HB	<i>The Housing Projects Officer continues to work closely with KCC on the 'No Use Empty' scheme. Two drop-in sessions have been held for home owners to get information about what support and funding is available to bring empty homes back in to use.</i>	Ongoing
2.14	The Council will review and update its <i>Empty Homes Action Plan</i> when it expires at the end of 2017/18.	HB	<i>The Action Plan is being updated at the end of 2017/18.</i>	Ongoing
2.15	The Council will track occupancy to disrepair rates and review related housing and health strategy accordingly.	JC	<i>The latest stock model is allowing the identification of areas with high levels disrepair and this will inform the activity aimed at reducing the existing levels.</i>	Ongoing
2.16	The Council will actively promote Disabled-Facilities Grants (DFGs) on mobile home parks to raise awareness and improve accessibility.	JC	<i>Promotion of DFG has been undertaken and has resulted in adaptations being undertaken on most mobile home sites. General promotions and the new Housing Assistance Policy will ensure the maximum use of DFG funding for applicants residing in mobile homes.</i>	Ongoing
2.17	The Council will actively promote its Sevenoaks Switch and Save Service on mobile home parks to help reduce energy costs amongst older occupiers.	JC	<i>Additional promotion in areas with significant mobile homes will be undertaken along with assessing each DFG applicant within a mobile home to determine if they are on the best tariff.</i>	Ongoing
2.18	The Council will pilot an energy efficiency grant project to provide new	JC	<i>Such a scheme has just begun on a mobile home site in Hedge Barton.</i>	Ongoing

	boilers and other measures on a mobile home park.			
2.19	The Council will monitor developments with the potential extension of licensing and, if required, introduce a new inspection programme for the District's smaller HMO stock.	JC	<i>An extension of the mandatory HMO licencing has been announced and information on the proposed changes will shortly be going out to all letting agents.</i>	Ongoing
2.20	The Council will set up a multi-agency network to help raise awareness and report any new sub-standard HMO accommodation being set up in the District.	JC	<i>Given the extension of HMO licensing links with estate agents and landlords via the quarterly forums will be improved. Internal links are also existing including with Community Safety, Environmental Health and Social Housing.</i>	Ongoing
2.21	The Council will expand its support to almshouses charities and other small providers through a variety of means in order to improve the housing stock condition and create more effective business operations hold a forum for almshouses and other small affordable housing providers to create a support network and share good practice with those organisations that have already benefitted from its assistance.	GM	<i>We are currently mapping all of the District's almshouses schemes and building up evidence related to the use, condition and potential for each scheme. This will all then be used to create a plan of action and, once a draft is produced, this will be taken to the Housing and Health Advisory Committee for comments/approval. We are also helping to rebase rents to appropriate levels in order to create self-sufficient projects.</i>	Ongoing
2.22	The Council will review its Tenancy Strategy with a view to working towards fixed-term tenancies on new affordable housing developments and on relets of the existing affordable housing stock. This will include the	HB	<i>This Council is working with West Kent Housing Association which is looking to introduce fixed-term tenancies for their properties, which is the majority of social housing in this District. Working with housing associations including Moat and Orbit to promote shared ownership opportunities in the District.</i>	Ongoing

	option to support selective use for high demand areas, adapted properties and encouraging higher income households into tenures such as shared-ownership.			
2.23	The Council will work with housing associations to address low-level anti-social behaviour through improved tenancy procedures and monitor progress of the Government review into housing associations' powers in relation to anti-social tenants.	HB	<i>The Sevenoaks District Housing Allocations Policy is being reviewed and updated and an updated draft Policy will be going out to consultation in February 2018. This updates include more stringent information to exclude people who are considered to be unsuitable tenants due to unacceptable behaviour which is serious enough to make them unsuitable as social housing tenants, this includes anti-social behaviour (in accordance with Housing legislation). The Community Safety Unit Daily Briefing meetings provide an opportunity for partners to discuss anti-social behaviour within housing association properties and agree actions.</i>	Ongoing
2.24	The Council will lobby Government for stronger exclusions to the Right-to-Buy in rural areas.	GM	<i>This has been done through direct feedback with MPs and also via formal consultation feedback - as well as being highlighted as in issue in the main Housing Strategy. This has also been raised Kent-wide and through the Rural Housing Working Group. Current professional commentary is that the voluntary Right to Buy initiative has been effectively shelved.</i>	Ongoing
2.25	The Council will review its position with regard to affordable housing on projects delivered through its company as and when Government clarifies its position on Right-to-Buy.	GM	<i>Too early to progress. See comment in 2.24.</i>	Ongoing
2.26	The Council will set up a multi-agency network to help raise awareness and encourage the reporting of any new illegal and/or sub-standard premises being set up in the District that it can	JC	<i>With the assistance of the Health and Housing Co-ordinators and the 'One You, Your Home' advisor more inspections of domestic dwellings are being undertaken along with a greater number of substandard premises to be identified.</i>	Ongoing

	then tackle.			
3.1	The Council will develop and launch its new <i>Super-HERO</i> service.	HB	<i>This new service was formally launched at the Council's 2017 Housing Forum in November 2017.</i>	Complete
3.2	The Council will work with its West Kent partner local authorities to adopt and implement the new <i>West Kent Housing and Homelessness Strategy</i> .	HB	<i>The new West Kent Homelessness Strategy has been adopted by this Council and has been published on the Council's website and circulated to relevant housing partners.</i>	Complete
3.3	The Council will monitor developments with the Homelessness Reduction Act and undertake a full review of its homelessness services when related associated guidance is issued.	HB	<i>Work is continuing to train housing advice staff, update policies and amend operational processes to develop new duties as part of the Homelessness Reduction Act commencing from 3 April 2018. The then CLG's draft Code of Guidance has been published and the team continue to work to redesign services in line with the new legislation.</i>	Ongoing
3.4	The Council will undertake a survey of private landlords to identify potential incentives to encourage take-up as part of a new landlord package.	HB	<i>This work will be undertaken by the new Landlord Liaison Officer being recruited as part of the work to increase the capacity of the Housing Advice Team. The PSL Officer post is currently vacant.</i>	March 2018
3.5	The Council will evaluate the GP housing advice pilot with participant outcomes and feedback to determine future models for delivering targeted holistic advice services as part of an integrated health hub.	HB	<i>This pilot commenced in January 2018, with a 'One You, Your Home' Adviser being recruited in partnership with the Council's health team, housing standards and Age UK in Sevenoaks. Quarterly evaluation will take place once the service commences to monitor customer outcomes using GP data, customer evaluations for the target 25 customers identified as a priority by Edenbridge GP Surgery.</i>	Quarterly
3.6	The Council will implement a tenancy sustainment training programme through the <i>Behavioural Insights Project</i> .	HB	<i>The tenancy sustainment training programme 'Flying Start' is being redesigned by the HERO Officers and will be relaunched for targeted clients in February 2018.</i>	Ongoing

3.7	The Council will monitor developments relating to the Renters' Rights Bill and Housing (Tenants' Rights) Bill and, where approved, promote additional related rights to those seeking and occupying the District's private rented housing.	HB	<i>The Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government has now released a new renters' guide and private landlords must supply tenants with a copy. The Council is also due to feedback to Government on the proposed Tenants' Fees Bill.</i>	Ongoing
3.8	Following the review of the <i>Sevenoaks District Housing Register</i> , and if required, the Council will make adjustments to its policy to better meet local housing needs.	HB	<i>The Housing Allocations Policy is being updated and will be going out to consultation in February 2018. This will review the Housing Register operational process and procedures to apply greatest restrictions to ensure those with the greatest need for housing at given priority, in line with Housing legislation.</i>	July 2018
3.9	The Council will feed results from the Local Housing Needs Study into the <i>Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership</i> and its sub-groups to determine group priorities going forward.	GM	<i>On 23/11/17, the LSP was updated regarding the survey and Housing Strategy. The LSP subsequently agreed to participate in any task-and-finish groups (relevant partners for each issue) to look at any individual issues/barriers whilst implementing the new Housing Strategy - a method agreed to be more effective than previous approaches. This will be taken forward as and when required, therefore.</i>	Ongoing
3.10	The Council will cross-reference <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> data with the Supporting People needs analysis and subsequently work with Kent County Council, the NHS and other care providers to identify common priorities.	HB	<i>This Council is participating in KCC task and finish groups which are reviewing the Supporting People funded accommodation and services. West Kent partners are also addressing local needs against services to identify opportunities for targeted partnership working.</i>	Ongoing
3.11	The Council will cross-reference <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> data and related	GM	<i>Work has begun to map all older people's accommodation across the District and to overlay this with data from the study - the idea being to then, through a much better understanding of need and supply by type</i>	Ongoing

	priorities with a wide-range of third-sector partners, including but not limited to the Sevenoaks Seniors' Action Forum, Mencap and Age UK as part of the strategy development process.		<i>and tenure, create a plan of action for future provision of housing and related support services.</i>	
3.12	As Part of its strategy to health-proof housing, the Council will seek to utilise new plug-and-place IT-based assistive technologies to improve support packages for older and vulnerable people remaining independent at home.	JC	<i>No such demand or request for such IT based assistive technologies has been received. With greater access into older and vulnerable people's accommodation if such needs are identified then funding is currently in place to provide such assistive technologies.</i>	Ongoing
3.13	The Council will seek to maximise DFG funding through the Integration and Better Care Fund.	JC	<i>Improvements in maximising DFG funding continue with new initiatives with health providers, the third sector and other SDC sections continuing, examples of which include the One you - Your home coordinator and the recently approved new housing assistance policy.</i>	Ongoing
3.14	The Council will work with extra care housing providers to explore the possibility of allocating a small number of units as temporary accommodation for older people leaving hospital.	HB	<i>This Council is working closely with West Kent Housing and KCC to develop White Oak Court in Swanley into a full extra care scheme with a 24/7 care contract by KCC in place. Resident and staff consultations took place during January 2018 and the contract should be in place in April 2018.</i>	April 2018
3.15	The Council will feed evidence from the <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> into the Kent Accommodation Strategy as part of the cross-agency assessment process	HB	<i>This work is ongoing with local housing and health services being developed targeted on the data provided within the Local Housing Need Study. This data has also been used to update the Homelessness Strategy, the Kent Accommodation Strategy and inform potential</i>	Ongoing

	<p>and as part of the <i>Adult Social Care Transformation Programme</i>.</p> <p>The Council will work with the Kent commissioning bodies and a range of providers to seek to establish additional provision to complement existing services and in line with latest evidence from the Local Housing Needs Study.</p>		<p><i>changes in income thresholds in the new Allocations Policy.</i></p>	
3.16	<p>The Council will seek to ensure that a proportion of outdated social sector care home provision is replaced with modern purpose-built care homes which also provide specialist dementia care and extra care schemes (in line with need identified in the <i>Local Housing Needs Study</i> and KCC Accommodation Strategy).</p>	GM	<p><i>We are currently working with a partner to demolish an outdated care facility and to replace it with a new extra care housing scheme with a mix of tenure options for all price ranges. Work is also underway on a scheme in Swanley to replace outdated accommodation and this will provide modern housing for older people.</i></p>	Ongoing
3.17	<p>The Council will work up bids for supported housing grant under the Homes and Communities Agency's 2016/21 grant programme and taking into account the non-mainstream housing guidance Housing Our Ageing population: Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles.</p>	GM	<p><i>We supported a bid for an extra care facility and this was successful - significant external funding has been secured, therefore.</i></p>	Ongoing

3.18	The Council will maintain contact with Government as the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) supported housing review progresses to ensure that local issues are fully considered as a part of that process.	GM	<i>Government has now announced that it is scrapping Local Housing Allowance (LHA) on social housing and is considering a flexible funding approach on supported housing - so this is not considered to be an issue, though we will continue to monitor the situation.</i>	Complete
3.19	The Council will cross-reference related data in the Local Housing Needs Study and feed related evidence into the Local Plan review to ensure the right housing is built for older people.	GM	<i>This has all been fed into the Local Plan review and is working its way through the process - this is also seen as a priority group.</i>	Ongoing
3.20	Through the LSP sub-group for Adult Health and Social Care for the Sevenoaks District, and linked to the Sevenoaks Health Action Team, the Council will look at further integrating health and social care issues.	HB	<i>Work is continuing to link older people work, mental health, housing, health and social care with voluntary sector partners through LSP sub-groups. This work to date has included the development of the Edenbridge GP pilot project and setting up new community MARAC. Projects are discussed at quarterly sub-group meetings which include outreach mental health cafes.</i>	Quarterly
3.21	Through the LSP sub-group for Adult Health and Social Care for the Sevenoaks District, and linked to the Sevenoaks Health Action Team, the Council will set up a working group to look specifically at isolation and loneliness amongst older people.	HB	<i>This is being taken forward by the Health Action Team.</i>	Ongoing
3.22	The Council will work with providers to identify a suitable site for a Help to	GM	<i>This will be taken forward once we have completed the mapping of older people's accommodation project, which is underway. We have discussed</i>	Ongoing

	Buy project specifically for those aged 55 and over.		<i>this option with two key providers, however, and there is some appetite to deliver such a project.</i>	
3.23	In partnership with town and parish councils, the Council will develop housing elements of a toolkit to work towards Dementia-Friendly Communities.	HB	<i>Dementia friendly communities projects are being developed further across the District, Health officers are supporting Eynsford and West Kingsdown Members and communities to become dementia friendly villages. The Shop Safe scheme has been launched and continues to be promoted across the District. Also developing a new Dementia Running event in May and looking to set up a new Dementia Film evening at the Stag with local Sevenoaks District Dementia Forum partners</i>	Ongoing
3.24	The Council will work with the Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board's Dementia Action Allowance Housing Sub-Group to develop good practice in related housing strategy.	HB	<i>This Council continues to be represented on the Kent JPPB, the Board has updated essential protocols including the 16/17 care leavers and over 18's vulnerable protocols recently. Working on piloting social prescribing and hospital discharge schemes linking with housing across Kent.</i>	Ongoing
3.25	Additional actions to be considered in the Local Plan review: To permit modular housing units on garden land on a non-permanent basis to allow households to care for older relatives.	GM	<i>This has been included in the Local Plan review and is making its way through the process.</i>	Ongoing
3.26	The Council will cross-reference relevant data from the Local Housing Needs Study and develop an action plan to respond to younger people's housing accommodation and related support needs.	HB	<i>Accommodation for a young persons supported housing scheme continues to be a priority for this Council however a suitable location and property is yet to be identified. Working with KCC on the redesign and consultation on young person's support accommodation across Kent.</i>	Ongoing

3.27	The Council will monitor the effects of changes to Housing Benefit, including the Shared Accommodation Rate, and seek to develop supporting housing strategy to tackle any negative effects.	HB	<i>Data for residents affected by Benefit Cap and Welfare Reforms are set to the HERO service monthly by the Benefits Team. Proactive appointments are made with the residents affected by the greatest reduction in benefits to support them with affordability.</i>	Ongoing
3.28	The Council will cross-reference relevant data from the Local Housing Needs Study and review its criteria for a suitable site for the development of a new town centre supported housing scheme for vulnerable younger people.	GM	<i>Despite finding several potential sites for a project, none of these has proved to be viable - so we are continuing to explore sites for a scheme. Our current areas of focus are Sevenoaks and Swanley, as per KCC Supporting People recommendations.</i>	Ongoing
3.29	The Council will develop a housing information pack for younger people seeking housing.	HB	<i>Personalised action plans and leaflets are now provided.</i>	Complete
3.30	The Council will consider an enhanced enabling role following the national rent-a-room review.	HB	<i>To be reviewed.</i>	Ongoing
3.31	The Council work with Government's Behavioural Insights Team to take forward a potential shared-lodgings project for under-35s.	HB	<i>Discussed at KHOG. WKHA exploring the idea.</i>	Ongoing
3.32	The Council will work with partners to deliver the Adult Social Care	HB	<i>We are still looking for a site for the scheme for vulnerable younger people.</i>	Ongoing

	Transformation Programme in relation to vulnerable 16-25 year olds.			
3.33	The Council will explore a co-housing project for younger people.	GM	<i>No opportunities have arisen as yet.</i>	Ongoing
3.34	Through the HERO service, the Council will work to identify those likely to be affected by future welfare reform and offer proactive advice and support.	HB	<i>The HERO Team now has three officers as a result of a successful then CLG Trailblazer funding bid. Customers are referred directly from the Council Tax and Housing Benefits Team who may be getting into financial difficulties so HERO can assist them with affordability. HERO has seen over 250 clients in 2016/ 17 and the demand for the service continues to grow.</i>	Ongoing
3.35	The Council will extend its shared-ownership housing surgeries to include wider housing advice for those affected by the benefit cap and wider welfare reform or seeking more general housing, budgeting and employment advice.	GM	<i>We are looking to hold a surgery in Summer 2018.</i>	Ongoing
3.36	The Council will work with Kent Adult Social Services and Kent Supporting People to develop a process to better support refuge occupiers back into general needs housing and to free-up limited local refuge places in the process.	HB	<i>The housing register gives priority B ratings to assist occupiers back into general needs housing.</i>	Ongoing
3.37	Through the Community Safety Partnership, the Council will work	HB	<i>Those within 6-months of leaving supported housing are placed in Band B of the housing register to assist those back into general needs housing.</i>	Ongoing

	across departments and with external partners to identify additional measures to better support transitions back into general needs housing.		<i>Currently working with KCC around better moving on residents of supported housing.</i>	
3.38	The Council will cross-reference evidence from the Local Housing Needs Study and feed this into the Kent Accommodation Strategy and Kent Supporting People Strategy as part of the cross-agency assessment processes.	HB	<i>Underway.</i>	Ongoing
3.39	The Council will work with its Member Champion for the Armed Forces to develop and formally launch a housing information pack for current and ex-service personnel.	HB	<i>A successful Armed Forces Day event was held in Westerham in June 2017, HERO has attended a number of armed forces events to give information on Council services and present what is available. Supporting armed forces personnel and their families continues to be a priority to support this Council's signed Community Covenant. This will be identified as a priority within the updated Allocations Policy due later this year.</i>	Ongoing
3.40	The Council will explore the possibility of a pilot project with the MoD whereby those leaving the Armed Forces are automatically referred to local authorities for housing advice.	HB	<i>No progress has yet been made on this work with Michael Fallon MP</i>	Ongoing
3.41	The Council will work to deliver suitable housing for older ex-service personnel by providing a number of dedicated places in any future extra	GM	<i>Subject to planning consent, a new extra care scheme will be built in the District and we have already spoken to the provider about the possibility of allocating some apartments for this purpose.</i>	Ongoing

	care housing schemes.			
3.42	Filthy and verminous - the Council will monitor trends in this area by client group, and particularly the growing older population, in order to identify any early potential interventions.	JC	<i>Hoarding and filthy and verminous dwellings are being increasingly identified especially as part of the Your home/Hospital discharge co-ordinator. Funding is available to assist in removing such accumulations and if this is not accepted then statutory powers will be used.</i>	Ongoing
3.43	The Council will develop a database of housing providers' pet policies in order to be able to offer advice to older and vulnerable clients looking for pet-friendly housing.	GM	<i>A list of pet-friendly providers has now been produced and this will be developed into an information leaflet for older people looking to move.</i>	Ongoing
3.44	The Council will develop a pet-friendly policy with its recommendations for affordable and supported housing providers.	GM	<i>This work is ongoing.</i>	Ongoing
3.45	Where pets are not permitted, the Council will signpost to services such as the pet fostering scheme.	HB	<i>Information provided to operational officers to include in housing advice package.</i>	Ongoing
3.46	The Council will promote the Cinnamon Trust and its pet walking services for older people and those suffering from ill health.	HB	<i>Information provided to operational officers to include in housing advice package.</i>	Complete
3.47	The Council will explore a dog DNA scheme to encourage pet-friendly	GM	<i>Recent research has found that dog fouling has been halved in a London borough as a result of such a scheme. We will work to identify a social</i>	Ongoing

	housing policies.		<i>housing provider to agree to undertake a pilot.</i>	
3.48	Within any new housing that the Council develops through its company, it will aim to achieve the RSPCA's Gold Standard pet policy.	GM	<i>Too early to progress.</i>	Ongoing