

## CABINET

**MONDAY 20 MARCH 2017**  
**10.00 AM**

**Allia Future Business Centre Peterborough, Peterborough United Football Club, London Road, Peterborough, PE2 8AN**  
Contact – philippa.turvey@peterborough.gov.uk, 01733 452460

## AGENDA

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**Scrutiny Committee Representatives**  
**Directors, Heads of Service**  
**Press**

*Any agenda item highlighted in bold and marked with an \* is a 'key decision' involving the Council making expenditure or savings of over £500,000 or having a significant effect on two or more wards in Peterborough. These items have been advertised previously on the Council's Forward Plan (except where the issue is urgent in accordance with Section 15 of the Council's Access to Information rules).*



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## **MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD 27 FEBRUARY 2017**

### **PRESENT:**

**Cabinet Members:** Councillor Holdich (Chair), Councillor Goodwin, Councillor Hiller, Councillor Seaton, and Councillor Smith

**Cabinet Advisors:** Councillor Casey and Councillor Stokes

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lamb, Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Elsey, and Councillor Walsh

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2017**

A question was raised as to whether the minutes should refer to the 'Police Authority' or the 'Police Crime Commissioner' in relation to a decision on Council Tax. It was confirmed that 'Police Authority' was correct.

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

### **4. PETITIONS PRESENTED TO CABINET**

There were no petitions presented to Cabinet.

## **STRATEGIC DECISIONS**

### **5. AMENDMENT OF EXISTING LOAN ARRANGEMENTS TO EMPOWER**

Cabinet received a report in relation to the amendment for existing loan arrangements to Empower, following a request from the Cabinet Member for Resources.

The purpose of the report was to authorise the use of the existing lending facility to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP to finance the acquisition of newly constructed and commissioned ground mounted PV systems on a range of Anglian Water sites across the East of England.

The Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the report and outlined that partnership arrangements were already in place in order to provide free solar panels and free energy with a return for the Council. The arrangements had previously been expanded to allow the partnership to provide the service outside of the Peterborough area. Work was currently being undertaken with ECP Peterborough 1 LLP and another Borough Council on similar arrangements to generate income for Peterborough.

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The partnership was able to generate income for the Council through the charging of higher rates than those paid internally.
- Due diligence checks were undertaken on all the proposals of the partnership.
- In relation to repayment arrangements, security was maintained for short term arrangements. Further long term arrangements would be established.
- The current loan arrangements were due to come to an end in September, however there was not considered to be any risk present.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the amendment of the terms of the Strategic Partnership with Empower Community Management LLP;
2. Amend the financing agreement with ECS Peterborough 1 LLP to include the purchase of ground mounted solar PV and the purchase of solar PV installed on local authority residential social housing properties;
3. Approve the due diligence measures proposed;
4. Approve Council entering into such further agreements with ECS Peterborough 1 LLP and any other body necessary to facilitate the arrangements set out in this report; and
5. Delegate to the Corporate Director, Resources and Director of Governance the ability to finalise any individual matters.

#### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The proposal would generate a surplus income which would contribute to the Renewable Energy Savings targets in the MTFS.

The proposal supports the Council's aspirations to be the UK's Environment Capital by facilitating the use of sustainable energy sources.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Council had a discretion as to whether to advance any additional funding to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP and could determine not to make such further advance. However the funding of additional projects of this kind was considered to be likely to enhance the refinancing terms which Empower may be offered in quarter 2017. Whilst the Council would be repaid as part of that refinance, it would have a continued interest in ECS Peterborough 1 LLP due to the profit share arrangements in place in respect of projects undertaken in Peterborough. That being the case, the Council could see an ongoing benefit in the event that more favourable refinance terms can be secured. If the Council decided not to provide the additional funding it would also lose the opportunity to receive the additional interest income from the increased loan until the re-financing takes place.

#### **6. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) 2017/18 – 2026/27**

Cabinet received a report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 to 2026/27 as part of the Council's formal budget process as set out within the constitution and as per legislative requirements to set a balanced budget for 2017/18.

The purpose of the report was to enable Cabinet to consider the feedback from the consultation undertaken to date with Scrutiny, residents, partner organisations, businesses and other interested parties, to recommend to Council on 8 March 2017.

The Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the report and outlined that following the launch of the consultation on the MTFs at the Cabinet meeting on 6 February 2017 all responses received at the current time had been considered. There was no change to the provisional proposed financial figures. Within the MTFs no reductions in service were proposed and investment was to be undertaken around cleansing, the environment, and vulnerable people. Although the proposals included an increase in Council Tax, Peterborough still had one of the lowest rates in the country.

Feedback had been received in relation to the proposals for a Peterborough Lottery and whether this would have an adverse impact on communities. Cabinet were assured that strict safeguards were required. While comments had been received in relation to the increase in Members Allowances, this increase had been approved by Council and could not be reversed as part of these proposals. It was noted that more could be done to communicate Council plans to the public, and this had been incorporated into the Leader's priorities.

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Commercialisation was taking place across the authority, including Planning Services, Empower, and the launch of a new employee app, amongst others.
- It was noted that although communities would benefit from a local lottery, the concerns raised within the consultation were understandable. It was felt, however, that with the required policies and the online nature of the proposals, that this mediate against the foreseen risks.
- The introduction of the local lottery would be closely monitored. It was noted that Aylesbury Vale District Council had had a similar scheme in place for 12 months and had not experienced any issues.
- The Corporate Director Finance would provide confirmation on what the ticket prices for the lottery would be.
- The Corporate Director of Growth and Regeneration would confirm the date of the Peterborough Housing Partnership meeting and the City Leaders Forum meeting.
- Attention was drawn to the comments of Orton Waterville Parish Council in relation to the management of open spaces. It was confirmed that the Parish Council had expressed interest in taking on responsibility for Clayton Place. This comment would be amended in the feedback.
- The Local Levy Contribution had been confirmed by the Environment Agency and was within the budget that had been provisionally allocated.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note:

1. The advice of the Chief Finance Officer per Schedule A, the continuing uncertainty of national public finances, and the risks surrounding forecasts and budget proposals;
2. The feedback on the budget proposals from residents, staff and community groups detailed in Appendix A;
3. The delayed Local Government 2017/18 Final Settlement, the advice given to Local authorities from LGA with regards to setting a budget without this information (Appendix B) and that an update would be given to Cabinet at the meeting; and
4. The transport levy arrangements with the combined authority included in the budget.

Cabinet **RECOMMENDED** to Council:

5. The draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18-2026/27 (including Phase two budget proposals), as set out in the attached Schedules which comprised of:

- a. Report of the Chief Finance Officer,
  - b. Forecast Revenue Outturn 2016/17,
  - c. Budget Proposals, Key Figures & Cash Limits (including fees & charges proposals),
  - d. Treasury Strategy, Prudential Code & Minimum Revenue Provision,
  - e. Asset Investment Strategy, Acquisition Strategy, Capital Programme & Disposals 2017/18 – 2026/27,
  - f. Asset Management Plan, and
6. A Social Care precept of 3% for 2017/18 and 3% in 2018/19, as well as the Council tax increase of 2% for 2017/18 and future years, already agreed as part of the 2016/17 budget strategy.

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

Under statutory requirements the Council must set a lawful and balance budget. The approach outlined in the report worked towards fulfilling this requirement.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

No alternative option had been considered as the Cabinet was responsible under the Constitution for initiating Budget Proposals and the Council was statutorily obliged to set a lawful and balanced budget by 11 March annually.

## **7. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2015/2016**

Cabinet received a report following a referral from the Council's External Auditor (Ernst and Young).

The purpose of the report was to consider and respond to the Annual Audit Letter for 2015/16, prepared by the Council's external auditors Ernst and Young (EY).

The Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the report and advised that the report outlined the findings of the external auditors, namely the annual accounts. The report had been considered the Audit Committee, which the Auditors attended for questioning. An unqualified value for money rating had been received with a subsequent balanced budget.

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Further clarification would be provided by officers on what movement had been made on the legal transfer of schools non-current assets. It was suggested that this would be down at the point for transfer to an academy.

The Leader announced that this was to be the Service Director Financial Services' last Cabinet meeting and extended his thanks on behalf of the Cabinet for his considerable contribution to the work of the Council.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Audit Letter for the financial year 2015/16, subject to any comments Cabinet made.

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The Council was required to consider the statutory Annual Audit Letter and make appropriate arrangements in response to recommendations.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

There were no alternative options considered.

## 8. MODERN SLAVERY ACT

Cabinet received a report following a referral from CMT on 18 January 2017.

The purpose of the report was to consider and approve the draft Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement in order to meet the Council's statutory obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 ("MSA").

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The Statement was a legal requirement following the 2015 Act and was the beginning of an ongoing commitment by the Council.
- The Act and the Statement related to those who were forced to work via the use of mental or physical threat, those who were perceived to be "owned" by their employer, or those who had been subject to dehumanisation.
- The most difficult part of the process would be recognising where it was taking place. Discussion were to be held with community partners and the Police to assist with this.
- A group had been formed to assist in the creation of an anti-slavery policy for the Council. Work would continue on this following the approval of the Transparency Statement.
- It was considered that the Statement and expected policy would be of help to the Housing Enforcement Team and Prevention and Enforcement Services when visiting accommodation.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to approve the draft Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement for signature and publication by the Director of Governance.

### REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The draft Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement fulfilled the Council's statutory obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Cabinet was therefore recommended to approve the strategy.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not to approve the draft Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement. This option was not recommended as the Council would not be able to meet its statutory requirements.

Chairman  
10.00am – 10:30am

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<b>CABINET</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 5</b>
<b>20 MARCH 2017</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Irene Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environmental Capital	
Contact Officer(s):	Adrian Chapman – Service Director, Adult Services and Communities	Tel. 863887

**REVIEW OF EMERGENCY STOPPING PROVISION FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS WITHIN PETERBOROUGH**

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
<b>FROM :</b> Adult and Communities Scrutiny Committee	<b>Deadline date :</b> N/A
<p>The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee strongly endorses and recommends the Task and Finish Group report for approval by Cabinet, and request that Cabinet seriously considers the recommendations within the report to try to alleviate any future issues caused by, and increases in, unauthorised encampments. The specific recommendations from the report are as follows:</p> <p><b>Recommendation 1</b> Based on the number of unauthorised encampments across the city and the findings from the investigation it is recommended that the council provide four Temporary Stopping Places across Peterborough. Temporary stopping places should be properly planned and controlled, and their occupation time limited.</p> <p>Based on the limitations experienced with the existing Emergency Stopping Place it is recommended that full planning permission is secured for the Temporary Stopping Places to allow the sites to be used for more than the current 28 days limit.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 2</b> It is recommended that the Growth and Planning Team identify council land which is suitable for redevelopment and use for stopping places.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 3</b> It is also recommended that as well as investigating council owned land the Growth and Planning Team identify land suitable for purchase, if necessary under compulsory purchase.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 4</b> That the Growth and Planning Team identify land suitable for leasing with a view to purchase at a later date should the site be successful as a Temporary Stopping Place.</p> <p>The Growth and Planning Team should review land available by the end of April 2017, to report back the findings to the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee in June 2017.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 5</b> The Task and Finish Group recommend that the Growth and Planning Team review the Local Plan with regards to provision in the city for transient gypsies and travellers.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 6</b> To distribute a flow chart to all councillors which details the process of dealing with unauthorised encampments from assessment to removal.</p>	

## 1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 7 March 2017.

## 2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider the recommendations made by the Adults and Communities scrutiny committee following a cross party task and finish group review regarding provision of emergency stopping places for Gypsies and Travellers.
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.4: *To promote the Council's corporate and key strategies and Peterborough's Community Strategy and approve strategies and cross-cutting programmes not included within the Council's major policy and budget framework.*

## 3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	<b>N/A</b>
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## 4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 At its meeting on 20 July 2016 the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee (now the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee) recommended that a cross-party task and finish group be established to review emergency stopping place provision for Gypsies and Travellers in Peterborough.
- 4.2 The task and finish group investigated the current provision of and future needs for transit or temporary stopping places across Peterborough. The group reviewed key documents from the last task and finish group review in 2014 as well as information from other local authorities and key witnesses.
- 4.3 During the review the task and finish group identified the need for additional Temporary Stopping Places in Peterborough and investment into the current Emergency Stopping Place adjacent to the Dogsthorpe Triangle. After discussions it was agreed that a permanent transit site was not the best option for Peterborough, but instead a number of well-managed, properly planned, controlled and time-limited stopping places that would provide the best solution to help with the management of unauthorised encampments limiting the current impact on local communities and providing a more appropriate temporary stopping place for Travellers.
- 4.4 The group also noted that land which would be suitable for these sites owned by the local authority is very limited. The task and finish group's recommendations therefore include investigating all options available in terms of converting, purchasing or leasing land.
- 4.5 Full details of the task and finish group's work and their recommendations are contained in the full report attached at Appendix A.
- 4.6 Separate to the task and finish group's review, work is continuing to review and enhance the approach the council and police take to managing unauthorised encampments. Whilst we act promptly, we are keen to ensure that we are making full use of all and every available power to prevent negative impacts in residential or business areas, public open spaces and close to amenities. The provision of additional Temporary Stopping Places and the outcomes of the review of management arrangements will complement one another to ensure Peterborough has as robust a process in place as possible.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The task and finish group spoke with key witnesses and received information from other local authorities. No formal consultations have taken place at this time.
- 5.2 The full report from the task and finish group was debated at the Adults and Community Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 March 2017.
- 5.3 Consultation would be required if Cabinet approves recommendations contained in the report. The change in use of the current Emergency Stopping Place to a Temporary Stopping Place would be subject to public consultation as full planning permission would be required. Use of any land identified and deemed suitable by the council would also be subject to public consultation.

## **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

- 6.1 Providing additional stopping place provision would assist with the management and moving on of unauthorised encampments within community settings. The provision of new stopping places, if approved, will run alongside the review of enforcement powers, both of which will significantly reduce the impact unauthorised encampments can sometimes have on local communities.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 To assist with the moving on of authorised encampments limiting the impact unauthorised encampments have on local communities.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 A range of alternative options were considered by the task and finish group, although the conclusion of that was that Temporary Stopping Places provided the best arrangements for Peterborough.
- 8.2 Doing nothing was not considered an option, due to the ongoing costs and impact unauthorised encampments can have on local communities in Peterborough.

## **9. IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The recommendations made by the Adults and Communities Scrutiny committee have financial implications for the council. If land is identified as being suitable for either purchase or lease as a Temporary Stopping Place funding would need to be identified. In addition, the conversion of the existing Emergency Stopping Place at Dogsthorpe to a Temporary Stopping Place will also require investment to bring it up to a reasonable standard.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

- 10.1 Review documents produced by the 2014 Task and Finish Group
- 10.2 Peterborough Local Plan
- 10.3 Dealing with illegal encampments: A summary of Available Powers, *Department for Communities and Local Government*.

## **11. APPENDICES**

- 11.1 Appendix A - Task and Finish Group Report

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# **ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

**REVIEW OF EMERGENCY STOPPING PLACE PROVISION FOR TRAVELLERS  
WITHIN PETERBOROUGH**

**7 MARCH 2017**

**Report of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Task and Finish Group**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

At its meeting on 20 July 2016, the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee now called the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee recommended that a Task and Finish Group be established to review emergency stopping place provision for travellers within Peterborough and to present their recommendations back to the Committee at a future meeting.

The Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report at its meeting on 14 September 2016 to agree the Terms of Reference and membership of the Task and Finish Group to undertake the review.

The cross party Task and Finish group comprised the following members:



Cllr June Bull  
Conservative, Orton Longueville Ward



Cllr John Fox (Chairman)  
Independent, Werrington Ward



Cllr Stuart Martin  
Labour, Bretton Ward



Cllr Bella Saltmarsh  
Liberal Party, Dogsthorpe Ward



Cllr Asif Shaheed  
Liberal Democrats,  
Paston and Walton Ward



Cllr John Whitby  
UKIP,  
Fletton and Stanground  
Ward

Cllr Chris Harper – Co-opted Member (Non voting)

Officers supporting the Task and Finish Group were:

- Clair George, Prevention and Enforcement Manager
- Adrian Chapman, Service Director Adult Services and Communities
- Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer

## 2. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1**

Based on the number of unauthorised encampments across the city and the findings from the investigation it is recommended that the council provide four Temporary Stopping Places across Peterborough. Temporary stopping places should be properly planned and controlled, and their occupation time limited.

Based on the limitations experienced with the existing Emergency Stopping Place it is recommended that full planning permission is secured for the Temporary Stopping Places to allow the sites to be used for more than the current 28 days limit.

### **Recommendation 2**

It is recommended that the Growth and Planning Team identify council land which is suitable for redevelopment and use for stopping places.

### **Recommendation 3**

It is also recommended that as well as investigating council owned land that the Growth and Planning Team identify land suitable for purchase, if necessary under compulsory purchase.

### **Recommendation 4**

That the Growth and Planning Team identify land suitable for leasing with a view to purchase at a later date should the site be successful as a Temporary Stopping Place.

Growth and Planning Team review land available by the end of April 2017. To report back the findings to Adult and Communities Scrutiny Committee June 2017 on recommendations 2 to 4.

### **Recommendation 5**

The Task and Finish Group recommend that the Growth and Planning Team review the Local Plan with regards to provision in the city for transient gypsies and travellers.



**Recommendation 6**

To distribute a flow chart to all councillors which details the process of dealing with unauthorised encampments from assessment to removal.

**3. PURPOSE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. To review the use of the existing Emergency Stopping Place provision in Peterborough
2. To consider this and any other alternative solutions with a view to making a clear recommendation for the future
3. To identify a list of potentially suitable locations to temporarily accommodate Gypsies and Travellers based on the agreed characteristics determined through the previous Task and Finish group into this subject
4. To examine each potential site in order to agree advantages and disadvantages, and identify current ownership
5. To make recommendations for appropriate solutions based on actions (i) to (iv) above
6. To review terms and conditions that Gypsies and Travellers will need to agree to before making use of Emergency Stopping Place provision.
7. To review the current partnership protocol for the management of illegal and unauthorised encampments, identifying the roles of all partners and the use of relevant legislation available
8. To review the support mechanisms required across various disciplines that ensure appropriate provision for unauthorised encampments is managed effectively, e.g. legal, financial, environmental, policing, communications, media etc

**4. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE INVESTIGATION****4.1 Methodology**

- o Desk top research and statistics
- o Review of previous Task and Finish Group report

- o Questioning of Key Witnesses
- o Local knowledge
- o Financial Information – Costs associated with dealing with unauthorised encampments

## 4.2 Process

The timetable of the events leading to the production of this report are set out below:

Meeting Date	Items discussed / Guests Attending
17 October 2016	Initial Meeting to agree terms of reference and scope the review
23 November 2016	Meeting to discuss baseline evidence available from other Authorities, current data available, review information and research provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HCA Land Ownership Plan</li> <li>● Emergency Stopping Places Recommendations Emergency Stopping Places Cabinet Report - Final</li> <li>● Emergency Stopping Place Cabinet Report Appendix 1 (Criteria for selection)</li> <li>● Emergency Stopping Review November 2015</li> <li>● Emergency Stopping Places Sites Visited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Summary of powers - Dealing with illegal and unauthorised encampments</li> <li>b) Finance information for 2016/17</li> <li>c) Number of authorised encampments and locations since 1st May 2016</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
19 December 2016	Meeting to discuss further information provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Information on other authorities provision of emergency stopping places</li> <li>● Updated information regarding any possible sites</li> </ul>
31 January 2017	Interviewing expert witnesses
31 January 2017	Meeting to discuss conclusions and recommendations from research, data received and evidence seen and heard.
16 February 2017	Meeting to discuss draft report and finalise.

### Key Witness's / Expert Advisers interviewed:

- Adrian Chapman, Service Director, Adults and Communities
- Paul Hamshere, Traveller Liaison Officer
- Nigel Joseph, Litigation Lawyer
- Chief Inspector Rob Hill, Head of Prevention and Enforcement Service
- Superintendent Andy Gipp, Area Commander

The Task and Finish Group would like to thank everybody who assisted them during the course of the review for their support and openness. This assistance was greatly appreciated.

## **5. BACKGROUND**

Over the last several years, Peterborough has regularly experienced high numbers of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments. On occasions there have been reported incidents of ASB, fly tipping and community tensions. There is also the ongoing considerable cost and time associated with dealing with each encampment (including clean-up, defence measures and legal process).

Gypsies and Travellers are ethnic minorities recognised by the Race Relations Amendment Act. Under the terms of the Act they have a right to a nomadic lifestyle and equal access to services such as education, health and accommodation and protection from discrimination and harassment. However, Gypsies and Travellers do not have a right to occupy vacant land without agreement from the landowner. Where the council receives notification that there is an unauthorised encampment on council-owned land officers use powers under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act to seek eviction.

A cross party Task and Finish group undertook a review in 2014 to investigate locations for possible transit-style provision, the outcome of which was a recommendation to create Emergency Stopping Places. During the review 75 sites were assessed using approved criteria, with three sites eventually being approved by Cabinet. Unfortunately following approval two of these sites became unusable, and so the Council has had the use of one location known as land adjacent to the Dogsthorpe Triangle as an Emergency Stopping Place for the past two years.

As part of the assessment process of unauthorised encampments the decision on whether or not to offer an encampment the chance to relocate to the ESP for a short period is considered, however this offer has frequently been refused due to the site's proximity to the Householders Waste facility and the current condition of the area. We have no powers to compel an encampment to move to the ESP.

The current Emergency Stopping Place can only be used up to 28 days in any 12 month period as it has no formal planning consent in place. It has no permanent infrastructure, however temporary facilities are supplied such as waste facilities, temporary toilets and water when in use. If an encampment move to the ESP our normal eviction procedures commence as per any other location

although we would be more likely to tolerate the encampment on the ESP for a slightly longer period.

The city continues to see a high number of unauthorised encampments across the city which are at their highest during the summer months. The former Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee identified the need to provide additional provision in the form of either transit sites or temporary stopping places to assist with the management of unauthorised encampments.

The current Task and Finish group focused on identifying options for potential new locations and not on the process of moving encampments on through the use of legal powers. This though is subject to a separate review by the Prevention and Enforcement Service, however powers available to agencies will also need to be considered depending on the outcomes of the cross party review.

## **6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1 Current Situation**

The Task and Finish group reviewed the documents produced by the last Task and Finish group which had been established in 2014 as well as the current volumes and costs associated with unauthorised encampments in the city since April 2016. Discussions also took place around the impact unauthorised encampments have on local communities.

The City Council currently has one Emergency Stopping Place adjacent to the Dogsthorpe Triangle which has been available for the last 2 years. Although during 2016 it was used for the full 28 days available to us, Travellers still frequently refused to go to the site due its location and the current issues with lack of infrastructure.

### **6.2 Need for provision**

With only one site in Peterborough the Task and Finish group agreed there is a clear need for additional temporary provision within the Peterborough boundary. More temporary provision would assist with the management and moving on of unauthorised encampments.

### **6.3 Type of provision**

The Task and Finish group took into consideration the type of provision which could be provided in Peterborough including looking at transit and temporary stopping place provision and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

In summary, they concluded the following:

- Transit Site - Permanently provided sites used to temporarily accommodate their residents. Lengths of stay vary but are usually set at between 28 days and three months. They are advertised and have permanent facilities, require planning permission and need site management.

After speaking with other local authorities they have experienced issues with facilities being vandalised and if not managed correctly transit sites can quickly become permanent sites.

- Temporary Stopping Places/Emergency Stopping Places - Pieces of land in temporary use as authorised short-term (e.g. less than 28 days) stopping places for all travelling communities. They do not require planning permission if they are in use for fewer than 28 days per annum. The requirements for temporary stopping places reflect the fact that the site will only be used for a proportion of the year.

After listening to experiences from other local authorities and from key witnesses the Task and Finish group concluded that the way forward would be to recommend formal Temporary Stopping Places, with the land meeting previously set criteria and the sites being properly managed with full planning consent in place to allow use for longer than the current 28 days of the year.

The Task and Finish group also concluded that four locations would be required in different parts of Peterborough as during the summer months there can be a number of families travelling through Peterborough at any given time.

#### 6.4 Locations

The Task and Finish group reviewed the documents produced by the last Task and Finish group, this also included looking at the previous assessment criteria applied. An approach was also made to strategic property to see if any new land had become available since the last review, but unfortunately nothing was deemed suitable.

At the current time the Task and Finish group was unable to identify and recommend new locations for Temporary Stopping Places, but have recommended that the Growth and Planning Team investigate any land across the city in both public and private ownership for adaptation, purchase or lease which would be suitable for a Temporary Stopping Place. If land is identified, officers in the Prevention and Enforcement Service will assess suitability and make recommendations around operational use.

Any land identified for use would be subject to discussions with ward councillors and local consultations.

## 6.5 **Conclusions**

It was the conclusion of the Task and Finish group that the local authority needs to provide more temporary stopping places for gypsies and travellers when they are travelling through the city. Providing alternative stopping places will assist with the management of unauthorised encampments, however it is noted by the Task and Finish group that there is limited land available. Temporary Stopping Places would however limit the impact some unauthorised encampments currently have on the community, will provide a more appropriate setting for the Traveller community and, through effective management, will reduce costs currently incurred when dealing with unauthorised encampments.

Any Temporary Stopping Place should be properly managed with temporary facilities and a nightly occupation agreement and fee in place.

Whilst work is ongoing to identify new land, the council should invest in the current Emergency Stopping Place at Dogsthorpe, converting it to one of the four Temporary Stopping Places and making it more acceptable for use. This should include the submission of a planning application which, if approved, would allow for it to be used more than the current 28 days per annum.

It should be noted that alongside the potential for investment to be made in Temporary Stopping Places, a full review of enforcement action is being undertaken with our partners to ensure that unauthorised encampments are removed from public land as expediently as possible to reduce the impact on local communities and reduce the costs involved. This could for example include the introduction of local byelaws to protect council land.

## 7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 1**

Based on the number of unauthorised encampments across the city and the findings from the investigation it is recommended that the council provide four Temporary Stopping Places across Peterborough. Temporary stopping places should be properly planned and controlled, and their occupation time limited.

Based on the limitations experienced with the existing Emergency Stopping Place it is recommended that full planning permission is secured for the Temporary Stopping Places to allow

the sites to be used for more than the current 28 days limit.

The specification for the stopping places to include an appropriate nightly charging structure, be an area of 100m<sup>2</sup>, have a suitable hard standing and have water, toilets and waste provision provided when in use. Temporary Stopping Places should be properly managed and remain protected unless an officer from the Prevention and Enforcement Service is directing travellers to one of the places. The council will be required to use their normal enforcement powers to ensure the sites are protected and not abused.

Whilst this work is being undertaken a review of the current stopping place in Dogsthorpe is undertaken and the site upgraded with a view to convert from Emergency Stopping Place to a Temporary Stopping Place as above which will allow for use in excess of 28 days each year.

### **Recommendation 2**

During the investigation it became apparent that the council has limited land available which is suitable and meets previous criteria for temporary stopping places. It is recommended that the Growth and Planning Team identify council land which is suitable for re-development and use for stopping places. The Team is also asked to consider, amongst other areas, converting areas of the city centre car parking and the purchase of part of an existing permanent site to be used as a transit/temporary stopping place.

### **Recommendation 3**

As stated in recommendation 2 the Task and Finish group notes limited council land available. It is also recommended that as well as investigating council owned land that the Growth and Planning Team identify land suitable for purchase, if necessary under compulsory purchase. The team should approach the Diocesan Advisory Committee as large landowners in the city, and approach Parish Councils for assistance in identifying any suitable available land. Further, the possibility of land becoming available when businesses relocate should also be investigated.

### **Recommendation 4**

That the Growth and Planning Team identify land suitable for leasing with a view to purchase at a later date should the site be successful as a Temporary Stopping Place.

Growth and Planning Team to review land available by the end of April 2017. To report back the findings to Adult and Communities Scrutiny Committee June 2017 on recommendations 2 to 4.

**Recommendation 5**

The Task and Finish Group recommend that the Growth and Planning Team review the Local Plan with regards to provision in the city for transient gypsies and travellers.

**Recommendation 6**

To distribute a flow chart to all councillors which details the process of dealing with unauthorised encampments from assessment to removal.

**8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Investment in the current Emergency Stopping Place is recommended, and it is estimated that a budget of £20k would be required to clear the site and to prepare it for its planning application.
- 8.2 If successful in identifying land which is available but not in council ownership, a budget to purchase or lease that land will need to be identified. At this time we are unable to confirm the value.
- 8.3 Investing in properly managed Temporary Stopping Places will, over time, reduce ongoing revenue costs as, for example, eviction and clear up costs will be significantly reduced.

**9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Formal legal advice will be sought if the recommendations contained in this report are agreed, in order to ensure full compliance with relevant equalities legislation.

**10. List of background papers and research sources used during the investigation**

Documents used to prepare the final report includes:

Review of documents produced from the 2014 Task and Finish Group  
Peterborough Local Plan Dealing with Illegal Encampments: A Summary of Available Powers, *Department for Communities and Local government*

Further information on this review is available from:

Democratic Services Team  
Governance Directorate  
Town Hall  
Bridge Street  
Peterborough  
PE1 1HG

Telephone – (01733) 747474  
Email – [scrutiny@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@peterborough.gov.uk)



<b>CABINET</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 6</b>
<b>20 MARCH 2017</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Irene Walsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environmental Capital	
Contact Officer(s):	Adrian Chapman – Service Director, Adult Services and Communities	Tel. 863887

## MANAGEMENT OF ROUGH SLEEPERS REVIEW

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
<b>FROM</b> : Adult and Communities Scrutiny Committee	<b>Deadline date</b> : N/A
<p>That Cabinet considers the recommendations from the cross party task and finish group formed to review the management of rough sleepers, namely:</p> <p><b>Recommendation 1</b> That a strategic group be set up which meets regularly in order to identify duplication and gaps in current provision for rough sleepers and which includes representation from partner agencies including from the faith and voluntary sector. This group will develop a Rough Sleeper Strategy to be developed and approved by Council to support the work of officers and the wider partnership arrangements, and will monitor and respond to fluctuations in the delivery of the council's homelessness policy.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 2</b> The creation of a multi-agency task and targeting group to work on a long-term plan to ensure that individual rough sleepers are supported to move away from a street-based lifestyle.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 3</b> That the staff resource dedicated to supporting rough sleepers is increased beyond the current single officer by one full time additional officer to provide greater resilience and capacity, including provision for weekend outreach work in addition to the existing Monday to Friday service.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 4</b> That, with a growing rough sleeping population, the availability of suitable all year round night shelter accommodation is maintained, or increased if demand increases, to ensure that those most vulnerable are able to get some shelter especially during severe weather conditions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 5</b> That night shelter accommodation is identified for rough sleepers with dogs where the rough sleeper would not be willing to allow the council to place the dog into kennels as is current practice.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 6</b> That consideration be given to establishing formal daytime drop-in advice and advocacy services for rough sleepers, in partnership with the voluntary and faith sectors, focussed on offering advice and guidance as well as case management for service users.</p>	
<i>continued overleaf</i>	

**Recommendation 7**

That consideration be given to a flexible approach to activating severe weather emergency provision (SWEPE), taking into account the good practice guidelines provided by Homeless Link.

**Recommendation 8**

That an urgent solution is found to the deficit of on-street drugs and alcohol support, either through renegotiating the existing contract the council holds with the provider or by increasing the value of the contract.

**Recommendation 9**

That a focussed and ongoing communications campaign is undertaken to encourage the public to report rough sleeping to the council so that the most appropriate support can be provided.

**Recommendation 10**

To design and print business card sized information cards for rough sleepers with contact details for rough sleeper touch points and durable conveniently sized hand-outs, which can be personalised with key advice and action plans for rough sleepers to support them to leave the streets.

**Recommendation 11**

That the existing provision of one Housing First bed for a rough sleeper with complex needs that cannot be accommodated in regular hostels be extended by two further beds, along with the associated wraparound support services.

**Recommendation 12**

That the current Chronically Excluded Adults (CEA) project which provides personalised support to rough sleepers and others with the most complex needs be mainstreamed into normal council business from 1 August 2017, the point at which existing grant funding ceases.

**Recommendation 13**

That the relationship between affordable housing and rough sleeping be further explored. If it is proven that there is a direct correlation between volumes of rough sleeping and availability of affordable housing, that the target for affordable homes to be built in Peterborough that are identified in the emerging Local Plan be increased from 30% to 35%, and that of the 35% at least 70% are affordable rented.

**Recommendation 14**

That, following the conclusion of the task and finish group, the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee continue to provide oversight of the recommendations and support to officers by way of a report to the committee in September 2017.

**1. ORIGIN OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet by the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee which met on 7 March 2017.

**2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT**

- 2.1 For Cabinet to consider the recommendations approved by the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee from a cross party review of the management of rough sleepers.
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.4: *To promote the Council's corporate and key strategies and Peterborough's Community Strategy and approve strategies and cross-cutting programmes not included within the Council's major policy and budget framework.*

### **3. TIMESCALE**

3.1	Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	<b>N/A</b>
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### **4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

4.1 At its meeting on 11 January 2017 the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a cross party task and finish group to review the council's approach to the management of rough sleepers.

4.2 The task and finish group have undertaken their review and their findings, which are contained in the report at Appendix A, were presented to the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 7 March 2017.

4.3 The scrutiny committee debated the report and its recommendations, and approved them for submission to Cabinet.

### **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 The task and finish group spoke with key witnesses and received information from other local authorities, as described in the report at Appendix A.

5.2 The Adults and Community Scrutiny Committee debated the report at its meeting on 7 March 2017.

### **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

6.1 Whilst the task and finish group has acknowledged the good work already undertaken by the council and its partners to support and manage rough sleepers, the recommendations in this report, if approved, will ensure a full package of interventions and the appropriate level of capacity is in place to support rough sleepers.

### **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 The recommendations contained in this report are as a result of a cross party task and finish group.

### **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 A wide range of options were considered as part of the work the task and finish group undertook, and the final recommendations represent the most appropriate for Peterborough.

### **9. IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Many of the recommendations set out in the task and finish group's report have no financial implications. However, some do and these costs are identified within the report. However, the task and finish group reviewed evidence from other council areas nationally that demonstrated the financial savings that can be achieved through effective preventative work and targeted engagement with rough sleepers, which would deliver a significant return on investment.

## 10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 10.1
  - **At What Cost? An Estimation of the Financial Costs of Single Homelessness in the UK, Crisis/Centre for Housing Policy, University of York, July 2015**
  - **Evidence Review of the Costs of Homelessness, Department for Communities and Local Government, August 2012**
  - **Cross Party Rough Sleeping Task and Finish Group – Briefing Pack**

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A - Task and Finish Group Report

# **ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

### **MANAGEMENT OF ROUGH SLEEPERS REVIEW**

*7 MARCH 2017*

#### **Report of the Task and Finish Group**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

At its meeting on 17 January 2017, the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee recommended that a cross-party Task and Finish Group be established to review the management of rough sleepers within Peterborough and to present their recommendations back to the Committee on 7 March 2017. Due to the urgency of the matter the Committee agreed the terms of reference at the meeting and the Senior Democratic Services Officer sought possible nominations to the Task and Finish Group to be confirmed following the meeting through the Group Secretaries.

The cross party Task and Finish group comprised the following members:



Cllr Ansar Ali,  
Labour, North Ward



Cllr June Bull, Conservative,  
Orton Longueville Ward



Cllr Darren Fower,  
Liberal Democrats,  
Gunthorpe Ward



Cllr Stephen Lane (Chairman)  
Independent, Werrington Ward  
Ward



Cllr John Okonkowski  
UKIP, Orton Longueville Ward



Cllr Keith Sharp  
Liberal Party, Dogsthorpe

Officers supporting the Task and Finish Group were:

- Adrian Chapman, Service Director, Adults and Communities
- Belinda Child, Head of Housing, Prevention and Wellbeing
- Sean Evans, Housing Needs Manager
- Sarah Hebblethwaite, Housing Needs Deputy Manager
- Sarah Scase, Housing Needs Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer
- Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer
- Joanna Morley, Democratic Services Officer



## 2. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1**

That a strategic group be set up which meets regularly in order to identify duplication and gaps in current provision for rough sleepers and which includes representation from partner agencies including from the faith and voluntary sector. This group will develop a Rough Sleeper Strategy to be developed and approved by Council to support the work of officers and the wider partnership arrangements, and will monitor and respond to fluctuations in the delivery of the council's homelessness policy.

### **Recommendation 2**

The creation of a multi-agency task and targeting group to work on a long-term plan to ensure that individual rough sleepers are supported to move away from a street-based lifestyle.

### **Recommendation 3**

That the staff resource dedicated to supporting rough sleepers is increased beyond the current single officer by one full time additional officer to provide greater resilience and capacity, including provision for weekend outreach work in addition to the existing Monday to Friday service.

### **Recommendation 4**

That, with a growing rough sleeping population, the availability of suitable all year round night shelter accommodation is maintained, or increased if demand increases, to ensure that those most vulnerable are able to get some shelter especially during severe weather conditions.

### **Recommendation 5**

That night shelter accommodation is identified for rough sleepers with dogs where the rough sleeper would not be willing to allow the council to place the dog into kennels as is current practice.

**Recommendation 6**

That consideration be given to establishing formal daytime drop-in advice and advocacy services for rough sleepers, in partnership with the voluntary and faith sectors, focussed on offering advice and guidance as well as case management for service users.

**Recommendation 7**

That consideration be given to a flexible approach to activating severe weather emergency provision (SWEPE), taking into account the good practice guidelines provided by Homeless Link.

**Recommendation 8**

That an urgent solution is found to the deficit of on-street drugs and alcohol support, either through renegotiating the existing contract the council holds with the provider or by increasing the value of the contract.

**Recommendation 9**

That a focussed and ongoing communications campaign is undertaken to encourage the public to report rough sleeping to the council so that the most appropriate support can be provided.

**Recommendation 10**

To design and print business card sized information cards for rough sleepers with contact details for rough sleeper touch points and durable conveniently sized hand-outs, which can be personalised with key advice and action plans for rough sleepers to support them to leave the streets.

**Recommendation 11**

That the existing provision of one Housing First bed for a rough sleeper with complex needs that cannot be accommodated in regular hostels be extended by two further beds, along with the associated wraparound support services.

**Recommendation 12**

That the current Chronically Excluded Adults (CEA) project which provides personalised support to rough sleepers and others with the most complex needs be mainstreamed into normal council business from 1 August 2017, the point at which existing grant funding ceases.

**Recommendation 13**

That the relationship between affordable housing and rough sleeping be further explored. If it is proven that there is a direct correlation between volumes of rough sleeping and availability of affordable housing, that the target for affordable homes to be built in Peterborough that are identified in the emerging Local Plan be increased from 30% to 35%, and that of the 35% at least 70% are affordable rented.

**Recommendation 14**

That, following the conclusion of the task and finish group, the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee continue to provide oversight of the recommendations and support to officers by way of a report to the committee in September 2017.

### 3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### **Purpose**

To make recommendations to the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee to improve, enhance or create services and support in order to reduce the numbers of people sleeping rough.

#### **Scope**

To review all available data and information relating to rough sleeping and wider issues of homelessness in Peterborough, in similar councils and nationally.

To review all existing services and support arrangements for rough sleepers in Peterborough, and to commission research into the services available in other council areas.

To identify and meet with expert witnesses to help inform discussions and recommendations.

#### **Reporting**

The working group will report to the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

## 4. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE INVESTIGATION

### 4.1 Methodology

- Desktop Research, national and local
- Local knowledge
- Questioning of key witnesses including voluntary sector groups, council officers and rough sleepers
- Written information received from the Growth and Regeneration Directorate in answer to questions from the Task and Finish Group
- Financial Information – costs associated with dealing with rough sleepers

### 4.2 Process

The timetable of the events leading to the production of this report are set out below:

Meeting Date	Items Discussed / Guests Attending
30 January 2017	Meeting to scope the review and receive research and background briefing from key officers.
2 February 2017 – 9.00pm	Homeless Briefing for all Councillors in the Town Hall.
2 February 2017 – 10.00pm	Walkabout, City Centre accompanied by Council officers. An opportunity to see first-hand rough sleepers and engage with them.
7 February 2017	Question and answer session with expert witnesses from the voluntary sector, key council officers and to feedback from the walkabout. Discussion on conclusions and possible recommendations.
20 February 2017	Meeting to discuss and finalise the contents of the Task and Finish Group's report.
7 March 2017	Presentation of report to the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

**4.3 Key Witness's / Expert Advisers interviewed:**

- Adrian Chapman, Service Director, Adults and Communities
- Belinda Child, Head of Housing, Prevention and Wellbeing
- Sean Evans, Housing Needs Manager
- Sarah Hebblethwaite, Housing Needs Deputy Manager
- Anne Keogh, Housing and Strategic Planning Manager
- Sarah Scase, Housing Needs, Rough Sleeper Outreach
- Atiq Rehman and Shujah Saklain, Children of Adam Charity
- Sue Hensby and Arnie Hensby, Light Project Peterborough
- Rough sleepers in Peterborough city centre

Additionally, the task and finish group asked a series of questions in writing of Simon Machen, the council's Corporate Director for Growth and Regeneration.

The task and finish group also contacted Stewart Jackson MP and Shailesh Vara MP to determine what was planned nationally to complement and support the work of councils in tackling rough sleeping.

## 5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 Many towns and cities across the UK have experienced an increase in the number of people rough sleeping. Official government figures for the 2015 rough sleeping count showed that 3,569 people were rough sleeping in England on a single night, up 102% from 2010. Figures for 2016 show an average increase of 16% compared to the previous year.
- 5.2 In Peterborough local intelligence, which comes from a number of different sources including support agencies, the police and from conducting a physical rough sleeper count, estimated that there were 21 people sleeping rough at the time of the official count. This is up from 15 last year, a 33% increase.
- 5.3 There are a wide range of services and support arrangements in place to help rough sleepers move into accommodation, overseen by the council's housing service. These include night shelter arrangements, support with housing applications, close working with government agencies to resettle foreign nationals back to their country of origin, and close working with a number of support agencies to help with substance misuse and mental health issues.
- 5.4 However, despite this Peterborough still has a number of rough sleepers and the issue was exemplified over the Christmas and New Year period when St Peter's Arcade in particular became a focal point for rough sleeping and for the public's response.
- 5.5 It is because of this that the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to review the situation via a cross-party task and finish group.
- 5.6 The task and finish group received a comprehensive briefing pack which set out the national policy framework that councils are required to follow to prevent homelessness and provide statutory housing functions, details of how that statute and guidance is implemented in Peterborough, and details of the additional support and services specifically available to people sleeping rough or who are at risk of sleeping rough.
- 5.7 The full briefing pack is attached at appendix 1.

- 5.8 Additionally, alongside input from council officers (described in section 4.3) the task and finish group invited two local charities to meet with them to share details of their services and to explore how the council might learn from them or enhance their offer. These charities were Children of Adam, who provide on-street outreach to rough sleepers including offering food, clothing and sleeping bags, and The Light Project Peterborough who, in collaboration with the council, provide a winter night shelter. Further details about both organisations is set out below. The task and finish group also requested information from Simon Machen, the council's Corporate Director for Growth and Regeneration, and again his responses are included below.
- 5.9 As part of the work of the task and finish group, an all-councillor briefing was held on 2 February 2017 to share detailed information about services and support for rough sleepers, and this was followed by a walkabout in city centre rough sleeping hotspots for members of both the task and finish group and the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee.



## 6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Throughout the discussions, the task and finish group acknowledged the breadth and effectiveness of services already provided by the council and its partners. It is evident that officers within the council's housing services are providing dedicated support to rough sleepers to encourage and enable them to move away from a street-based lifestyle, and they have developed some strong and effective links with a number of agencies to support them. These include drugs and alcohol services, mental health organisations, local and national enforcement agencies and local charities. Since April 2016 the team has enabled 27 rough sleepers to move away from sleeping rough.
- 6.2 However, the task and finish group recognised that the available resource within the council to carry out this work as intensively as is required is somewhat limited, and this was a cause of concern. To mitigate this risk the officers described how they work closely with other public sector bodies such as the Home Office Immigration Enforcement service and the local police.
- 6.3 Officers clearly understood the situation for every rough sleeper known to them and had established a bespoke package of ongoing support for most rough sleepers. However, the task and finish group heard about a small number of rough sleepers who were consistently refusing support opting instead to continue their street-based lifestyle. The group were anxious to ensure that officers and other agencies were given as many tools as possible to encourage or compel rough sleepers to engage with the support that's available to them.
- 6.4 During the discussions, officers also sought to dispel some myths that exist surrounding the rough sleeping community in Peterborough:
- Not everyone that is begging in the city is a rough sleeper, and not every rough sleeper begs. The focus of the task and finish group was the rough sleeping community, but the group were anxious to ensure that the issue of begging was also addressed as the perception that both groups were the same was confusing the real issues of rough sleeping. For example, agencies are aware that a number of people who regularly beg in the city centre have a home to return to at the end of each day. Officers reported that a new Public Space Protection Order is being proposed which includes an ability for overt aggressive begging to be stopped.

Officers clarified that the PSPO was not being proposed to criminalise those in genuine need, but instead to ensure those that already have access to alternative lifestyles were compelled to change their behaviours.

- The personal belongings of rough sleepers was not being removed arbitrarily. Where items appear to belong to a rough sleeper but there is no evidence of a rough sleeper being present, officers leave a note to offer support and information about access to a bed, and also advising that if the items remain unattended they will be removed. However, where an item such as a sleeping bag appears to have been obviously abandoned Amey are likely to remove it for issues of safety. This is especially true where there is, for example, drugs paraphernalia nearby.
- The recent social media coverage suggesting that the council had removed or was planning to remove the dog belonging to one particular rough sleeper was inaccurate. Officers confirmed that firstly the gentleman is not thought to be a rough sleeper but does partake in busking activity. Unfortunately his current and previous dogs have reportedly threatened and/or attacked other dogs and criminal charges have been brought against him both previously (leading to a dog control order being imposed) and more recently.

## **6.5 Accommodation**

6.5.1 The task and finish group discussed the provision of emergency shelter accommodation and also the plans for increasing the availability of suitable permanent accommodation for those sleeping rough as well as the wider homeless population.

6.5.2 Officers confirmed that:

- There is no need for anybody to sleep rough in Peterborough. The offer of a bed is always available and always made to people found sleeping rough.
- The council provides emergency shelter during prolonged periods of cold weather. This is known as Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP). SWEP is triggered where temperatures are forecast to be at zero degrees Celsius or below for three or more nights, and in Peterborough takes the form of a night shelter provided in partnership with Axiom Housing. Despite the trigger not being reached on many occasions this winter, the council took the decision to keep SWEP provision open and available since December.

- A winter night shelter project, in association with Churches Together, operates in Peterborough between mid-December and mid-March providing overnight accommodation for rough sleepers seven nights a week in various church buildings. The task and finish group subsequently met with the leaders of this project and further detail of the discussion is set out in section 6.6.5.
- A 'crash bed' is available for officers to direct rough sleepers to when it is available. As there is only one it operates on a first come first served basis.
- The council has use of a Housing First bed. Located at Fairview Court and managed by Axiom Housing Association the council has been able to provide accommodation to one of the most entrenched rough sleepers in the city and pull in resources from support agencies to ensure that their needs are met without relying on the service user accessing services through the traditional routes, which does not always happen.
- Peterborough has two direct access hostels, which are funded by the council through the Housing Related Support programme. The YMCA Timestop is for service users aged between 18 and 25 and the New Haven hostel managed by Axiom Housing Association is able to accommodate up to 35 single persons on any one night and for a period of up to 8 weeks. This should be sufficient time for the service user to secure alternative more permanent accommodation through a further supported accommodation setting, a private sector tenancy or an allocation of social housing.

6.5.3 Since April 2016 the council, like many others across the country, has seen a significant increase in households presenting to the council as homeless, and this has led to a sharp rise in the use of temporary accommodation including the use of high street hotel chains. The task and finish group discussed the reasons why this was happening, and concluded that there were a number of factors but that the predominant issue was the shortage of affordable rented housing stock of the right size. This served to create a bottleneck in temporary accommodation with households often unable to move through the system in a timely manner. Although general needs temporary accommodation is unlikely to be suitable for many rough sleepers (because, for example, they may need intensive support) the issue of the increased use of B&B-type accommodation was adding to the negative perceptions associated with rough sleeping in Peterborough.

6.5.4 The task and finish group was therefore keen to understand what measures were being taken to improve the availability of suitable accommodation for homeless and other households, as it was clearly understood that tackling one part of the problem in isolation was not a sustainable or appropriate thing to do.

6.5.5 Officers confirmed that:

- The council has a number of very positive relationships with private sector letting agents and landlords, and that government has enabled councils to discharge their duty to households by placing them into housing in the private rented sector. However, officers also acknowledged that the availability and affordability of privately rented housing was also sometimes challenging.
- Additionally, officers confirmed that the council had recently been awarded additional funding and Homelessness Trailblazer status to work with and support the availability of private rented housing to people in the most need. The funding will include the expansion of existing private sector leasing arrangements which guarantee a rental income for landlords in return for their stock being made available to the council.
- The council has a dedicated empty homes officer whose role is to work with owners of long-term empty homes to bring them back into use.
- Discussions are actively ongoing which seek to convert suitable empty accommodation into additional self-contained temporary accommodation for homeless households. Officers confirmed that, should any such discussions lead to tangible action, the local ward councillors will be informed at an early stage.

6.5.6 The task and finish group issued a series of questions to Simon Machen, the council's Corporate Director for Growth and Regeneration centred on the strategy for increasing availability of suitable and affordable housing in Peterborough. The key points following on from these questions are as follows:

- The emerging Local Plan currently in development strengthens the position for vulnerable households compared to the existing Local Plan by stating that the housing needs of the most vulnerable groups will be prioritised alongside the commitment to seeking provision of 30% affordable housing on all sites on which 15 or more dwellings are proposed.

- There is a solid basis of research and evidence which serves to direct the development of housing supply according to need. This is based on both demographic research and forecasting and the evidenced need of those households who are on the council's housing register.
- In Peterborough the council is seeking to invest in affordable housing through the housing joint venture with Cross Keys Homes, with the first units likely to be delivered in the next 12 months.

## **6.6 Support Arrangements**

- 6.6.1 Officers confirmed that everyone, regardless of circumstance, receives advice and support if they approach the council as homeless. The extent of that support depends though on a wide range of factors which officers have to consider, including whether or not the person presenting to them has made themselves intentionally homeless (e.g. because of excessive rent arrears or because of anti-social behaviour).
- 6.6.2 The task and finish group discussed the additional needs of rough sleepers beyond accommodation alone. Officers confirmed for example that many rough sleepers suffer from issues associated with substance misuse and dependency or have complex mental health problems. The task and finish group heard that although the council benefits from excellent relationships with specialist agencies such as drugs and alcohol services and MIND, these are not accommodation providers too. The task and finish group also learned that there is currently no on-street support provided by the drugs and alcohol service provider in Peterborough.
- 6.6.3 Full details describing the council's services to support people sleeping rough can be found in the briefing note attached at appendix 1.
- 6.6.4 The task and finish group were aware of a number of organisations that were providing direct support to people sleeping rough, but because of time constraints were only able to meet with two of them. These were the Light Project Peterborough and Children of Adam.

6.6.5 The conclusions from these discussions are as follows:

- ***Light Project Peterborough (Churches Together)***
  - The project operates using the Housing Justice Model, providing accommodation for up to eight guests per night at one of seven churches, one church each night.
  - Referrals into the project are made from the council, Outside Links on Wellington Street, and the New Haven Night Shelter.
  - Guests needed to be low risk as the guests are required to sleep in dormitory-style accommodation. The project is also run by volunteers and so is not set up to provide specialist mental health or substance misuse support.
  - Guests benefit from an evening meal, a safe bed for the night and breakfast. Social activities are available, as well as a listening ear.
  - Guests are dropped off each morning at Bayard Place to ensure they know where the council offices are.
  - To date the project has filled 311 beds out of a total of 456, spread over 42 separate guests. Over the three months that the project will run for the volunteer hours total 6,700.
  - So far this year 34 guests have moved on – 3 into private rented accommodation, 10 into hostel accommodation, 1 into prison, 8 of their own accord, 2 were linked back to their family, 2 returned to their home town, and 8 moved into SWEP provision as they were deemed high risk.
  - The direct costs to deliver the project total £17k which funds paid project workers and transportation. The indirect or hidden costs include heating and lighting church buildings and food and refreshments and is estimated to be in the region of £80 per night. The local prison provides laundry services.
  - The project commented that many rough sleepers who they support overnight struggled during the day, and that some form of daytime drop-in service could be offered where information could be provided alongside light touch case management.
  - The project also noted that many rough sleepers wanted to remain in Peterborough rather than return to their town of origin, and vice versa, to make a fresh start. However, it was acknowledged that the local connection rules didn't support this approach.
- ***Children of Adam***
  - The project operates based on the teachings of the Koran that states that Muslims should help their family. Children of Adam recognise Peterborough as their family.

- o The organisation has been helping the homeless of Peterborough for four years. This help includes distribution of between 40 and 50 meals twice a week, and the distribution of thermal clothing, blankets and sleeping bags.
- o The project felt that many rough sleepers were amenable to help from the council but were nervous to do so. They report that rough sleepers believe the council will ask for personal details and identification before assisting them. Officers clarified that this was not the case however.

## **6.7 Rough Sleeping Walkabout**

6.7.1 As previously discussed, the task and finish group along with members of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee, officers and local media attended a walkabout on the evening of 2 February 2017.

6.7.2 The task and finish group discussed their observations from the walkabout with officers, and the following conclusions were made:

- One of the people apparently sleeping rough was actually housed in private rented accommodation. However, she felt unable to stay there because it was in an unsafe condition. During the period between the walkabout and the subsequent discussion, council officers had visited the property and made arrangements for temporary accommodation to be provided to the occupants whilst repairs are carried out.
- Council officers usually visited rough sleepers during the pre-dawn period (c.5am) as this tended to be the time to find genuine rough sleepers.
- Rough sleepers often struggled to live within four walls and to maintain responsibility for paying bills and looking after their accommodation. It was sometimes therefore a slow process to normalise a tenancy arrangements for an entrenched rough sleeper, although officers always continue to provide support during that transitional period. Axiom Housing also provide a 6-month programme of support for new tenants.
- Officers clarified that rough sleepers are able to claim welfare benefits through the use of a 'care of' address.
- Consideration was needed of how best to communicate with rough sleepers when their personal belongings were present but they themselves were not. Currently officers leave a note explaining how to access services, but it is felt that a more formal method should be identified.

- Following on from this, a Personal Action Plan, similar to those used in some other council areas, should be considered setting out the key points of contact for rough sleepers, their accommodation options and their personal actions for completion in pursuit of more permanent accommodation.

## **6.8 Cost of Rough Sleeping**

6.8.1 The task and finish group were keen to establish the true cost of rough sleeping and homelessness more general on the public purse. The group recognised that preventing rough sleeping was likely to be a far more cost effective approach compared with dealing with the consequences of rough sleeping, as well as providing a far more positive outlook for the individuals concerned. Desktop research shows the following:

- That the estimated cost associated with successfully preventing homelessness for a single man in his 30s is £1,426<sup>1</sup>.
- That the estimated cost associated with persistent rough sleeping by a single man in his 30s over a 12 month period is £20,128<sup>1</sup>.
- Similar estimates are identified in other studies, and are described in the Department of Communities and Local Government's Evidence Review of the Costs of Homelessness, August 2012.

## **6.9 Good Practice**

6.9.1 Alongside research into the cost of rough sleeping the task and finish group also investigated examples of good practice from elsewhere in the country. Of most note was a City of London Pilot project which ran in 2008/2009 which provided personalised support and personal budgets to rough sleepers. At the time the project was evaluated in 2010 it found that most of the people benefitting through the pilot had secured their own accommodation.

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<sup>1</sup> 'At what cost? An estimation of the financial costs of single homelessness in the UK', Crisis/Centre for Housing Policy, University of York, July 2015



6.9.2 This pilot led to the creation of a coalition between Clinks, Homeless Link and Mind and the publication of a new approach to supporting people with complex needs known as Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM). Peterborough partnered with Cambridge City Council to secure funding under the MEAM prospectus to set up and run a chronically excluded adults project which adopts a personalised approach to supporting rough sleepers and other who have the most complex needs. Officers confirmed that funding for the local project ends on 31 July 2017.

## **6.10 Conclusions**

6.10.1 The task and finish group welcomes this opportunity to research and comment on the council's work surrounding homelessness and rough sleeping in the Peterborough area. Having been reliably informed throughout its period of involvement, and from all the collated evidence, it is happy to conclude the following.

6.10.2 Most of us struggle to understand what it is like to sleep on the streets and that's why when many people see rough sleepers they want to extend a helping hand. However, no one needs to be sleeping rough today as there are well trodden pathways to vital services, including housing, which can be accessed by genuine rough sleepers – even the most entrenched.

6.10.3 The council is determined to engage with this issue and to ensure that the right intervention is made, as promptly as possible. It is accepted that this does need to be a collaborative approach between the council, the wider public sector and the voluntary and charitable sectors, so that the safety net is strengthened further.

6.10.4 The task and finish group received a briefing pack from officers outlining all of the council's various statutory duties in relation to homelessness, along with how it will support anyone found to be rough sleeping.

- 6.10.5 The council provides advice and assistance on housing and homelessness prevention to anyone in their district, free of charge. However, it should be noted that where the council is approached by a young person aged 16 or 17 that is homeless, the council will first check if they are in priority need and will be assessed by Children's Social Care to determine whether they are a 'child in need' and owed a duty under the Children's Act 1989, under which they will be accommodated by Children's Social Care. Where the young person is not owed such a duty they will be in priority need and interim accommodation is provided while further investigation is undertaken.
- 6.10.6 Over the last 5 years Peterborough has seen increasing demand on homelessness services. The number of homelessness declarations being made to the council has been steadily increasing. In particular, there were increases in the number of presentations in 2016. While the increase in homelessness presentations has placed additional pressures on resources in the Housing Needs team, at the same time there was a reduction in the availability of accommodation with partner social landlords. The council can secure suitable accommodation in the private sector, but recent increases in the rental costs of private sector accommodation, changes to tax rules for private landlords and a reluctance of some landlords accepting households who will be in receipt of Housing Benefit has meant that its ability to discharge homeless duties is more difficult. The combination of all these factors has resulted in households being accommodated in more expensive temporary accommodation, such as a Travelodge, for longer periods while the council seeks to find a permanent solution.
- 6.10.7 Whilst targeting prevention of homelessness (including rough sleepers) is part of the overall solution it is accepted that there is a lack of affordable homes in the housing market – particularly rented single and two bed accommodation that is inexpensive to lease/rent.
- 6.10.8 The causes of homelessness are complex, some of which relate to the housing market and the wider economy, and others which are personal to the individual because of underlying causes. These may lead to that individual being unable to support themselves in sustainable accommodation, and they end up sleeping on the streets.

- 6.10.9 The council's Housing Needs team has an established Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer, who provides help to individuals who find themselves sleeping rough. The officer will direct them firstly to any of the Council's local partners offering a hot meal and shelter for the night, and then to Bayard Place and the Housing Needs Service in the morning. However, there are a number of individuals who are entrenched rough sleepers and prefer to remain independent.
- 6.10.10 There is a cold weather provision for rough sleepers during prolonged periods of night temperatures being at or below freezing point for more than three days. This winter, the Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) has been sensibly employed for more nights than were necessary and is a welcome, humanitarian gesture to be encouraged for future planning. With a growing rough sleeping population, it is important for the availability of suitable accommodation to be at least maintained, or perhaps increased, to ensure that those most vulnerable are able to get some shelter during severe weather conditions.
- 6.10.11 All rough sleepers are assessed as to whether they are eligible and in priority need in accordance with the current legislation. An assessment is also made on whether they need to be referred to other agencies such as Mind or Aspire, as the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer does not have the necessary skills. The officer and partner agencies can only provide effective support for those willing to have a dialogue with them. It is desirable for the Housing Needs Team to expand on its current ability to work with rough sleepers, for which additional resources, such as personnel, will be required.
- 6.10.12 The recent contract that was commissioned for drug and alcohol treatment services did not include outreach work. There is currently no available specialist to accompany the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer when they go out to visit rough sleepers.
- 6.10.13 The task and finish group were especially pleased to meet with two registered charities that offered support and guidance for rough sleepers in the Peterborough area. There are others who operate in the same field but could not attend due to short notice. The task and finish group hopes to see a dialogue and involvement continue after its work is complete.

- 6.10.14 The Children of Adam have been helping the homeless for four years with meals, clothing, blankets and sleeping bags. It has noticed an increase in the numbers it meets throughout this period, including a rise in those coming into the city from other areas. Their opinion is that a large number of its clients are afraid of 'suits' and feel they are better placed to interact and build a rapport to gain trust. The Housing Needs Manager offered to liaise with the Children of Adam to collate their findings, and the charity is willing to work with the Housing Needs team to coordinate resources.
- 6.10.15 The Light Project Peterborough is a charity that has support from seven Peterborough churches. Its Winter Night Shelter Project has been successfully running for two years, offering meals, shelter and advice for low-risk rough sleepers on a nightly rota basis. It takes referrals from three agencies, including the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer. The project is willing to improve its links with other agencies. In their opinion the council could help with a daytime provision of services for rough sleepers. It is thought a drop-in centre where information and case management could be offered would be of help.
- 6.10.16 The task and finish group, in its short life since inception, is satisfied that there is a significant amount of good work already being done by the Housing Needs team and its lone Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer. Timely and appropriate interventions by the statutory and voluntary organisations do restore and save lives and the public also has a part to play in realising this.
- 6.10.17 It is unlikely that there will ever be a time when there are no rough sleepers in the city, but the current work and aspirations of the team is applauded, given the limited resources at its disposal. The task and finish group is indebted to all those who have contributed to its work and feel confident that the right statutory interventions are being made as promptly as possible and that only minor adjustments need be made to enhance what is already a robust system of managing the city's rough sleepers.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The task and finish group makes the following recommendations:

### **Recommendation 1**

That a strategic group be set up which meets regularly in order to identify duplication and gaps in current provision for rough sleepers and which includes representation from partner agencies including from the faith and voluntary sector. This group will develop a Rough Sleeper Strategy to be developed and approved by Council to support the work of officers and the wider partnership arrangements. This group will also monitor and respond to fluctuations in the delivery of the council's homelessness policy to ensure there is no impact on rough sleepers within the city.

### **Recommendation 2**

The creation of a multi-agency task and targeting group to work on a long-term plan to ensure that individual rough sleepers are supported to move away from a street-based lifestyle. This group should comprise statutory agencies including the council, police, Home Office Immigration Enforcement and the NHS, housing providers, and voluntary and faith organisations, and will adopt a case management approach to unblock barriers and ensure the appropriate resources are available to individuals based on their circumstances.

### **Recommendation 3**

That the staff resource dedicated to supporting rough sleepers is increased beyond the current single officer by one full time additional officer to provide greater resilience and capacity, including provision for weekend outreach work in addition to the existing Monday to Friday service.

### **Recommendation 4**

That, with a growing rough sleeping population, the availability of suitable all year round night shelter accommodation is maintained, or increased if demand increases, to ensure that those most vulnerable are able to get some shelter especially during severe weather conditions.

**Recommendation 5**

That night shelter accommodation is identified for rough sleepers with dogs where the rough sleeper would not be willing to allow the council to place the dog into kennels as is current practice. As part of this provision, to explore the potential for a qualified vet to attend this provision on a regular basis to offer advice and treatment.

**Recommendation 6**

That consideration be given to establishing formal daytime provision for rough sleepers, in partnership with the voluntary and faith sectors, focussed on offering advice and guidance as well as case management for service users. The task and finish group is NOT recommending daytime shelter as it recognises that this removes incentives for rough sleepers to work with services to move away from a street-based lifestyle.

**Recommendation 7**

That consideration be given to a flexible approach to activating severe weather emergency provision (SWEPE), taking into account the good practice guidelines provided by Homeless Link including considering extreme cold temperatures but also wind, rain and other weather conditions.

**Recommendation 8**

That an urgent solution is found to the deficit of on-street drugs and alcohol support, either through renegotiating the existing contract the council holds with the provider or by increasing the value of the contract.

**Recommendation 9**

That a focussed and ongoing communications campaign is undertaken to encourage the public to report rough sleeping to the council so that the most appropriate support can be provided. This campaign should also educate the public on the best ways to support rough sleepers including, for example, donating to the local food banks or to local or national homelessness charities.

**Recommendation 10**

To design and print business card sized information cards for rough sleepers with contact details for rough sleeper touch points and durable conveniently sized hand-outs, which can be personalised with key advice and action plans for rough sleepers to support them to leave the streets.

**Recommendation 11**

That the existing provision of one Housing First bed for a rough sleeper with complex needs that cannot be accommodated in regular hostels be extended by two further beds, along with the associated wraparound support services.

**Recommendation 12**

That the current Chronically Excluded Adults (CEA) project which provides personalised support to rough sleepers and others with the most complex needs be mainstreamed into normal council business from 1 August 2017, the point at which existing grant funding ceases. Additionally, that the project:

- incorporates provision of a delegated budget held by officers to cover costs of items or services that remove a barrier to a rough sleeper engaging or that help a rough sleeper into more permanent accommodation
- provides ongoing support for service users (e.g. mental health support) for a period of at least 12 months.

**Recommendation 13**

That the relationship between affordable housing and rough sleeping be further explored. If it is proven that there is a direct correlation between volumes of rough sleeping and availability of affordable housing, that the target for affordable homes to be built in Peterborough that are identified in the emerging Local Plan be increased from 30% to 35%, and that of the 35% at least 70% are affordable rented.

**Recommendation 14**

That, following the conclusion of the task and finish group, the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee continue to provide oversight of the recommendations and support to officers by way of a report to the committee in September 2017.

## 8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The task and finish group recognises that some of the recommendations made have financial implications. However, the group is also clear that evidence it has seen demonstrates the overall saving to the public purse as a result of reducing rough sleeping through preventative work and personalised interventions.

8.2 The task and finish group are also confident that a number of the recommendations will be cost neutral to implement, or can be implemented by varying delivery arrangements in other parts of the system.

8.3 The views of the task and finish group are as follows:

- Recommendation 1: no direct additional cost
- Recommendation 2: no direct additional cost
- Recommendation 3: cost of additional officer - £29,000 per annum
- Recommendation 4: no direct additional cost if provision is maintained at existing levels
- Recommendation 5: no direct additional cost if existing provision is modified
- Recommendation 6: limited additional cost if developed in partnership with the faith Sector – estimated £10,000 per annum
- Recommendation 7: limited additional cost
- Recommendation 8: no direct additional cost assuming the existing contract can be varied
- Recommendation 9: no direct additional cost assuming the Prevention and Enforcement Service communications officer leads this work
- Recommendation 10: limited additional cost – estimated £500
- Recommendation 11: no direct additional cost if existing provision is modified
- Recommendation 12: cost of officer and associated budgets - £38,000 plus £5,000 per annum
- Recommendation 13: no direct additional cost
- Recommendation 14: no direct additional cost

## 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no identified legal implications.



**10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND RESEARCH SOURCES USED DURING THE INVESTIGATION**

- **At What Cost? An Estimation of the Financial Costs of Single Homelessness in the UK**, *Crisis/Centre for Housing Policy, University of York, July 2015*
- **Evidence Review of the Costs of Homelessness**, *Department for Communities and Local Government, August 2012*

Further information on this review is available from:

Democratic Services Team  
Governance Directorate  
Town Hall  
Bridge Street  
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# Cross-Party Rough Sleeping Task and Finish Group

## Briefing Pack

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## **1. Relevant legislation defining Homelessness**

The council has various statutory duties in relation to homelessness. These are broadly covered in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) and further detailed in the statutory Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2006.

Many elements of the acts have been amended/varied by case law, but the principles remain the same. Section 179(1) of the Housing Act 1996 confirms that housing authorities have a duty to ensure advice and information about homelessness, and the prevention of homelessness, is available free of charge to any person in their district. The provision of comprehensive advice plays an important part in delivering the housing authority's strategy for preventing homelessness in their district.

## **2. Statutory duties towards people we have accepted a duty towards**

### **2.1 Investigations**

Section 184 of the Housing Act 1996 confirms that where the council has reason to believe that an applicant may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, it must make inquiries to satisfy itself whether the applicant is eligible for assistance and, if so, whether any duty and if so what duty is owed to him or her under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

In order to determine this, the council is required to establish whether the applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness, whether he or she became homeless, or threatened with homelessness, intentionally and whether he or she has a priority need for accommodation.

### **2.2 Homeless or threatened with homelessness**

Section 184 of the Housing Act 1996 confirms that if the council has reason to believe that a person applying to the council for accommodation, or assistance in obtaining accommodation, may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, the housing authority must make inquiries to satisfy itself whether the applicant is eligible for assistance and if so, whether a duty is owed to that person under Part 7 of the 1996 Act.

Under Section 175(4) a person is '*threatened with homelessness*' if he or she is likely to become homeless within 28 days. In many cases, effective intervention can enable homelessness to be prevented or the loss of the current home to be delayed sufficiently to allow for a planned move. The council should not wait until homelessness is a likelihood or is imminent before providing advice and assistance.

There are a number of different factors that determine whether a person is homeless. Under Section 175, a person is homeless if he or she has no accommodation in the United Kingdom or elsewhere which is available for his or her occupation and which that person has a legal right to occupy. A person is also homeless if he or she has accommodation but cannot secure entry to it, or the accommodation is a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation (such as a caravan or houseboat) and there is no place where it can be placed in order to provide accommodation. A person who has accommodation is to be treated as homeless where it would not be reasonable for him or her to continue to occupy that accommodation.

### 2.3 Eligibility

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 includes provision which make certain persons from abroad ineligible for housing assistance. The council therefore needs to satisfy that applicants are eligible before providing housing assistance.

The council must ensure that staff who are required to screen housing applicant eligibility for assistance are provided with adequate training in the complexities of the housing provisions, the housing authority's duties and responsibilities and how to deal with applicants in a sensitive manner.

A person is not be eligible for assistance under Part 7 if he or she is a person from abroad who is ineligible for housing assistance under Section 185 of the 1996 Act. There are two categories of '*person from abroad*' for the purposes of Section 185:

- *A person subject to immigration control* – such a person is not eligible for housing assistance unless he or she comes within a class prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State; and
- *A person from abroad other than a person subject to immigration control* – the Secretary of State can make regulations to provide for other descriptions of person from abroad who, although they are not subject to immigration control, are to be treated as ineligible for housing assistance.

The regulations that set out which classes of persons from abroad are eligible or ineligible for housing assistance are the *Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006* (SI 2006 No.1294) ('the Eligibility Regulations'). Persons subject to immigration control are not eligible for housing assistance unless they fall within a class of persons prescribed in regulation 5 of the Eligibility Regulations. Persons who are not subject to immigration control will be eligible for housing assistance unless they fall within a description of persons who are to be treated as persons from abroad who are ineligible for assistance by virtue of regulation 6 of the Eligibility Regulations.

### 2.4 Priority Need

Under the homelessness legislation, housing authorities must have a strategy for preventing homelessness and ensuring that accommodation and support are available to anyone in their district who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. They must also provide advice and assistance on housing and homelessness prevention to anyone in their district, free of charge. Stronger duties to secure accommodation exist for households who have a priority need for accommodation.

Since 2002, the priority need categories have embraced a wider range of people whose age or background puts them at greater risk when homeless, including more single people.

The main homelessness duties in Section 193(2) and Section 195(2) of the 1996 Housing Act (to secure accommodation or take reasonable steps to prevent the loss of accommodation) apply only to applicants who have a priority need for accommodation.

Section 189(1) and the *Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002* provide that the following categories of applicant have a priority need for accommodation:

- (a) A pregnant woman or a person with whom she resides or might reasonably be expected to reside;
- (b) A person with whom dependent children reside or might reasonably be expected to reside;

- (c) A person who is vulnerable as a result of old age, mental illness or handicap or physical disability or other special reason, or with whom such a person resides or might reasonably be expected to reside;
- (d) A person aged 16 or 17 who is not a '*relevant child*' or a child in need to whom a local authority owes a duty under section 20 of the Children Act 1989;
- (e) A person under 21 who was (but is no longer) looked after, accommodated or fostered between the ages of 16 and 18 (except a person who is a '*relevant student*');
- (f) A person aged 21 or more who is vulnerable as a result of having been looked after, accommodated or fostered (except a person who is a '*relevant student*');
- (g) A person who is vulnerable as a result of having been a member of Her Majesty's regular naval, military or air forces;
- (h) A person who is vulnerable as a result of:
  - Having served a custodial sentence;
  - Having been committed for contempt of court or any other kindred offence; or
  - Having been remanded in custody;
- (i) A person who is vulnerable as a result of ceasing to occupy accommodation because of violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out;
- (j) A person who is vulnerable for any other special reason, or with whom such a person resides or might reasonably be expected to reside; or
- (k) A person who is homeless, or threatened with homelessness, as a result of an emergency such as flood, fire or other disaster.

Inquiries as to whether an applicant has a priority need must be carried out in all cases where the council has reason to believe that an applicant may be eligible for assistance and where the Council has reason to believe that the applicant may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, and is eligible for assistance. Moreover, where the housing authority has reason to believe that the applicant is homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need, they will have an immediate duty to secure interim accommodation, pending a decision on the case.

Once a housing authority has notified an applicant that he or she has a priority need and has been accepted as owed the main homelessness duty (s.193(2)) it cannot – unless the decision is subject to a request for a review – change the decision if the applicant subsequently ceases to have a priority need (e.g. because a dependent child leaves home).

Any change of circumstance prior to the decision on the homelessness application should be taken into account. However, once all the relevant inquiries are completed, the housing authority should not defer making a decision on the case in anticipation of a possible change of circumstances.

## **2.5 Homeless 16 & 17 year olds**

Where the Housing Needs service is approached by a young person who is aged 16 or 17 and is homeless, in order to determine whether they are in priority need they must first be assessed by Children's Social Care to determine whether they are a 'child in need' and owed a duty under the Children's Act 1989.

Referrals are made to Children's Social Care as soon as we are aware of a homeless young

person and where possible a joint assessment will take place.

Where a young person is owed a duty under the Children's Act 1989 they are not considered to be in priority need for assistance and therefore not owed a housing duty, but are accommodated by Children's Social Care.

Where the young person is not owed a duty under the Children's Act 1989 they will be in priority need and interim accommodation is provided while further investigation is undertaken.

## **2.6 Intentionality**

The duty owed towards those who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness, and who have a priority need for accommodation will depend upon whether they became homeless, or threatened with homelessness, intentionally or unintentionally. Section 191 defines the circumstances in which an applicant is to be regarded as having become homeless intentionally. Section 196 frames the same definitions in regard to someone who is threatened with homelessness.

The duty owed to applicants who have a priority need for accommodation but have become homeless, or threatened with homelessness, intentionally is less than the duty owed to those who have a priority need for accommodation and have become homeless, or threatened with homelessness, unintentionally. This recognises the general expectation that, wherever possible, people should take responsibility for their own accommodation needs and ensure that they do not behave in a way which might lead to the loss of their accommodation.

Where a housing authority finds an applicant to be homeless, or threatened with homelessness, intentionally they have a duty to provide the applicant (or secure that the applicant is provided) with advice and assistance in any attempts he or she may make to secure that accommodation becomes available (or does not cease to be available) for his or her occupation. Before this advice and assistance is given, the authority must assess the applicant's housing needs. The advice and assistance must include information about the likely availability in the authority's district of types of accommodation appropriate to the applicant's housing needs (including, in particular, the location and sources of such types of accommodation). Authorities should consider what best advice and assistance the authority could provide, for example, providing information about applying for social housing, local lettings in the private rented sector, rent deposit schemes or housing benefit eligibility to help the applicant avoid homelessness or secure accommodation. Where such an applicant also has a priority need for accommodation the authority will also have a duty to secure accommodation for such period as will give the applicant a reasonable opportunity of securing accommodation for his or her occupation.

## **2.7 Local Connection**

When the council makes inquiries to determine whether an applicant is eligible for assistance and owed a duty under Part 7, it may also make inquiries under Section 184(2) to decide whether the applicant has a local connection with the district of another housing authority in England, Wales or Scotland.



Section 199(1) provides that a person has a local connection with the district of a housing authority if he or she has a connection with it:

- (a) Because he or she is, or was in the past, normally resident there, and that residence was of his or her own choice; or
- (b) Because he or she is employed there; or
- (c) Because of family associations there; or
- (d) Because of any special circumstances.

Where the council decides that a s.193 duty is owed to an applicant (i.e. the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and has a priority need) but it considers that the conditions for referral of the case to another housing authority are met, they may notify the other housing authority (*the notified authority*) of their opinion.

Notwithstanding that the conditions for a referral are apparently met, it is the responsibility of the notifying authority to determine whether s.193 applies before making a referral. Applicants can only be referred to another authority if the notifying authority is satisfied that the applicant is unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and has a priority need.

## **2.8 Advice & Assistance To Those Who Are Not Owed A S.193 Duty**

Housing authorities have a duty to ensure that an applicant is provided with advice and assistance to those whom it has decided is not owed a Section 193 duty. These require an assessment to be made of the housing needs of the applicant before advice and assistance is provided.

Among other things, the Secretary of State considers the assessment should identify any factors that may make it difficult for the applicant to secure accommodation for him or herself (for example, poverty, outstanding debt, health problems, disabilities and whether English is not a first language). In particular, housing authorities are advised to take account of the circumstances that led to the applicant's homelessness, or threatened homelessness, since these may impact on his or her ability to secure and maintain accommodation and may indicate what types of accommodation would be appropriate.

Often, even where there is no duty to provide accommodation, advice and assistance may include supporting the applicants to source accommodation. This could be in a hostel setting with one of our housing association partners (e.g. the New Haven). Financial assistance may also be provided where the applicant has secured accommodation but does not have the funds to pay the upfront costs required, or where the applicant has outstanding housing related debt, which excludes them from applying to join the Housing Register. Options are not restrictive and officers are encouraged to be innovative.

## **3. Details of what this means in Peterborough**

### **3.1 The Housing Needs Team**

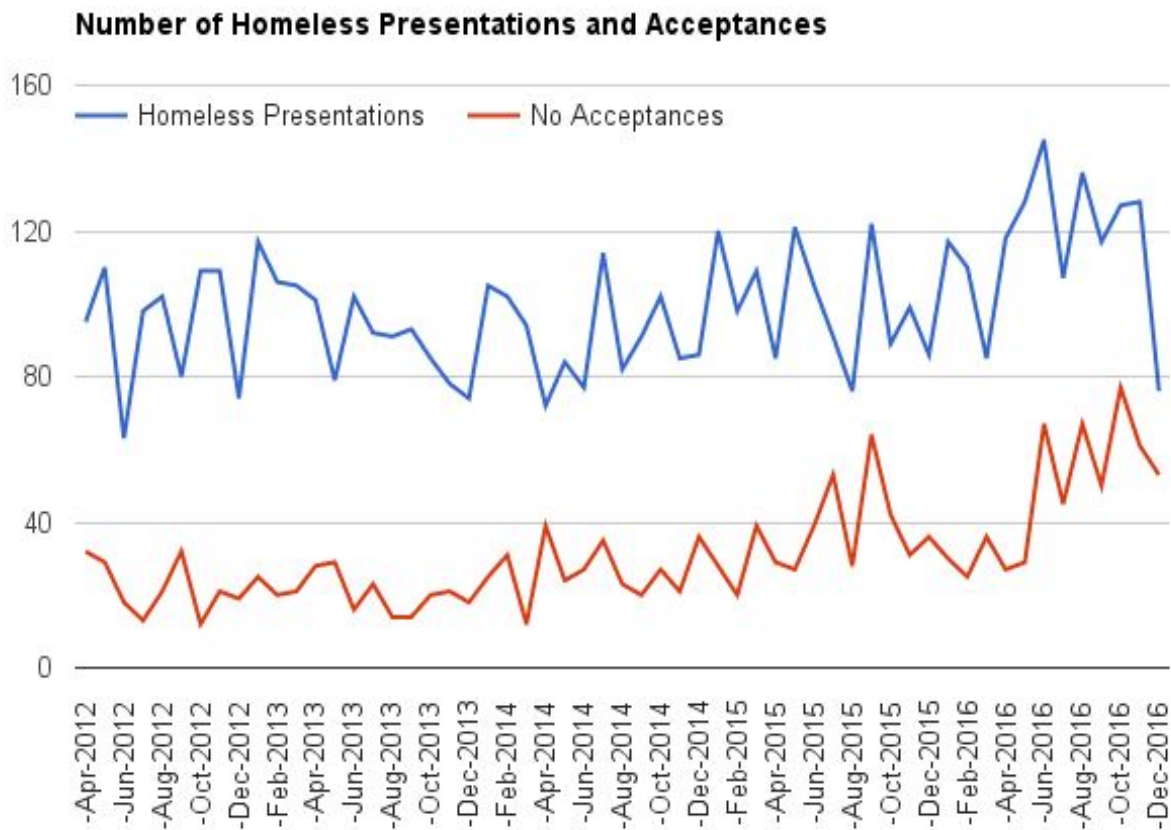
In Peterborough the Housing Needs service provides free advice via telephone (direct dial 01733 864064). In addition telephones are provided in the foyer of the council premises at Bayard Place for those who attend in person. Where a client is unable to communicate with the team because of language difficulties or a disability reasonable arrangements are made for face to face contact.

Many enquiries will be dealt with via telephone advice, however where there is a more complex issue, calls are referred to Housing Needs Officers who may make an appointment to see a client face to face. Housing Needs Officers operate an appointments system, which

can be pre-booked up to seven (7) days in advance; a number of appointment slots are held back for emergency situations (i.e. on occasions where a client presents as homeless on the day).

Over the last 5 years Peterborough has seen increasing demand on homelessness services. The number of homelessness declarations being made to the authority has been steadily increasing. In particular, we have seen increases in the number of presentations in 2016.

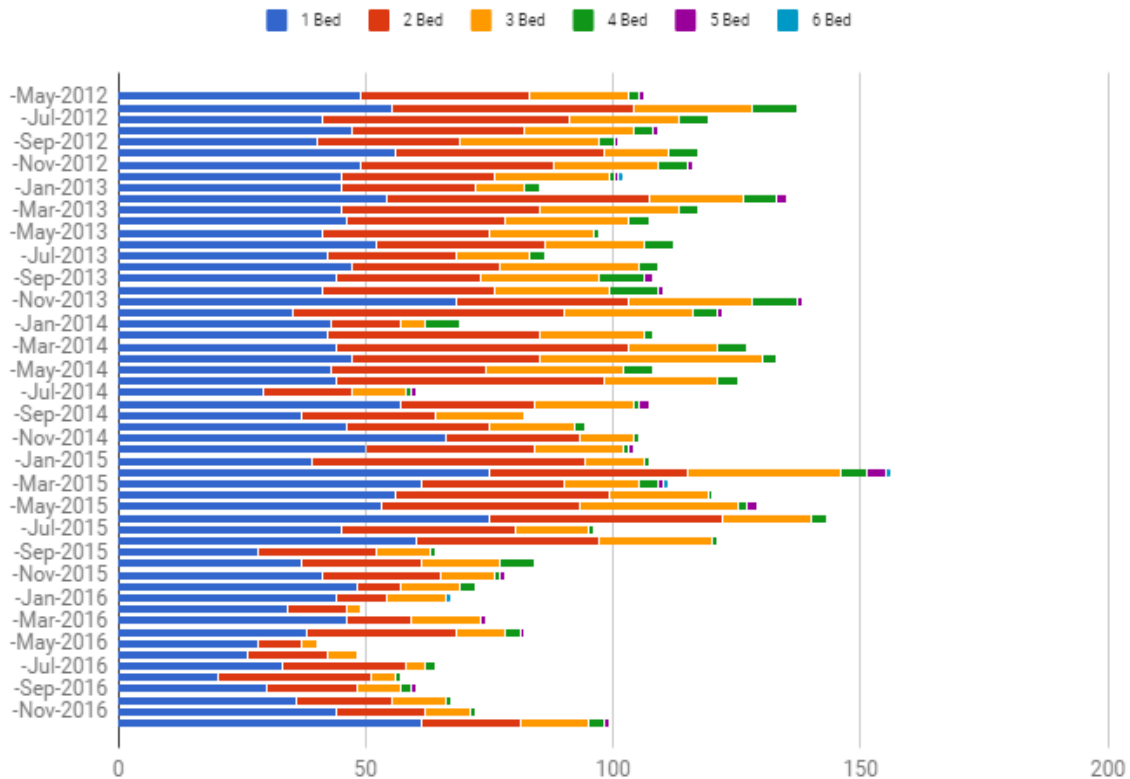
The graph below shows the number of homelessness presentations and the number of homelessness acceptances made by the Council month by month since April 2012:



While the increase in homelessness presentations has placed additional pressures on resources in the Housing Needs service, at the same time we have seen a reduction in the availability of accommodation with our partner social landlords.

The graph below shows the number of properties available for let through choice based lettings over the last 5 years.

### Number of Lettings through Choice Based Lettings



Generally, those households to whom the Council accepts a full housing duty will be allocated accommodation with a social landlord, however the Localism Act 2011 gave local authorities the power to discharge the full housing duty by securing suitable accommodation in the private sector.

The Council has previously been successful in utilising the private sector in preventing homelessness and discharging its homelessness duties; however recent increases in the rental costs of private sector accommodation, changes to tax rules for private landlords and a reluctance of landlords accepting households who will be in receipt of Housing Benefit has meant that our ability to discharge our homeless duties is more difficult.

The combination of an increase in the numbers of applicants being homeless, the reduction of available social housing and it being more difficult to access the private sector has resulted in households being accommodated in temporary accommodation for longer periods while we seek to find a permanent solution.

### 3.2 Making Arrangements For Temporary Accommodation

Section 188(1) imposes an interim duty on housing authorities to secure that accommodation is available for an applicant (and his or her household) pending their decision as to what duty, if any, is owed to the applicant under Part 7 of the Act if they have reason to believe that the applicant may:

- (a) Be homeless;
- (b) Be eligible for assistance; and
- (c) Have a priority need.

The threshold for the duty is low as the local authority only has to have a reason to believe that the applicant may be homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need.

The s.188(1) duty applies even where the council considers the applicant may not have a local connection with Peterborough and may have one with the district of another housing authority (s.188(2)). Applicants cannot be referred to another housing authority unless the housing authority dealing with the application is satisfied that s.193 applies (i.e. the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and has a priority need).

The council has an agreement with Cross Keys Homes, which is included in the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) agreement, to provide temporary accommodation to households who are determined to be owed a duty under sections 188 and 193 of the Act.

This is hostel type accommodation - consisting of seventy seven (77) rooms spread over five (5) hostels:

- Hope House, 71 High Street, Fletton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 8EW.
- 69 High Street, Fletton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 8EW.
- 72 London Road, Woodston, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 9BP.
- 15 South Parade, West Town, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE3 6BG.
- 10 The Crescent, Orton Longueville, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 7DT.

This is currently the primary temporary accommodation provision for households, but where this is fully occupied the council has to make use of bed & breakfast accommodation in the city. Longer stays in temporary accommodation has meant that a bottleneck has formed and the use of B&B type accommodation has increased.

There are three B&B providers in the city who the council work with; when these are full, the council will spot purchase accommodation with other providers such as Travelodge; while all efforts are made to secure accommodation in the city, this is not always possible and it may be outside of the city boundaries. At time of writing no homeless households are accommodated outside Peterborough.

Where B&B accommodation has been used in an emergency situation, applicants should be moved to more suitable accommodation as soon as possible. The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003 provides that B&B accommodation is not suitable accommodation for families with children and households that include a pregnant woman unless there is no alternative accommodation available and then only for a maximum of six weeks.

More recently the Council has entered into an arrangement with Stef & Philips Ltd to use accommodation at St Michaels Gate Peterborough for temporary accommodation for homeless households.

Once fully utilised the use of B&B accommodation should be reduced and the client's flow through temporary accommodation will change.

The flowchart below shows the previous journey for households who present as homeless and have a full housing duty accepted:



Talks are also ongoing with our partners with a view to increasing the number of self contained accommodation units for use for homeless households who are being accommodated in temporary accommodation for longer periods.

The flowchart below shows the new model journey for clients who present as homeless and are owed an accommodation duty:

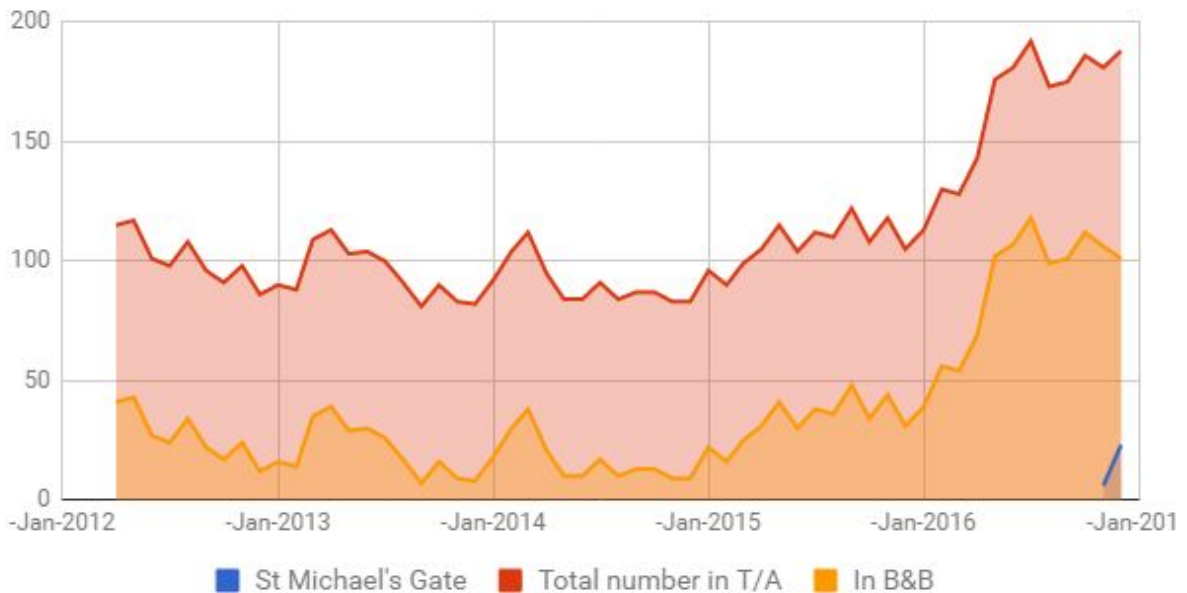


Applicants will often be transferred from B&B to hostel accommodation while investigations into their application are ongoing or while the council are seeking to discharge their Section 193 duty. Transfers often happen at short notice and require a coordinated response.

**4 Data showing the current use of TA by type**

The graph below shows the number of households accommodated in temporary accommodation awaiting a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting a permanent offer of accommodation.

**Total Accommodated in Temporary Accommodation**



## **5. Relevant legislation to deal with Rough Sleeping**

### **5.1 The Rough Sleeper Outreach Service**

The Rough Outreach Officer provides persistent outreach to individuals who find themselves sleeping rough. Rough sleepers can be categorised into three groups:

- New to the streets (flow);
- Entrenched long term rough sleepers (stock); and
- Those who have slept rough before (returners).

Each group requires a personalised approach and persistent outreach to develop a support plan to leave the streets. The flow can be dealt with by means of an assessment and support plan, accessing accommodation via the rent deposit scheme, supported housing, reconnection or interim accommodation routes. If engagement is swift, this group can be prevented from becoming long term entrenched rough sleepers.

The stock requires a long term support plan with the Outreach Officer assessing the mental and physical health of the individual alongside addictions. This group do not only require accommodation but need to access support to empower them to eventually make a decision to leave the streets. Their needs are both complex and multi-faceted and cannot be resolved by purely removing them from the streets.

Finally, returners have been previously supported but now find themselves rough sleeping again. This group can present considerable challenges as they may have lost faith in the support services and will often need an innovative and/or fresh approach that cannot be delivered solely by the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer. A multi-agency task and targeting group will be established to work on a long term plan to ensure that the individuals are eventually able to leave the streets.

The complexities of this role often mean that the Outreach Officer will need to draw on their housing expertise and be both innovative and persistent to bring about positive change and support individuals to leave street based lifestyles.

The task of empowering rough sleepers to leave the street cannot be resolved by enforcement and requires both time and housing expertise to ascertain the positive path that an individual should take. A heavy enforcement approach will often result in an individual disengaging further, leading to a sharp decrease in both their physical and mental health.

The chaotic nature of this client group means that it is difficult to engage with them via traditional routes and means. The need for flexibility is essential. This will often involve outreach being undertaken at unsociable hours of the day and night, and joint operations with the Police and Home Office amongst other agencies.

### **5.2 Reconnections service**

The Reconnections service provides the opportunity for persons not eligible for services to reconnect to their support networks in their country or town of origin. This service is provided to both EEA and UK nationals.

### 5.3 The Vagrancy Act

Section 4 of the Vagrancy Act 1824 deems it an offence to sleep rough in the open air, subject to certain conditions. Its use nationally has diminished significantly as the statute is old and the language and definitions contained within it are outdated. Crown Prosecution Service charging standards are stringent, and police nationally must apply proportionality tests when considering its use. Without significant aggravating factors, this power is unlikely to be used and there are recent examples of it being subject to legal challenge. The power has been repealed in Scotland and subject to review in England and Wales.

Where anybody, including people sleeping rough, breach other laws the police locally will take appropriate action using other legislation. For example, one current rough sleeper is subject to a Criminal Behaviour Order and was arrested for breaching this. Over the Christmas period three separate offences perpetrated by rough sleepers were dealt with by the police - a fight, drunk and disorderly behaviour and public indecency.

## 6. Relevant legislation to deal with Begging

Rough Sleeping in the most visible form of homelessness. In Peterborough persons can often be seen in the city centre with rucksacks, sleeping bags and blankets asking for money or simply with a vessel in front of them. The public perception is that these person are sleeping rough and this is particularly prevalent in the area from Bayard Place to Bridge Street. On most days, between 8-12 persons can be seen within this area. Unfortunately the vast majority of this group are not street homeless but are begging in order to sustain their street based activities and addictions.

Whilst an officer of the Local Authority can ask an individual to move if they refuse there is currently no further power that the officer has available to them. However, we have recently consulted on the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order for the city centre, which, if approved, will give PES officers the powers to enforce against aggressive begging. The PSPO is not designed to tackle or criminalise rough sleeping or to replace other mechanisms in use to engage with vulnerable people, but will assist in cases where begging is intrusive and persistent.

The proposed PSPO also gives officers powers to deal with other forms of ASB including alcohol-related ASB, people urinating or defecating in the street, and people breaching the busking code.

## 7. Details of all known rough sleepers in Peterborough today

Person	Gender	Nationality	Comments
1	Male	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Chronic alcoholic Evicted from Severe Weather Emergency Provision Refuses to engage and becomes aggressive
2	Female	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Alcoholic Has been evicted from Severe Weather Emergency Provision Have offered New Haven and support to access Private Rented Sector

3	Female	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Is in Priority Need Trying to engage with her and encourage her into temporary accommodation Leaving Care – Northants and very vulnerable
4	Female	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Only recently started to rough sleep Trying to encourage into services
5	Male	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Actively begs Trying to find accommodation – has a dog which he will not allow us to foster temporarily whilst he accesses temporary provision MIND engaging
6	Male	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Historic rough sleeper and beggar who was housed in 2013 Only recently returned to the streets on and off after being evicted Started to engage
7	Male	British	Sleeping rough outside the city centre Offered accommodation at the New Haven which he has refused twice Does not come into the City Centre in the day time
8	Male	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Chronic alcoholic Fails to attend appointments, fails to use accommodation when provided
9	Male	British	Sleeping rough in the City Centre Walking around asking people for money Refuses offer of a room at the New Haven Refuses to move on in the morning
10	Male	Latvian	Sleeping rough outside the city centre Ready to be removed Offered reconnection
11	Male	Lithuanian	Sleeping rough outside city centre Served IS151a (see below) No ID - offered reconnection
12	Male	Lithuanian	Sleeping rough along the embankment Will be served IS151a Not working however need to determine if any other right to reside Offered reconnection and homeless interview
13	Male	Polish	Sleeping rough in the city centre Served IS151a- ready for removal Reconnection offered Homeless appointment offered to establish eligibility



14	Female	Czech	Sleeping rough around the city centre Not eligible for assistance Cannot currently be removed as 2 children in care. Actively begging
15	Male	Lithuanian	Sleeping rough outside city centre Ready to be removed Offered reconnection
16	Male	Polish	Sleeping rough in the city centre Offered reconnection Alcoholic Ready to be removed

*IS151a - This second stage of paperwork served by the Home Office which notifies the EEA national that they will be removed should they continue to sleep rough and not exercise their treaty rights. Appeal paperwork is also served at this point.*

## 8. Data on volumes of rough sleepers

The table below shows the number of rough sleeper count submissions made to DCLG every year for the past 6 years:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
21	17	12	11	17	15	21

In 2014 of the 17 sleeping rough, 5 were female and 3 were EEA nationals  
In 2015 of the 15 sleeping rough, 1 was female and 3 were EEA nationals  
In 2016 of the 21 sleeping rough, 6 were female and 7 were EEA nationals

## 9. Details of services available to support rough sleepers

### 9.1 The New Haven

The New Haven Night Shelter is a direct access hostel on Towler Street, Peterborough managed by Axiom Housing Association. The shelter provides 18 single homeless persons with short stay supported accommodation. Each resident is allocated a support worker to assist them to access support services and establish a pathway plan to permanent accommodation.

This is supported by the private rented sector scheme that enables single persons to access rooms in shared accommodation via an interest free loan from the Housing Needs service. There is also an emergency crash bed for persons found rough sleeping.

### 9.2 Winter Night Shelter / Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP)

There is a humanitarian obligation on local authorities to do all they can to prevent deaths on the streets caused by winter weather. This includes the cold but may also include conditions such as high wind and heavy rain.

There is a need to have adequate provision to prevent rough sleeping at any time of year, however, the winter period often presents greatest risks to people's health. It also provides

increased opportunities to engage with entrenched rough sleepers and other hard-to-reach groups, as they may be more likely to accept support at this time of year.

Cold Weather Provision is provided with the following aims:

- To ensure that no one dies on the streets due to severe weather; and
- To ensure that every effort is made to engage individuals with support services during the winter months.

The cold weather provision operates from November until March. Periods of exceptionally cold weather are measured by three (3) consecutive nights or more when the temperature is below zero (0) degrees. This is monitored by the Housing Needs service and is checked daily on the Met Office website ([www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)).

When the provision is triggered, the council will contact voluntary and statutory partners by email to advise that SWEP is in place, providing contact details to inform of any rough sleepers. The council's website is updated accordingly with the details of who to contact if a member of the public comes across someone sleeping rough during the severe weather.

Each time the SWEP provision is activated, it will run for a minimum of three (3) nights.

### 9.3 Eligibility for SWEP

The council does not apply Part VII Housing Act 1996 criteria (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) that governs access to housing when deciding whether to assist an individual sleeping rough during the period of SWEP. This means that the individual concerned is not required to demonstrate eligibility for assistance (including whether they have recourse to public funds), priority need, intentionality or local connection.

The individual concerned must only:

- Be at risk if they continue to sleep rough during a period of severe weather; or
- Have nowhere to sleep indoors during the course of severe weather.

If a rough sleeper meets the above criteria they will be offered emergency shelter for the duration of cold weather. The shelter usually takes the form of a room within a supported housing project with both sleeping mats and bags.

Many entrenched rough sleepers may be wary of services and less likely to engage. The extreme cold weather increases the risk of death or serious illness to people who sleep rough. Given this, a refusal to accept assistance during such times may be grounds to trigger a referral to other services (such as a mental health assessment). The SWEP is visited on a regular basis by the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer and/or other members of the Housing Needs service.

While the temperatures in Peterborough currently do not continue to meet the SWEP criteria, we took the decision to open this provision on 20 December and it still remains open. This provision takes the form of a night shelter currently being provided in partnership with Axiom Housing Association.

The **Light Project Peterborough** was established in 2015 providing a Church based Winter Night Shelter for Peterborough utilising the Housing Justice rolling Church model. Working in partnership with Peterborough City Council and Axiom Housing Association the project aims to provide additional beds for rough sleepers during the colder months. For one night each week, 7 Churches from a variety of denominations (2 Anglican, 2 Methodist, 2 Baptist and Salvation Army) each provide an evening meal, bed and breakfast and support their guests to attend Housing Needs and work towards resolving their homelessness. The Winter

Night Shelter opened on 12 December 2016 and will run until 12 March 2017. Since its opening the shelter has provided 35 different guests a bed to sleep in. In 2015/2016 46 guests were provided with this assistance.

#### **9.4 Support available to rough sleepers suffering mental health issues**

Many rough sleepers will have complex needs that include poor mental health, substance misuse and a history of poor engagement with support services. The Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer is able to assist rough sleepers to access mental health services through their GP. This includes registering them with a GP and booking an appointment to be referred into services. Rough sleepers with complex mental health issues can be referred to a specialist service operated by MIND. This service primarily works with adults with mental health problems who in the past have found it difficult to access other support within the city. This service works closely with our Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer to encourage engagement and further enhance access into mental health services.

#### **9.5 The Chronically Excluded Adults Service**

In Peterborough, as in most cities in England, there are many individuals that experience a combination of problems such as homelessness, substance misuse, mental health problems and offending. Their multiple needs and chaotic lives mean that they can also face ineffective contact with services which result in significant costs for them and for wider society. A significant number of this cohort will find themselves rough sleeping.

This project in Peterborough is a partnership between Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. The service is part of the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) national network. MEAM is a coalition of charities representing homelessness, Mental Health and Criminal Justice service. The pilot project in Peterborough started on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and is due to end on 31st July 2017. This is funded through a successful bid to the Department of Communities and Local Government. However, there is currently no further funding available for this service beyond 31st July..

The chart below shows the true person centred approach adopted by the CEA Co-Ordinator, addressing the complex multi-faceted needs of this cohort. The Operational Group meeting has representation from all directly relevant services in Peterborough. This includes CPFT, Police, BeNCH CRC, Housing Needs, the drug and alcohol service (Aspire) and Adult Social Care, and Cambridgeshire CEA also attend to offer support and advice.

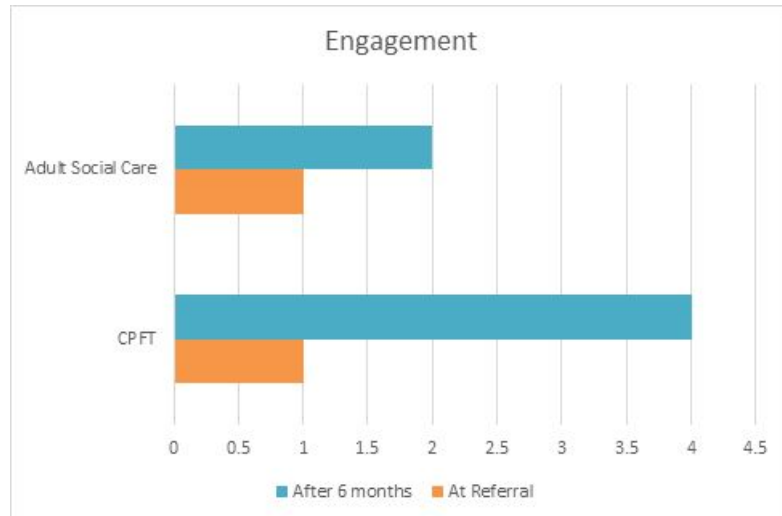
The Operational group discusses new referrals, case concerns and closures as well as monitoring the operational progress of the service and exchanging other relevant information as part of an effective multi-agency approach.



The table below shows the housing status for the 13 clients worked with to date, at the point of referral and at 6 months into the intervention. Those rough sleeping or in insecure or short term accommodation has fallen from 10 to 5. Those in more secure supported or independent accommodation has risen from 2 to 6. One person was in prison at the 6 month stage who CEA continue to work with.



The table below shows changes in engagement rates. Particularly significant is the increase in engagement with mental health services offered by CPFT. Where only one person was engaged at the referral point this has risen to 4 individuals.



## 10. Details of work we undertake where rough sleepers are not engaging

### 10.1 Rough Sleepers refusing to engage

There are a small number of rough sleepers who refuse to engage with services. This cohort may become subject to enforcement actions. Persons found rough sleeping who are from the EEA may be subject to administrative removal if they are not exercising their treaty rights, eligible for services and refusing an offer of reconnection.

### 10.2 Dispelling Myths

*“I can’t claim benefits as I am sleeping rough.”*

If you are entitled to work based benefits you can use the ‘care of’ address facility at Outside Links to make a claim.

*“There’s no help for people like me.”*

We pride ourselves on always making every rough sleeper an offer to leave the streets.

*“The Council can’t help me.”*

We have a dedicated officer to work with rough sleepers to ensure that they can access appropriate accommodation or be reconnected to their support networks.

## 11 Our current process from the point a rough sleeper is reported to us

Referrals are made from an array of sources including, but not limited to:

- Directly from members of the public
- Peterborough City Council’s online referral form
- Streetlink referrals
- Referrals directly from agencies such as Citizens Advice, MIND, Police and Immigration Enforcement

A site visit is conducted at the earliest possible opportunity by the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer to engage with the rough sleeper.

If the rough sleeper is not there, a note is left stating that they do not need to sleep rough and that they can access support by contacting housing needs. During periods where the

Severe Weather Emergency Provision is activated, the note also explains that they can access that service directly and gives information on how to do so.

If the rough sleeper is there then an assessment is made as to whether they are eligible and in priority need in accordance with the Housing Act (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). An assessment is also made on whether they need to be referred to other agencies such as MIND or Aspire.

If they are are an EEA national who is not in employment and not deemed eligible according to the Housing Act (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) then their details are forwarded to Immigration Enforcement. They are offered reconnection back to their home country. They are then served Minded to Remove notice requiring the rough sleeper to illustrate how they are exercising their treaty rights. If they are deemed not to be exercising their treaty rights then they are then served IS151A paperwork by the Home Office which will ultimately lead to them being administratively removed. If Severe Weather Emergency Provision is activated then they are encouraged to attend.

If they are eligible but would be non priority under the Housing Act (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002), then the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer will call the New Haven to see if the crash bed is available. If it is then the rough sleeper will be booked into the room whilst a clear housing pathway is created. This could include getting into supported accommodation, getting the next room at the New Haven or help accessing the Private Rented Sector.

If they are eligible but the crash bed is full then the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer would encourage them to go to the New Haven to access support in getting into the Private Rented Sector. A referral would be made to the New Haven to request that they are given the next room that becomes available. Numerous visits are conducted both early morning and in the day to reiterate what support can be given to the rough sleeper.

If the rough sleeper does not make contact with services and is not there, then a further site visit is undertaken by the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer. If a tent or other shelter is in situ a notice is pinned to it advising that it will be removed by a certain date. If the informant advises that the rough sleeper is only there at night then the police are requested to go to the site to make contact.

If no further contact is made, Amey are requested to clear the site if it is on Council land.

## **12 Annual Rough Sleeper Count**

Local authorities are required to submit an annual figure to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to indicate the number of people sleeping rough in the local area on a typical night. This figure can be achieved by conducting a count or estimate and enables local authorities to track progress, consider current service provision and new approaches if required.

Local authorities are required to use the *'Count and Estimates Toolkit: Estimates – Evaluating'* the extent of rough sleeping published by Homeless Link.

The definition of rough sleeping is provided by the Department of Communities and Local Government:

*People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus*

*shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or 'bashes').*

The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers. It does not include people who were rough sleeping in the area on a previous night or earlier in the evening but who were not there at the time of the count. It does not include people wandering around or empty sleeping sites.

Bedded down is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping. About to bed down includes those who are sitting in/on or near a sleeping bag or other bedding. The intention is to establish that they are or will be rough sleeping on the night of the count.

Research has found that in many areas, people seen drinking in the street or begging (even if they have a blanket or a sleeping bag) are not necessarily sleeping rough and they should not be included unless they are clearly bedded down or about to bed down at the time of the count.

A Lead Officer must be appointed to oversee the process and liaise with Homeless Link's Strategy and Partnership team for support and verification. The Lead Officer is responsible for deciding if a count or estimate will be conducted. An estimate is a single figure to represent the number of people thought to be sleeping rough in the local authority area on a typical night. It is informed by the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer and partner agencies. A count is a snapshot of the number of rough sleepers in the local authority area on a single night between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November. Either a count or an estimate will not record everyone with a history of rough sleeping within the local area but will provide an important snapshot of levels of rough sleeping on a particular night.

The count or estimate must take place between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November and be submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government by 15<sup>th</sup> December each year.

### **13 Rough Sleeper hotspots visited on the last rough sleeper count**

#### City Centre

- Hereward Tower
- Behind Westgate Church
- St Peters Arcade
- The Works doorway
- Behind the Town Hall
- Old Post Office doorway – Cowgate
- Midgate
- Underpass near the train station/PT building
- St John's Church
- Behind the museum
- Bayard Place - behind planters
- Ghost – New Road under porch
  
- Mitchells Sports Club - Fengate
- 85 Mayors Walk – Sugar Square Development – West Town
- Old DVLA site – Lincoln Road
- Potters Way embankment – Fengate

- Boardwalks
- Alma Road
- Bardney, Orton Goldhay
- Bushes at the bottom of Park Lane
- Chestnut community centre – Norman Road
- Orthodontics, Eastfield Road
- Wharf Road - all along to Sugar Way
- Central Park – near to train in children’s play area
- Mellows Close underpass
- Embankment Asda side heading away from town
- Key theatre embankment
- Old Court Mews
- Stanley Rec bushes
- Hampton Nature Reserve

#### **14 The Homelessness Reduction Bill**

The Homelessness Reduction Bill was tabled by Bob Blackman MP and had its first reading on the 29 June 2016. It has since had its second reading and was due to go to Committee stage on the 18 January 2017.

##### **The Bill’s aims**

The main thrust of the Bill is to refocus English local authorities on efforts to prevent homeless. While many authorities already do this, it would become a duty to prevent as opposed to the current duty to assist when homeless. The Bill is seeking to amend Part 7 of the *Housing Act 1996*. Its measures include:

- An extension of the period during which an authority should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days.
- Clarification of the action an authority should take when someone applies for assistance having been served with a section 8 or section 21 notice of intention to seek possession from an assured shorthold tenancy.
- A new duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness.
- A new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants.
- A new duty on public services to notify a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

More detailed information can be found in the parliamentary briefing paper:

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7736/CBP-7736.pdf>

##### **Impacts on services**

Should the bill be introduced in its current form there will be a resource impact locally. While we currently offer advice and assistance to all households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, for those who are not in priority need our duty currently ends after we have given advice on how the applicant can secure accommodation themselves.



The proposed changes would require us to formulate and work through an action plan with each applicant. This action plan would be owned by the advisor and the applicant and if followed effectively should result in the applicant not becoming homeless or being assisted in securing alternative accommodation before they have to leave their current home.

Where successful this would prevent the need for costly emergency accommodation and would have significant benefits in reducing upheaval for families who are faced with homelessness. However, there is a significant shortage of available accommodation both in the social and private sector. For certain households the chances of us securing alternative accommodation prior to a household becoming homeless is slim at best.

The initial version of the bill also included the proposal of placing a duty on all local authorities to provide emergency accommodation to all homeless households while their homelessness was being investigated and alternative accommodation was being secured. That includes households who would currently not be accommodated as they were not considered to be in priority need.

This proposal was not present in the bill's most recent form, but could be reintroduced before receiving Royal Assent.

While the proposals of the bill make perfect sense and no one working in this field would object to what is trying to be achieved, practically this would place a burden on the authority which would be very difficult to meet. The duty to provide temporary accommodation, particularly for single people, would mean an increase in the use of temporary accommodation and we would need to procure suitable accommodation for single people.

There is likelihood that in order to be successful in preventing homelessness we would need to have the ability to offer financial assistance to households in order to reduce arrears. While we offer this currently this would be extended to non priority groups.

This could be offered by way of a loan, similar to the current rent deposit scheme, but this would likely increase bad debt provision unless additional resource was focussed on debt recovery.

## **15 Homelessness Prevention Programme**

### **Prospectus**

The government has released £40m of funding to support local authorities and other agencies to formulate innovative ideas in order to improve homelessness provision for those who need it. The £40m has been split into three separate areas:

- £20 million for local authorities to pilot new initiatives to tackle homelessness in their area
- £10 million for targeted support for those at imminent risk of sleeping rough or those new to the streets

- £10 million in Social Impact Bonds to help long-term rough sleepers with the most complex needs

Trailblazer funding: This will provide £20 million of grant funding across 2016 to 2017, 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019. Local authorities are invited to bid either singularly, or in collaboration. This will give local authorities the resources to ramp up prevention and take new approaches to reduce homelessness, including:

- collaborating with other services to identify at-risk households, and target interventions well before they are threatened with eviction
- helping people earlier than the statutory 28 days when they are threatened with the loss of their home
- offering that help to a wider group of people than just those owed the main homelessness duty
- testing new, innovative approaches to preventing homelessness to help us build our evidence base on what works and test the effects of these approaches in different areas

Rough Sleeping Grant Funding: DCLG are providing up to £10 million to local authorities over 3 years: 2016 to 2017, 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019. Through the £10 million Rough Sleeping Grant Funding we will help those new to the streets, or at imminent risk of sleeping rough, by:

- reducing the flow of new rough sleepers to the street, through more targeted prevention activity aimed at those at imminent risk of sleeping rough - this will build on the No First Night Out pilot being delivered in the tri-borough of Hackney, Tower Hamlets and City of London
- helping new rough sleepers off the street and into independence, through more rapid crisis interventions and support to access and sustain move-on accommodation - this will build on the rollout of the No Second Night Out approach through our Homelessness Transition Fund

Rough Sleeping Social Impact Bond Funding: DCLG are providing up to £10 million of outcomes funding for locally commissioned Social Impact Bonds. Local authorities will be able to bid for an allocation of the funding to use to commission a Social Impact Bond within a geographic area.

This funding will then be paid out on outcomes achieved by named cohorts of individuals, including outcomes around:

- accommodation
- employment and education
- mental health

- substance misuse

Support will be provided for an anticipated 1,500 to 2,000 individuals through 5 to 10 locally commissioned Social Impact Bonds. These individuals will be long-term rough sleepers, or those entrenched within hostels and temporary accommodation, who we know tend to cycle on and off the streets.

### **Details of bids**

Peterborough have been successful with a joint bid in partnership with the other Cambridgeshire authorities under the trailblazer funding category to support the following initiatives:

1. Creation of a homelessness prevention hub, which will allow landlords and other agencies to highlight households at potential risk of homelessness. Referrals would be handled by a multidisciplinary team who would work collaboratively including the client to formulate client specific action plans in order to prevent their homelessness arising. *1 x FTE post to be based in Peterborough*
2. Introduction of a "Town Hall Lettings" initiative. We will work with private sector landlords in taking over the management of their properties. These properties would then be utilised by the council in support of households who are owed a homelessness duty. *1 x FTE post to be based in Peterborough covering Peterborough & Fenland*
3. Creation of a Private landlord liaison service. This would support landlords who were experiencing issues with current tenants and were contemplating taking eviction action. By acting as a mediator the aim of the service would be to resolve the issue in order to prevent the landlord from having to take eviction action.

A decision is to be made on where these posts will be hosted, but they will cover the whole of cambridgeshire.

Peterborough submitted an individual bid under the rough sleeping category to cover the following areas:

1. Expansion of current winter night shelter provision to be available for up to 2 individuals all year round. The aim of this is to prevent new rough sleepers from hitting the streets. This will be provided by Axiom Housing Association, based in one of their current support accommodation projects.
2. An additional resource to support rough sleeper outreach. There has been an increase in rough sleeping locally and more resource to tackle this will result in more outcomes achieved.

3. Tenancy sustainment support for those who have been helped to leave the street to prevent them from failing in their tenancy and becoming homeless again as a result.

The total value of the bid over the 3 years is as follows:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Support	£0	£7,500	£7,500
Staffing	£0	£119,403	£79,602
Other	£12,765	£7,449	£7,449
Total	£12,765	£134,352	£94,551

Unfortunately we were not successful in this bid for funding.

## 16 Summary of our work on empty homes

The number of long-term empty homes in Peterborough has shown a significant decline over the past 7 years, falling from over 800 in 2009 to 540 in 2016.

When dealing with empty homes and their owners, a voluntary way forward and solution is always preferred. Advice, assistance and incentives reduce the demand on council resources as well as the need to pursue enforcement action at a later date. Whilst in the vast majority of cases this is sufficient, there are occasions where owners cannot be traced or are simply unwilling to enter into voluntary dialogue. It is here where enforcement action needs to be considered. Although considered a last resort, Peterborough City Council has nevertheless been successful in their application of enforcement action in recent years with Enforced Sales, and in particular with Empty Dwelling Management Orders.

The Council has also seen success over the past five years in working with local registered providers and local investors, seeing a number of long-term empty properties returned to use through negotiation and subsequently used as affordable housing to meet local need and demand.

In the past 4 years

- Over 820 empty homes brought back into use with Council intervention
- The Empty Homes portion of the New Homes Bonus allocation has reached £3 million
- Successfully bid for £1.2 million HCA 'Empty Homes Funding Round 1' in partnership with Cross Keys Homes in March 2012. The Empty Homes Partnership was successful in returning 7 long term and problematic properties back to use, with a combined empty period of 36 years
- The Council and Cross Keys Homes were Highly Commended in 2013 for their

delivery of the Empty Homes Partnership

- Worked in partnership with the charity 'Hope Into Action' to secure HCA funding to bring back into use 4 empty homes in the city, now used to support ex-offenders and drug users during rehabilitation. Two houses were purchased in 2012 and a further 2 houses in 2014
- The Council were successful in securing 6 Empty Dwelling Management Orders applications to the Residential Property Tribunal between July 2014 and August 2016, two of which were revoked as they prompted the owner to take voluntary action.
- Building a successful relationship with investors and buyers of empty homes, resulting in the private sales of a number of short and long term empty houses
- Peterborough City Council's Empty Homes Officer Highly Commended in 2013 by the Empty Homes Network, the Country's foremost empty homes practitioner group
- Peterborough City Council's Empty Homes Officer named 'National Empty Homes Practitioner of the Year 2014' by the Empty Homes Network
- Peterborough City Council's Empty Homes Officer provided case and best practice advice to neighbouring authorities and set up the Eastern Region Forum for empty homes practitioners, bringing together expertise and advice sharing opportunities for all empty homes work in the region
- Peterborough City Council's Empty Homes Officer accepted onto the Empty Homes Network Executive Committee resulting in Peterborough playing a part in driving and implementing new policy and practice nationally

Given the shortage of available housing and current housing demand, the Council is introducing discretionary Empty Homes Assistance (up to a maximum of £20,000 depending on what refurbishment works are required) to act as an incentive to owners to put their empty properties forward to be used as accommodation for families in need of housing on the Council's Housing Register. This initiative will contribute to increasing housing supply in the City making more privately owned homes available to the Housing Needs Service.

To be considered for Empty Homes Assistance, the property must have been empty for a minimum of 6 months prior to application and be of the size and type of accommodation in need by families on the Housing Register. Working in a similar way to Empty Dwelling Management Orders, the Empty Homes Officer will assess the property and the potential refurbishment costs in order to determine the lease period which will be a minimum of 5 years. The Council will initially offer Empty Homes Assistance in order to carry out the necessary repairs and refurbishment which will be delivered by the Home Home Improvement Agency.

Empty Homes Assistance will be secured by attaching a legal charge to the property for the duration of the lease agreement from when the works are complete. If the property is disposed of during the lease period, the Council will seek repayment of the Empty Homes Assistance in full.

The property owner must enter into a lease agreement with the Council and a separate management agreement with the preferred management agent who will manage the property throughout the duration of the agreed lease period. The property owner must make the property available for lease to the Council for nomination to applicants in housing need for the duration of the agreed lease period and immediately after any remedial works have been carried out.

The Council will then offer a guaranteed monthly rent (based on the Local Housing Allowance rate) and will recoup the repairs and refurbishment costs from the monthly rent, minus any fees for the management of the property during the lease period. Any remaining monies at the end of the lease period will be paid back directly to the owner. At the end of the lease agreement the property is handed back to the owner in good repair in order to sell or continue renting it out.

## **17 Details of any work done with RSL and VCS partners**

Rough sleeping is a complex issue and cannot be resolved by simply providing accommodation. This cohort have in the past been encouraged to initially engage with services and then offered accommodation. We recognise that this is not realistic for some members of this cohort and therefore created a 'Housing First' bed with Axiom Housing Association. This bed enables a rough sleeper to be taken from the streets into the bed based at Fairview Court. Services are then wrapped around the individual to empower and encourage them into support services and on a pathway to addressing their physical and mental health needs alongside substance misuse.

An important element of the role of the rough sleeper outreach officer is to educate members of the public, partner agencies and faith groups with regard to the services offered to rough sleepers. Training is undertaken to over 300 members of local churches via the Light project on an annual basis and to police, faith based groups, and partner RSL's.

The Housing Needs services have a strong partnership with Axiom Housing Association providing service to single homeless persons. Partner projects also include the emergency crash bed and the Private Rented Sector scheme to support single persons into rooms in shared houses. This project was initially funded through a joint bid and then integrated into the services provided through the Housing Needs service and the New Haven Night Shelter.

<b>CABINET</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 7</b>
<b>20 MARCH 2017</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	<b>Councillor Irene Walsh</b> - Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital	
Contact Officer(s):	<b>Richard Kay</b> – Head of Service - Sustainable Growth Strategy <b>Charlotte Palmer</b> – Environment Transport and Future City Manager	Tel. 863795 Tel. 453538

## ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND ACTION PLANS (EAPS)

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>FROM</b> : Corporate Director of Growth and Regeneration	<b>Deadline date</b> : 12 April 2017
It is recommended that Cabinet recommends the 'Environment Action Plan: City-Wide' and 'Environment Action Plan: Peterborough City Council' documents to Council for adoption.	

### 1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Environment Action Plans (EAPs) have been prepared to outline how the city intends to deliver against the 'Creating the UK's Environment Capital' strategic priority.
- 1.2 A public consultation has taken place (details in this report) which has helpfully informed the final EAPs being brought to Cabinet for approval prior to consideration by Council.

### 2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek support for the EAPs by Cabinet and, if such support is forthcoming, for Cabinet to recommend the EAPs to Council for adoption.
- 2.2 The current citywide (i.e. greater than just the City Council) Environment Capital Action Plan (adopted April 2014) expired at the end of 2016. Separately, the Environment Capital Major Policy was adopted in 2010 and as such is becoming outdated and no longer fit for purpose. Work has been undertaken, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital, to replace all existing environment related policies and plans with two new environment policy documents. The first is simply an updated version of the existing citywide document and the second is a document that focuses on the policy position, achievements and targets specific to just the Council (and which feeds off the citywide version). All targets contained within the second document have been provided by the relevant officers and as such will be a true reflection of what the Council is able to commit to within existing resources and anticipated grant funding.
- 2.3 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.9: *To commission reviews by and determine any changes of policy proposed by the Scrutiny Committees making recommendations to Council about proposed changes to the Council's major policy and budget framework.*

### 3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>YES</b>	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	<b>20 MARCH 2017</b>
Date for relevant Council meeting	<b>12 APRIL 2017</b>	Date for submission to Government Dept	<b>N/A</b>

#### 4. ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND ACTION PLANS

- 4.1 The Creating the UK’s Environment Capital Major Policy was adopted in 2010. The city’s first Environment Capital Action Plan was adopted in 2014, which incorporated Council and city wide targets to 2016. A monitoring report detailing annual progress made against these targets is published on our website.
- 4.2 The two proposed documents, which are attached to this report in a recommended final format at Appendix B & C, are intended to set out the policy and plan for how the Council’s Strategic Priority will be achieved by different city stakeholders. This approach demonstrates how delivering the Priority makes sense economically, how it makes the city more resilient to change and how it improves our health and wellbeing based on the internationally recognised concept of One Planet Living. This is a vision of a sustainable world where people lead healthy, happy lives within their fair share of the earth’s resources covering ten different interconnected themes: Zero Carbon Energy; Sustainable Water; Land Use and Wildlife; Sustainable Materials; Local and Sustainable Food; Zero Waste; Sustainable Transport; Culture and Heritage; Equity and Local Economy and; Health and Wellbeing.
- 4.3 The documents are intended to be a true reflection of what the Council and city stakeholders are able to commit to within existing and anticipated resources and allow us to understand what these resources are. Crucially, whilst the documents are being led and developed by the Council, the city plan is owned by the city with the aim of delivering this shared priority. The adoption of these documents will allow us to move purposefully forward. The challenge thereafter will be to address how we collectively, as a city, fill the gap between 2020 and the 2050 vision. The documents are broken down into three key areas for each theme:

	<b>Environment Action Plan: City-wide 2016 - 2020</b>	<b>Environment Action Plan: Peterborough City Council 2016 - 2020</b>
<b>A vision to 2050</b>	Intended to be truly visionary. At this stage we do not know if this target is possible but after adoption we will continue to focus effort on undertaking more in depth research into each theme area establishing the trajectory and revising the vision if necessary.	This area remains the same across both documents.
<b>Context</b>	This section details some highlights of activities that have taken place throughout the duration of the first Environment Capital Action Plan.	This section includes facts that allow the theme to be seen in context and highlights some achievements by the Council so far. It also highlights existing policies and strategies adopted by the Council that directly or indirectly support the thematic area.
<b>Targets to 2020</b>	This section brings together targets that, in the vast majority of cases, already exist across partner organisations in the city.	These targets will be, in the vast majority of cases, those that exist already across the Council. If they are additional they focus on research or seeking funding which we aim to deliver by working with partners including local and national universities. Therefore these targets do not require additional resource. Note: This document also contains a clear and concise policy statement detailing the Council’s commitment.

- 4.4 Should Council decide to approve the EAPs subsequent action will focus on three key areas. The first will be to work with partners to help deliver the targets within the plans. The second action will include monitoring progress which will be delivered by gathering quarterly performance data and using this to produce an annual monitoring report which will be made publicly available. The third action will focus on continuing to work with



organisations across the city to identify further targets that can be included in the plan going forward.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1 A consultation took place on the draft EAP's between 23 January and 12 February 2017. In addition officers attended the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 16 January 2017. A summary of the comments received and proposed alterations arising as a result of comments received can be found at Appendix A.

5.2 In short, however, having considered carefully the comments received, there appears no reason to fundamentally amend the approach, vision and targets as were set out in the draft EAPs. Instead, just a limited number of refinements to the EAPs have been made, as detailed in Appendix A.

## **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

6.1 It is anticipated that Cabinet will recommend the Environment Action Plans to Council for adoption.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the Environment Action Plans. This is because the plans will help deliver the city's Environment Capital priority by providing clear strategic direction for the priority whilst creating a set of targets with which the progress of this priority will be measured.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 The alternative option of not producing a plan would mean that there would be no clear vision and targets associated with the Environment Capital priority making progress difficult to monitor and the effective allocation of resources difficult. Therefore the alternative option of not producing the Environment Action Plans was rejected.

## **9. IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Environmental – The plans have positive implications for the environment as they set out a strategic plan to deliver against the Environment Capital Priority.

9.2 Legal Implications - None.

9.3 Financial Implications - There are no immediate financial implications on the Council. Where applicable, all targets contained within the plans are currently planned to be achieved within existing resources and anticipated grant funding.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

10.1 The first Environment Capital Action Plan was adopted in 2014 and can be viewed on the Council's website. The link is:

<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/campaigns/environment-capital/>

## **11. APPENDIX**

Appendix A – Summary of Responses to the Environment Action Plan Consultation

Appendix B – Environment Action Plan: City-Wide 2016 -2020

Appendix C – Environment Action Plan: Peterborough City-Council 2016 -2020

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## Summary of responses to the Environment Action Plans Public Consultation

### Introduction

Consultation on the draft Environment Action Plans took place between 23<sup>rd</sup> January and 12<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Thank you to all of those who took the time to write to us with comments. 12 individual responses were received.

The role of this report is to provide a summary of what was said. This report does not summarise every point made, but rather it tries to capture the most important or frequently mentioned issues. However, rest assured that all comments received have been read and have been considered before the proposals for changes have been presented for final approval by Full Council.

We have kept the comments as anonymous as possible because what is said is more important than who said it. However, if anyone feels we have substantially misinterpreted views, then please let us know.

### Next steps

On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017, Cabinet will consider the final draft of the plans and if they are satisfied they will recommend that Full Council adopt them on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The challenge after adoption (and future reviews) will be to address how we collectively, as a city, fill the gap between 2020 and the 2050 vision.

### Comments relating to the Environment Action Plan: City-Wide document, targets to 2020

The consultation began by asking respondents if they were aware of other targets that exist in organisations across the city that could be included in the 'Environment Action Plan: City-Wide' document, or if there are any other targets they would like to see incorporated in the plan.

Targets to 2020	Summary of comments received and the council's response
<p><b>Zero Carbon Energy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce per capita CO2 emissions to 4.5 tonnes.</li> <li>2. Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) will provide energy advice support to 2,000 households.</li> <li>3. 100% of schools in the area will be offered specialist support to embed sustainability via PECT.</li> <li>4. Seek to take advantage of grant funding to increase energy efficiency and the uptake of renewable energy.</li> <li>5. Queensgate will reduce its energy use by a further 5%.</li> </ol>	<p>General comment on how achievable the targets are and whether there is available funding.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> Where applicable, all targets contained within the plans are currently planned to be achieved within existing resources and anticipated grant funding.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Water</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New homes to be of the highest water efficiency standard.</li> <li>2. Nenescape will deliver a programme of activity to protect and promote the nature and heritage of the Nene Valley.</li> <li>3. Deliver physical and behaviour change activities within the Werrington Brook</li> </ol>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>

<p>catchment to improve water quality.</p> <p>4. Anglian Water aim to reduce household water consumption to 125 litres per person per day and increase the number of Peterborough households on metered water supply to 86%.</p>	
<p><b>Land Use and Wildlife</b></p> <p>1. Increase the number of local sites in positive management to 82% and maintain going forwards.</p> <p>2. Plant 24,000 trees in specific parts of the city to increase canopy cover as part of the Forest for Peterborough project.</p> <p>3. Seek funding to develop a natural capital budget for the city.</p> <p>4. Subject to funding designate two new local nature reserves.</p> <p>5. Champion net biodiversity gain in new developments.</p>	<p>Comment on the use of tree planting for practical uses.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> The target is to plant trees in specific parts of the city to increase canopy cover.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Materials</b></p> <p>1. Support Peterborough's ambition to become a circular city through active collaboration, partnership and shared insight.</p> <p>2. In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough 31% of total aggregates sales will be comprised of secondary and recycled aggregates.</p> <p>3. 80% of Skanska's procurement will be from the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP area.</p>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>
<p><b>Local and Sustainable Food</b></p> <p>1. Achieve and maintain Fairtrade city status.</p> <p>2. Seek funding to introduce a scheme to identify and promote restaurants and food outlets that offer local and sustainable food.</p> <p>3. Actively promote the conservation and wise use of productive land.</p>	<p>Comments focussed on concern for the use of public money for target number 2 and whether the food outlets could do this themselves.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> The target is to seek funding - it could be that funding is sought from retailers themselves.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Zero Waste</b></p> <p>1. Build a new Household Recycling Centre.</p> <p>2. Seek funding to develop an action plan to reduce landfill of non-municipal waste (i.e. non-domestic).</p> <p>3. Seek to achieve zero waste to landfill.</p> <p>4. Queensgate will increase its recycling/reuse rate to 95%.</p>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Transport</b></p> <p>1. Increase the number active business travel plans to 97 and school travel plans</p>	<p>The comments received focussed on concerns about the lack of buses and/or taxi licencing and diesel cars referred to in the plans.</p>

<p>to 43.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Increase the number of people who walk and who cycle at least three times per week by 1% annually.</li> <li>3. Increase the percentage of people satisfied with cycle routes and facilities in the city from 58% to 62%.</li> <li>4. Seek to improve sustainable transport connections across the Greater Peterborough area.</li> </ol>	<p>Another comment suggested a target to allow concessionary fare Bus Pass holders to use their bus pass from 0900 hours.</p> <p>One comment suggested including segregated cycle lanes as a target as part of new housing developments.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> Target 4 seeks to cover all forms of transport and opportunities to make improvements, as appropriate, through the life of the plan. We continue to work with bus and taxi operators with regards to emissions and seek appropriate funding opportunities to support this.</p> <p>At present Peterborough City Council comply with the statutory minimum for Concessionary Fare Bus Pass holders. This allows pass holders to travel on any 'off-peak' services which effectively means that the only services that they are prevented from using are those that operate before 9.30am on weekdays. If the Council were to allow Concessionary Fare Bus Pass holders to travel on services before this time it is estimated there would be considerable, unbudgeted costs, for both the officer time required to develop the scheme, initial set-up and then ongoing carriage of eligible passengers.</p> <p>All new developments are required to undertake an assessment to ensure that appropriate provision has been made for safe, convenient and sustainable access to, from and within the site by all user groups in line with the city's Local Plan and Local Transport Plan (4).</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Culture and Heritage</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The council will seek to celebrate heritage in all public realm and highway design schemes across the city.</li> <li>2. Environmental charity PECT will give support to 10 community groups and engage 30,000 people a year on environmental issues.</li> <li>3. Through the Culture Strategy raise the profile of culture, increase participation and visitor numbers.</li> </ol>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>

<p><b>Equity and Local Economy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek opportunities to commercialise Share Peterborough in order to sustain and grow the B2B platform.</li> <li>2. PECT will engage with 1,000 organisations to make eco improvements and encourage 200 volunteers to get involved with their work.</li> <li>3. Development proposals of 15 or more dwellings should provide a minimum of 30% affordable housing.</li> <li>4. Peterborough will have an awarding university.</li> </ol>	<p>Comments suggested more needs to engage the business community/Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> We have contacted the Chamber of Commerce and will continue to work with them, as appropriate, through the life of the plan.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the proportion of physically active adults in Peterborough to match the performance for the rest of England.</li> <li>2. Nene Park Trust will increase the percentage of visitors expressing benefits to their health and wellbeing through visiting the park from a baseline of 90% in 2016.</li> <li>3. Reduce the proportion of children and adults with an unhealthy weight.</li> </ol>	<p>Comments received included a suggestion to include a target around homelessness.</p> <p>There was also a comment on the price of swimming and suggestion to maintain/designate more areas as parks.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> To include a new target – On a trend basis, seek to reduce the number of people who are declared homeless.</p> <p>Vivacity manage swimming facilities in Peterborough on behalf of the Council and offer competitive rates with discounts available.</p> <p>The new Local Plan puts in place measures to create new open spaces as well as maintain and improve existing provision.</p>

**Comments relating to the Environment Action Plan: Peterborough City Council document, targets to 2020**

Targets to 2020	Summary of comments received and the council's response
<p><b>Zero Carbon Energy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a CO2 baseline relevant to Fletton Quays and set a target for reduction relative to the city's growth aspirations.</li> <li>2. Maintain our 'Green' rating with Investors in the Environment.</li> <li>3. Fletton Quays office to meet BREEAM 'very good' standard.</li> <li>4. Take advantage of funding streams and the Honeywell Framework to increase energy efficiency/ renewable energy.</li> </ol>	<p>A general comment on whether the targets are driving ambition and achievement.</p> <p>Other comment is to have less LED street lights, replacing three lights with one LED light.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> The targets are, in the vast majority of cases, those that exist already due to the need to be achieved within existing resources. However, there are some additional targets in the plan which focus on research or seeking funding which we aim to deliver by working with partners including local and</p>

<p>5. Seek to procure 100% renewable energy.</p> <p>6. Upgrade 17,000 street lights to energy efficient LEDs</p>	<p>national universities, helping to drive ambition where possible. The plans aim to provide clear strategic direction whilst creating a set of targets with which progress will be measured, helping to promote achievement by internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>Overall, the investment (in LEDS lights) will save the council £8.6million over 20 years in saved energy costs. The upgraded lights are expected to achieve a reduction in the amount of energy used of up to 70 per cent. It is also thought that it will help to create safer, stronger communities by helping to reduce crime levels and the fear of crime. The parkway works will involve removal of some lights where appropriate and focus on lighting interchanges and slip roads. We are not looking to turn street lights off in residential areas.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Water</b></p> <p>1. Establish a baseline for the council's water consumption relevant to Fletton Quays and set a target for reduction.</p> <p>2. Seek to include SuDS in all appropriate public realm and highways design schemes across the city.</p> <p>3. Skanska will establish a baseline for water consumption and set a target to reduce potable water.</p> <p>4. Design the new offices at Fletton Quays to minimise water consumption e.g. low flow taps.</p>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>
<p><b>Land Use and Wildlife</b></p> <p>1. Increase the number of sites in positive management to 82% and maintain going forwards.</p> <p>2. Develop a biodiversity area at the Fletton Quays site.</p> <p>3. Skanska are seeking to increase overall biodiversity levels across all of their highway schemes.</p> <p>4. Subject to funding designate two new local nature reserves.</p> <p>5. Support Nene Park Trust to develop their city centre offer.</p>	<p>Comments focussed on the need for less intensive grass cutting of verges and the need for more areas designated as parks.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> Many areas of the city are now cut less frequently as agreed by councillors as part of the 2015/16 budget. Where there are open spaces we try to ensure there is sufficient space for recreation and these areas receive eight cuts a year. Many other areas now receive three cuts a year. Last summer (2016) residents raised concerns about the length of grass in certain locations and as a result the council decided to review whether the number of cuts it currently provides is sufficient.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Materials</b></p>	<p>A comment suggested the council aims to use</p>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support the city to develop circular economy approaches and ascertain the feasibility of becoming the UK's first circular city.</li> <li>2. 80% of Skanska's procurement will be from the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP area.</li> <li>3. Develop a sustainable procurement policy and seek to increase opportunities for local SME's in our supply chain.</li> <li>4. Seek to minimise the environmental impact of new ICT</li> </ol>	<p>recycled paving slabs.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> This is something that we are currently exploring. For example, Skanska are in the process of looking at recycled materials such as asphalt which incorporates a % of recycled plastic. In a broad sense this is also covered by target 1 (becoming a circular city).</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Local and Sustainable Food</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek funding to introduce a scheme to identify and promote restaurants &amp; food outlets offering local and sustainable food.</li> <li>2. 100% of the food purchased by Skanska will be Fairtrade and/or locally sourced.</li> <li>3. Skanska will introduce food growing areas for staff.</li> <li>4. Promote local and sustainable food to employees through the annual 'Boost your Wellbeing' campaign.</li> </ol>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>
<p><b>Zero Waste</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Skanska will divert 95% of waste from landfill and will work with their supply chain to minimise waste.</li> <li>2. Baseline the council's waste relevant to Fletton Quays and develop a target for reduction.</li> <li>3. Run an annual zero waste week for staff.</li> <li>4. Continue to offer used battery collection at key council offices.</li> </ol>	<p>Comments related to home composting facilities for new homes and to encourage home composting over the brown bin. Also not to supply larger black bins where there is less than a certain number of adults.</p> <p>Making it clearer that the 10% increase in recycling was for certain areas (included in the achievements section of the plan).</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> The Council does encourage home composting on the brown bin section of the Council website as an option for recycling garden waste. This will also be included in the resident's action plan. Families of five or more people are able to apply for a larger black bin.</p> <p>The wording of this achievement already makes it clear that it only applies to some areas.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Transport</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to seek funding to support citywide sustainable transport initiatives.</li> <li>2. Undertake an annual staff travel survey.</li> <li>3. Decrease the number of employees</li> </ol>	<p>The comments received focussed on better school transport, later bus services in rural areas and segregated cycle lanes.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b></p>



<p>traveling to work in single occupancy cars by 5% from a baseline of 64%.</p> <p>4. Skanska will reduce the number of work-related single occupancy car journeys by 70% over the life of their contract.</p>	<p>The Environment Action Plan: City Wide document includes a target to increase the number of school travel plans to 43. As part of Local Transport Plan 4 the Council's objective is to also 'engage with all Peterborough schools supporting individual travel needs to increase sustainable and active travel on the school journey'. The Council recently invested an additional £100,000 in subsidised bus services. A Cross Party Working Group was established and recommended that improved services should be concentrated in the Fengate area to support access to employment as well as the evening economy in this area.</p> <p>The Environment Action Plan: City Wide document also has a target to 'seek to improve sustainable transport connections across the Greater Peterborough area'.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Culture and Heritage</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek to celebrate heritage in all public realm and highway design schemes across the city.</li> <li>2. Refurbish two listed rail buildings and develop the mill as a new hub for culture and the arts at Fletton Quays.</li> <li>3. Continue to work with local stakeholders to be able to offer discounts to local events, venues and companies for Peterborough City Council staff.</li> <li>4. We will promote environmental initiatives as appropriate.</li> </ol>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>
<p><b>Equity and Local Economy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek to promote the uptake of apprenticeships.</li> <li>2. Support work placements and work experience opportunities, as appropriate, across the organisation.</li> <li>3. Continue to pay the Peterborough Living Wage.</li> <li>4. Maintain the Disability Confident accreditation.</li> <li>5. Seek to actively participate in Share Peterborough.</li> <li>6. Produce an Environment Action Plan for residents.</li> </ol>	<p>Comment to include to 30% affordable housing target in the PCC plan as well as the city plan.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> Because this target is already captured in the city plan there is no need to repeat here.</p> <p>No change to the targets.</p>
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lead implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016/19 and relevant metrics.</li> </ol>	<p>No comments</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> N/A</p>

<p>2. Continue 'Healthy Peterborough' campaign.</p> <p>3. Continue to deliver the annual 'Boost your Wellbeing' campaign to staff.</p> <p>4. Consider supporting staff who wish to volunteer for a Peterborough community project one day each year.</p> <p>5. Develop and roll out a programme of agile working.</p>	
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### Comments on a Residents Environment Action Plan

Respondents were then asked a question on a potential 'Residents Environment Action Plan'. One of the targets within the 'Environment Action Plan: Peterborough City Council' document is to develop an Environment Action Plan for residents. The question asked respondents whether there were any targets they would like to suggest people in Peterborough could aim to undertake in order to become more sustainable.

Theme	Summary of comments received and the council's response
<b>Zero Carbon</b>	No comments
<b>Sustainable Water</b>	No comments
<b>Land Use and Wildlife</b>	<p>Comment that this is a sensible area for the council to set a target for residents as it is one where it interacts with residents so can most easily influence behaviours.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> This comment will be taken into account when developing a Resident's Environment Action Plan.</p>
<b>Sustainable Materials</b>	No comments
<b>Local and Sustainable Food</b>	No comments
<b>Zero Waste</b>	<p>Suggestion to include home composting</p> <p>Making it clearer that the 10% increase in recycling was for certain areas (included in the achievements section of the plan).</p> <p>Comment that this is a sensible area for the council to set a target for residents as it is one where it interacts with residents so can most easily influence behaviours.</p> <p><b>Council response:</b> To include in a Residents Environment Action Plan.</p> <p>The wording of this achievement already makes it clear that it only applies to some areas.</p> <p>This comment will be taken into account when developing a Resident's Environment Action Plan.</p>
<b>Sustainable Transport</b>	<p>Comment that this is a sensible area for the council to set a target for residents as it is one where it</p>

	interacts with residents so can most easily influence behaviours. <b>Council response:</b> This comment will be taken into account when developing a Resident's Environment Action Plan.
<b>Culture and Heritage</b>	Comment that this is a sensible area for the council to set a target for residents as it is one where it interacts with residents so can most easily influence behaviours. <b>Council response:</b> This comment will be taken into account when developing a Resident's Environment Action Plan.
<b>Equity and Local Economy</b>	No comments
<b>Health and Happiness</b>	Comment that this is a sensible area for the council to set a target for residents as it is one where it interacts with residents so can most easily influence behaviours. <b>Council response:</b> This comment will be taken into account when developing a Resident's Environment Action Plan.

#### **Response to attending an informal local group to discuss green issues**

Respondents were then asked if they would be interested in attending a local forum to discuss green issues. 50% of those who completed the survey expressed an interest in this, suggesting that there is some appetite for such a group.

#### **Additional amendments**

The following targets/achievements have also been amended to the draft plans in order to ensure the most up to date information is included at the time of recommending the plan for approval.

<b>Current target/achievement</b>	<b>Proposed amendment/comments</b>
Seek to procure 100% renewable energy.	This was discussed recently as part of the budget setting process and it was agreed not to proceed any further.
Peterborough currently produces around 90,000 tonnes of waste per year, around 45% of which is currently recycled.	Peterborough currently produces around 90,000 tonnes of waste per year, around 45% of which is currently recycled. Our goal is to achieve in excess of 65% recycling by 2020.

Finally, a glossary style document will be developed to sit alongside the Environment Action Plans online in order to provide a definition of key terms and/or scheme names within the plan.

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# Environment Action Plan: City-Wide

This plan highlights the targets of different stakeholders working together in Peterborough.

Theme / 2050 Vision	Achievements to date	Our targets to 2020
<p><b>Zero Carbon Energy</b></p> <p>No net carbon emissions from energy consumption, achieved through high energy efficiency and renewable energy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peterborough's per capita CO2 emissions have reduced from 8.1 (2005) to 5.7 tonnes (2014).</li> <li>We have the 4th highest number of domestic solar PV installations in Great Britain. More than 500 homes have taken advantage of a free solar PV scheme saving an average of £200.</li> <li>Charity PECT's Eco Framework for schools helps embed knowledge of sustainability issues into classes. 97% of schools in Peterborough currently deliver eco education activities.</li> <li>The Vista housing development in Peterborough city centre was highly commended in the 'Best Low or Zero Carbon Initiative' category at the Housebuilder Awards in 2015.</li> <li>Queensgate has reduced its energy consumption by 45% over the last 5 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce per capita CO2 emissions to 4.5 tonnes.</li> <li>Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) will provide energy advice support to 2,000 households.</li> <li>100% of schools in the area will be offered specialist support to embed sustainability via PECT.</li> <li>Seek to take advantage of grant funding to increase energy efficiency and the uptake of renewable energy.</li> <li>Queensgate will reduce its energy use by a further 5%.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainable Water</b></p> <p>We will have high quality water environments, the annual risk of flooding will be less than 1 in 100 in the urban area and we will each use 80 litres of water or less daily.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council's Flood and Water planning guidance is promoted by the Environment Agency as best practice.</li> <li>The Werrington Brook Improvements programme has delivered two stretches of physical river improvements and has seen around 200 hours of volunteer activity.</li> <li>The Water Innovation Network has over 50 members who are aiming to drive innovation in the water industry, led by Allia, Anglian Water and Opportunity Peterborough.</li> <li>Anglian Water's water saving home visits have helped households reduce their water use by up to 50 litres per day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New homes to be of the highest water efficiency standard.</li> <li>Nenescape will deliver a programme of activity to protect and promote the nature and heritage of the Nene Valley.</li> <li>Deliver physical and behaviour change activities within the Werrington Brook catchment to improve water quality.</li> <li>Anglian Water aim to reduce household water consumption to 125 litres per person per day and increase the number of Peterborough households on metered water supply to 86%.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Land Use and Wildlife</b></p> <p>A network of naturally diverse, wildlife-rich, accessible places which are valued and enjoyed locally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forest for Peterborough has planted a total of 93,609 trees in Peterborough, half way to the project target of 180,000.</li> <li>The Boardwalks Local Nature Reserve has reopened following replacement of flood-damaged bridges and walkways and is now managed by charity Froglife.</li> <li>Peterborough's Buzzing is an exciting new Heritage Lottery Fund funded project led by Buglife in partnership with the council to transform a number of urban green spaces into wildflower meadows supporting a range of plants and insects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of local sites in positive management to 82% and maintain going forwards.</li> <li>Plant 24,000 trees in specific parts of the city to increase canopy cover as part of the Forest for Peterborough project.</li> <li>Seek funding to develop a natural capital budget for the city.</li> <li>Subject to funding designate two new local nature reserves.</li> <li>Champion net biodiversity gain in new developments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainable Materials</b></p> <p>All building materials purchased in the city will be from sustainable sources and wherever possible sourced locally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peterborough launched its ambition in November 2015 to become the UK's first circular city.</li> <li>Peterborough DNA's Smart Supper event in 2015 challenged young people to come up with innovative solutions to circular city challenges.</li> <li>Peterborough Reuse, an organisation that received kick-starter funding from Peterborough DNA, takes used coffee hessian and jute sacks from Mastroast, a local roasting and packing firm, and turns them into shopping bags.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Peterborough's ambition to become a circular city through active collaboration, partnership and shared insight.</li> <li>In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough 31% of total aggregates sales will be comprised of secondary and recycled aggregates.</li> <li>80% of Skanska's procurement will be from the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Local and Sustainable Food</b></p> <p>80% of food consumed will be produced and processed within 100 miles of the city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FoodCycle, a national charity that combines volunteers, surplus food and spare kitchen spaces to create tasty, nutritious meals for people at risk of food poverty and social isolation, has launched in Peterborough with support from Cross Keys Homes.</li> <li>The Green Backyard is working in partnership with Parsnips and Pears to offer fresh, locally grown veg boxes delivered direct to the door for homes in and around Peterborough.</li> <li>Metal Peterborough's Harvest Festival in 2015 brought 500 residents together for dinner.</li> <li>There are 1,450 allotments in the city covering an area of 367,630m3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve and maintain Fairtrade city status.</li> <li>Seek funding to introduce a scheme to identify and promote restaurants and food outlets that offer local and sustainable food.</li> <li>Actively promote the conservation and wise use of productive land.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Zero Waste</b></p> <p>Annual household waste will decrease to 250kg per person and 100% will be recycled, reused, composted or recovered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Re-Use facility reprocesses and reconditions electrical goods for recycling and resale into the community, aiming to divert both large and small electrical items from landfill.</li> <li>The city's Energy Recovery Facility formally opened in March 2016 and can process up to 85,000 tonnes of waste per year providing electricity to power over 16,000 homes.</li> <li>The 'Love Peterborough: Love your Community' recycling rewards scheme has seen recycling increase by up to 10% in some areas of the city.</li> <li>The weekly food waste service has been improved by providing free bin liners to residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a new Household Recycling Centre.</li> <li>Seek funding to develop an action plan to reduce landfill of non-municipal waste (i.e. non-domestic).</li> <li>Seek to achieve zero waste to landfill.</li> <li>Queensgate will increase its recycling/reuse rate to 95%.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainable Transport</b></p> <p>A pedestrian, public transport and cycle first city and 90% of all journeys will be zero emission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peterborough Travelchoice work with schools, businesses and residents to encourage more people to reduce their reliance on cars and instead walk, cycle, use the bus and car share.</li> <li>Personalised Travel Planning in businesses resulted in a 3.2% increase in car sharing, 10% increase in cycling, 21.1% increase in walking and a 42.2% increase in public transport use.</li> <li>Over 1300 pupils in the city received Bikeability training in 2015.</li> <li>Skanska is now using a GPS system in all of its fleet to encourage efficient fuel consumption and better green driving techniques.</li> <li>The council is delivering a £500k grant from the DfT to promote sustainable transport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number active business travel plans to 97 and school travel plans to 43.</li> <li>Increase the number of people who walk and who cycle at least three times per week by 1% annually.</li> <li>Increase the percentage of people satisfied with cycle routes and facilities in the city from 58% to 62%.</li> <li>Seek to improve sustainable transport connections across the Greater Peterborough area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Culture and Heritage</b></p> <p>We will be recognised as a high quality culture and heritage destination with active residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Arts Festival and the Heritage Festival each attract over 30,000 visitors annually.</li> <li>Flag Fen now hosts eight prehistoric Bronze Age log boats, found near the site at Must Farm.</li> <li>The Cathedral has received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for £2.4 million to enable them to celebrate their 900th anniversary.</li> <li>The Green Backyard have, over the last 6 years, delivered hundreds of sessions on arts, crafts, gardening and confidence building to over 1,000 people.</li> <li>Voluntary group Nene Coppicing &amp; Crafts formed together with the aim of connecting people with the natural and cultural heritage of woods and to help revive ancient skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council will seek to celebrate heritage in all public realm and highway design schemes across the city.</li> <li>Environmental charity PECT will give support to 10 community groups and engage 30,000 people a year on environmental issues.</li> <li>Through the Culture Strategy raise the profile of culture, increase participation and visitor numbers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equity and Local Economy</b></p> <p>A 'high skilled / low poverty' economy aided by the highest concentration of environmental businesses in the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peterborough was awarded Smart City of the Year in 2015, beating competition from cities such as Moscow, Dubai and Buenos Aires.</li> <li>Peterborough DNA's Smart Supper programme asks young people to develop innovative approaches to solve city challenges.</li> <li>Over 8,000 net new jobs have been created in the last 6 years and net business creation is 43% above the UK average. Peterborough is also one of the UK's most innovative cities.</li> <li>83% of Queensgate's stores took part in its Growing Greener initiative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to commercialise Share Peterborough in order to sustain and grow the B2B platform.</li> <li>PECT will engage with 1,000 organisations to make eco improvements and encourage 200 volunteers to get involved with their work.</li> <li>Development proposals of 15 or more dwellings should provide a minimum of 30% affordable housing.</li> <li>Peterborough will have an awarding university.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>We will live longer, healthier, more fulfilling lives, with health equality for all residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 8,000 people have run over 300,000km as part of Peterborough's Park Run.</li> <li>Total attendances in Vivacity's sport and physical activities stands at over 1.5m per annum.</li> <li>Sailability, a volunteer-led initiative, offers disabled people the opportunity to go sailing. With just 6 participants in 2006, now more than 150 people with physical or learning difficulties regularly enjoy this social outdoors activity at Ferry Meadows.</li> <li>Inspire Peterborough promotes sport/leisure activities for disabled people and their carers.</li> <li>Multi-agency Partnership Boards are delivering the Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy (2016/19).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the proportion of physically active adults in Peterborough to match the rest of England.</li> <li>On a trend basis, seek to reduce the number of people declared homeless.</li> <li>Nene Park Trust will increase the percentage of visitors expressing benefits to their health and wellbeing through visiting the park from a baseline of 90% in 2016.</li> <li>Reduce the proportion of people with an unhealthy weight.</li> </ul>



# Environment Action Plan: Peterborough City Council

We are committed to environmental leadership, decision-making and continuous improvement. We will achieve this by:

Theme / 2050 Vision	Context, achievements and supporting policies	Our targets to 2020
<p><b>Zero Carbon Energy</b></p> <p>No net carbon emissions from energy consumption, achieved through high energy efficiency and renewable energy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2015/16 the council generated 645,126 KWh of renewable energy. In addition, the Energy Recovery Facility has generated 53,000MWh of renewable energy per annum.</li> <li>All council employees are required to take a mandatory sustainability e-learning module.</li> <li>369 homes have benefitted from external wall insulation across the city.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Carbon Management Action Plan, adopted 2010</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a CO2 baseline relevant to Fletton Quays and set a target for reduction relative to the city's growth aspirations.</li> <li>Maintain our 'Green' rating with Investors in the Environment.</li> <li>Fletton Quays office to meet BREEAM 'very good' standard.</li> <li>Take advantage of funding streams and the Honeywell Framework to increase energy efficiency/ renewable energy.</li> <li>Upgrade 17,000 street lights to energy efficient LEDs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainable Water</b></p> <p>We will have high quality water environments, the annual risk of flooding will be less than 1 in 100 in the urban area and we will each use 80 litres of water or less daily.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a single year the council's estate uses approximately 256,946m3 of water.</li> <li>The council were highly commended in the leadership category of Anglian Water's 'We Love What You Do' Business Awards in 2014.</li> <li>Peterborough's SuDS team were highly commended in the Institution of Civil Engineers awards for delivering a regeneration scheme tailor-made for the community it serves.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, adopted 2016</a></li> <li>The Peterborough City Council Emergency Management Plan, adopted 2015</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline for the council's water consumption relevant to Fletton Quays and set a target for reduction.</li> <li>Seek to include SuDS in all appropriate public realm and highways design schemes across the city.</li> <li>Skanska will establish a baseline for water consumption and set a target to reduce potable water.</li> <li>Design the new offices at Fletton Quays to minimise water consumption e.g. low flow taps.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Land Use and Wildlife</b></p> <p>A network of naturally diverse, wildlife-rich, accessible places which are valued and enjoyed locally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council manages a rich asset of approximately 105,000 trees predominantly on highways, parks and open spaces, and an estimated further 1.4m trees making up the councils 280 hectares of woods, providing benefits to public health and the environment.</li> <li>Amey, on behalf of the council, maintain over 5.6million m<sup>2</sup> of grass (the same size as 800 football pitches).</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Peterborough's Biodiversity Strategy, adopted 2010</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of sites in positive management to 82% and maintain going forwards.</li> <li>Develop a biodiversity area at the Fletton Quays site.</li> <li>Skanska are seeking to increase overall biodiversity levels across all of their highway schemes.</li> <li>Subject to funding designate two new local nature reserves.</li> <li>Support Nene Park Trust to develop their city centre offer.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainable Materials</b></p> <p>All building materials purchased in the city will be from sustainable sources and wherever possible sourced locally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peterborough launched its intention in 2015 to create a circular city and is one of nine cities to be part of the Ellen MacArthur Circular Cities Network.</li> <li>The council, in partnership with Opportunity Peterborough have developed 'Share Peterborough' a platform that allows businesses to share products, services and resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Circular Peterborough Commitment, launched 2016</a></li> <li>Peterborough City Council's Procurement Strategy, adopted 2015</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the city to develop circular economy approaches and ascertain the feasibility of becoming the UK's first circular city.</li> <li>80% of Skanska's procurement will be from the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP area.</li> <li>Develop a sustainable procurement policy and seek to increase opportunities for local SME's in our supply chain.</li> <li>Seek to minimise the environmental impact of new ICT.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Local and Sustainable Food</b></p> <p>80% of food consumed will be produced and processed within 100 miles of the city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are 1,450 allotments covering an area of 367,630m3.</li> <li>The council supports Peterborough's aspiration to become a Fairtrade city.</li> <li>Via the council's internal catering contract with Amey, 75% of fresh produce and 40% of meat is from East Anglia - the majority of which is through school meals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Peterborough Local Plan, preliminary draft due for adoption 2018</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek funding to introduce a scheme to identify and promote restaurants &amp; food outlets offering local and sustainable food.</li> <li>100% of the food purchased by Skanska will be Fairtrade and/or locally sourced.</li> <li>Skanska will introduce food growing areas for staff.</li> <li>Promote local and sustainable food to employees through the annual 'Boost your Wellbeing' campaign.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Zero Waste</b></p> <p>Annual household waste will decrease to 250kg per person and 100% will be recycled, reused, composted or recovered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peterborough currently produces around 90,000 tonnes of waste per year, around 45% of which is currently recycled. Our goal is to achieve in excess of 65% recycling by 2020.</li> <li>Recycling rates have risen by over 10% in some areas of the city following the introduction of a recycling rewards scheme, 'Love Peterborough: love your Community'.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, adopted 2011</a></li> <li><a href="#">Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, adopted 2008</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skanska will divert 95% of waste from landfill and will work with their supply chain to minimise waste.</li> <li>Baseline the council's waste relevant to Fletton Quays and develop a target for reduction.</li> <li>Run an annual zero waste week for staff.</li> <li>Continue to offer used battery collection at key council offices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainable Transport</b></p> <p>A pedestrian, public transport and cycle first city and 90% of all journeys will be zero emission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>32% of council employees travel to work sustainably and of this 9% walk. This compares to Peterborough as a whole where 28% travel to work sustainably and 7% walk to work.</li> <li>14% of employees live within 2 miles of the office and 41% live within 5 miles making walking and cycling realistic commuting options.</li> <li>The council have pool bikes for staff use and operate the national CycleToWork scheme.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Long Term Transport Strategy, adopted 2011</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to seek funding to support citywide sustainable transport initiatives.</li> <li>Undertake an annual staff travel survey.</li> <li>Decrease the number of employees traveling to work in single occupancy cars by 5% from a baseline of 64%.</li> <li>Skanska will reduce the number of work-related single occupancy car journeys by 70% over the life of their contract.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Culture and Heritage</b></p> <p>We will be recognised as a high quality culture and heritage destination with active residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peterborough has over 1,000 listed buildings.</li> <li>Our city is diverse, with 20% of the population born outside of the UK.</li> <li>Flag Fen now hosts eight prehistoric Bronze Age log boats, found near the site at Must Farm.</li> <li>The Cathedral has received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for £2.4 million to enable them to celebrate their 900th anniversary.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Peterborough Culture Strategy 2015-2020, adopted 2015</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to celebrate heritage in all public realm and highway design schemes across the city.</li> <li>Refurbish two listed rail buildings and develop the mill as a new hub for culture and the arts at Fletton Quays.</li> <li>Continue to work with local stakeholders to be able to offer discounts to local events, venues and companies for Peterborough City Council staff.</li> <li>We will promote environmental initiatives as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equity and Local Economy</b></p> <p>A 'high skilled / low poverty' economy aided by the highest concentration of environmental businesses in the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5,500 households have taken advantage of the Peterborough Community Energy Tariff, saving an average £232 annually.</li> <li>All council employees have an annual performance and development review, identifying opportunities for training as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Visitor Economy Strategy 2015-2020, adopted 2015</a></li> <li>Volunteer policy, due for adoption 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to promote the uptake of apprenticeships.</li> <li>Support work placements and work experience opportunities, as appropriate, across the organisation.</li> <li>Continue to pay the Peterborough Living Wage.</li> <li>Maintain the Disability Confident accreditation.</li> <li>Seek to actively participate in Share Peterborough.</li> <li>Produce an Environment Action Plan for residents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>We will live longer, healthier, more fulfilling lives, with health equality for all residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new 'Healthy Peterborough' campaign which will help residents prevent and tackle common health problems and live healthily for longer is being led by the City Council.</li> <li>The council has an occupational health advisor and an employee assistance programme.</li> <li>The council coordinates an 'Our Space' employee panel to seek views and feedback on corporate change programmes and staff communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of supporting policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-19</a></li> <li>The council has a number of employee policies in place to support health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016/19 and relevant metrics.</li> <li>Continue 'Healthy Peterborough' campaign.</li> <li>Continue to deliver the annual 'Boost your Wellbeing' campaign to staff.</li> <li>Consider supporting staff who wish to volunteer for a Peterborough community project one day each year.</li> <li>Develop and roll out a programme of agile working.</li> </ul>

Signed by:

Councillor John Holdich OBE  
Leader of the Council

Councillor Irene Walsh  
Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment

Gillian Beasley  
Chief Executive



<b>CABINET</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No. 8</b>
<b>20 MARCH 2017</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Peter Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development.	
Contact Officer(s):	Anne Keogh, Housing and Strategic Planning Manager Caroline Hannon, Senior Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer	Tel. 863815 Tel. 863818

## THE DRAFT PETERBOROUGH HOUSING STRATEGY 2016 TO 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS	
<b>FROM</b> Corporate Director of Growth and Regeneration	<b>Deadline date:</b> N/A
It is recommended Cabinet support the Peterborough Housing Strategy as attached at Appendix A and agree to recommend it to Council for adoption.	

### 1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report is submitted to Cabinet following recent changes to Government's policy and procedures towards housing, and following the end of the current Peterborough Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015 and following the conclusion of the recent public consultation on the draft version of the Housing Strategy

### 2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to seek support from Cabinet for the attached Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021 and for Cabinet to recommend its adoption by Council.
- 2.2. On adoption the Peterborough Housing Strategy will be a major policy item for the Council. The Strategy sets out the Council's priorities and commitments for the period 2016-2021 for a broad range of Housing matters, including rural housing issues. The Housing Strategy has been widely consulted on to ensure that all stakeholders and partners have had an opportunity to influence the final report.
- 2.3. This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.9: *To commission reviews by and determine any changes of policy proposed by the Scrutiny Committees making recommendations to Council about proposed changes to the Council's major policy and budget framework.*

### 3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>YES</b>	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	<b>20 MARCH 2017</b>
Date for relevant Council meeting	<b>19 JULY 2017</b>	Date of submission to Government Dept.	<b>N/A</b>

## 4. KEY ISSUES

### 4.1 Style of the Strategy

4.1.1 The Strategy has been prepared as a document that is:

- Succinct, yet informative
- Written in an easy reading style that will make it accessible to a range of audiences
- Clear as to what the Council wants to achieve and what measures it will take to get there

### 4.2 Structure of the Strategy

4.2.1 The Strategy consists of four main parts:

- An introduction to the Strategy and a brief summary of the outcome of the consultation
- An overview of the National and Local legislative and policy context and the opportunities and challenges they presents for housing in Peterborough
- A set of four priorities, each with their own set of specific measures that the Council will implement to achieve them
- Key snapshot facts and figures and case studies relevant to identified priorities

### 4.3 The Housing Strategy Priorities

4.3.1 Priority one - **How we will support substantial and sustainable growth.** A range of key measures are identified to contribute to the delivery of growth in Peterborough. These include preparing a new Local Plan to ensure Peterborough is equipped to meet our growth needs, but also to ensure that growth is sustainable and responds to the demand for all types of housing including rural housing that is affordable to local residents. Supporting other important initiatives such as Peterborough's new housing Joint Venture with Cross Keys Homes which will deliver new housing of all types and tenures including affordable homes, and ring-fencing funding to support affordable housing providers to meet affordable housing needs in Peterborough.

4.3.2 Priority two - **How we will increase the supply of homes that people can afford.** The key measures identified in this section are; ensuring a balanced mix of property types and tenures particularly recognising the likely reduction in the provision of new rented affordable homes as a result in changes to national policy and funding priorities; ensuring the sustainability of rural communities through affordable housing provision to address local need; supporting community led housing solutions in rural neighbourhoods such as rural exception sites; and ensuring that allocation policies and tenure policies for social housing promote mixed and sustainable communities in the light of Government's social housing and welfare reforms.

4.3.3 Priority three - **How we will improve housing conditions to support health and wellbeing.** This priority focuses on utilising a range of preventative and proactive measures that will improve living conditions in Peterborough's existing homes. The key measures identified are tackling empty homes, addressing serious disrepair in the private sector through grants and through enforcement and providing aids and adaptations to enable frail elderly people and people with disabilities to remain safely in their homes. Maximising the energy efficiency of existing housing particularly in rural areas where there are a significant number of off-gas heated homes, is also identified as an important area for tackling indoor cold and fuel poverty.

4.3.4 Priority four - **How we will ensure that a range of supported and specialist accommodation is available.** The key measure identified to contribute to achieving this priority is ensuring the suitability of accommodation for households with specific housing needs both within the existing stock and within future stock by supporting the provision of a range of property types that will cater for different specialist needs. This involves

partnership working with key stakeholders including Adult and Children's services, private sector housing and care providers, affordable housing registered providers and health.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Housing Strategy and Enabling team (part of Sustainable Growth Strategy service area within the Growth and Regeneration Department) has coordinated the preparation of the Strategy in association with the relevant service areas within the Council, which reflect the wide range of issues which the Strategy covers. Therefore officers across the Council have been consulted with and involved in the development of areas of the Strategy that reflect their service areas. Following approval of the draft Housing Strategy at Cabinet on 7 November 2016, the document was subject to a 6 week public consultation process from 28 November 2016 to 16 January 2017.
- 5.2 Details of the consultation on the draft Housing Strategy were published on Peterborough City Council's Website
- 5.3 A wide range of key stakeholders including all Registered Providers with housing stock in Peterborough were sent electronic notification of the consultation period, electronic copies of both documents with a representation form and a link to Council's online consultation survey as a means of providing their feedback.
- 5.4 On completion of the consultation process, issues raised during that consultation period were fully considered and changes have been made to the Housing Strategy where appropriate. Further details of the consultation responses received can be found at Appendix B.
- 5.5 We received some useful comments and suggestions alongside considerable support for the Strategy including from key stakeholders. Sustainable Growth Scrutiny will further debate the post consultation version of the Strategy on 15 March.
- 5.6 In response to the consultation, the following notable amendments have been incorporated into the final version of the Housing Strategy:
- The National Context has been updated to reflect changes to Government policy and include the new Housing White Paper
  - Expansion of the commentary relating to the City Council's approach to tackling homelessness to reflect the successful bid for additional DCLG funding under the homelessness prevention trailblazer scheme.
  - Neighbourhood Plans have been acknowledged as key local documents that will inform and underpin the Housing Strategy and therefore added to the diagram illustrating the local policy context for Peterborough
  - Numerous other minor amendments and updates have been undertaken to the document as a result of feedback from the consultation and progress on national policy delivery and local delivery targets.

## **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

- 6.1 It is anticipated that Cabinet will support the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021. Subject to Cabinet approval, as this is a Major Policy Item, Council will be asked to formally adopt the Strategy.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The stated lifespan of the existing Peterborough Housing Strategy is from 2011 to 2015. Plans to renew the Strategy were delayed to await the outcome of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The major anticipated announcements have now been made by Government, so the timing to publish our own local housing strategy is very timely.

## 8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 A 'do nothing' option (where no new Housing Strategy is developed and the existing Housing Strategy is not updated) was considered. However such an approach would mean that Peterborough would have an out of date Strategy which did not reflect the significant changes to national housing and welfare policy and how we as a Council plan to respond to them. A refresh of the Strategy was necessary to ensure that we have a fit for purpose Housing Strategy.

## 9. IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 **Financial:** Preparation of the Housing Strategy only involved staffing resource costs that are met within existing budgets. However, the Housing Strategy, once adopted, will commit the Council to undertaking various activities in the future, each of which have varying cost implications. These tasks however, will have been agreed with the applicable service areas, and therefore it is anticipated that the budgets will be in place in order to achieve the measures proposed. As such, there will be no new financial implications directly arising from the Strategy, other than those already accounted for in existing budgets.
- 9.2 **Legal Implications:** Local Authorities in England are no longer required to have a Housing Strategy (Deregulation Act 2015 amendments apply) However, Local Authorities continue to provide Housing Strategy as they are a useful planning tool identifying the needs of diverse, changing and growing communities. The Equalities Act 2012 requires local authorities to consider the needs of diverse communities. The Housing Strategy will enable the Council to identify and plan for current and future needs
- 9.3 **Environment Capital:** Sections of the Strategy relate to environmental issues, such as tackling fuel poverty and bringing empty housing back into use. Overall, the Strategy can be regarded as having a positive impact on tackling environmental issues and our aspirations to create the UK's Environment Capital.

## 10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

- 10.1 None.

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A – Peterborough Housing Strategy
- 11.2 Appendix B – Consultation Responses



# Peterborough Housing Strategy

2016 to 2021



# Foreword

## by Councillor Peter Hiller

Welcome to our new Peterborough Housing Strategy. Housing has certainly been a topical issue both nationally and locally in recent times, and it is a widely shared view amongst political parties, businesses, pressure groups and other leading voices that we are experiencing a national housing crisis. It is not just about increasing the supply of homes, but also about ensuring that people can access decent homes at a cost they can afford.

Peterborough City Council recognises these national concerns, and is aware it needs to tackle its own housing challenges. This Strategy sets out our priorities for housing in Peterborough over the next five years. Our priorities are not that surprising:

- Supporting substantial and sustainable growth
- Increasing the supply of homes that people can afford
- Improving housing conditions
- Ensuring that a range of supported and specialist housing is available

There are common themes which also span across our headline local priorities: creating the UK's Environment Capital; improving the health and wellbeing of our residents; maximising access to a range of homes that meet the demands and needs of our diverse communities; and supporting our rural communities in addressing their particular housing issues.

We do not underestimate the challenges ahead, and we will work creatively and collaboratively with our partners to achieve the targets we have set ourselves.

We are aware that we are in a period of significant ongoing change nationally, and through this strategy we try to reflect how we are responding to these changes within the financial constraints that we, like all local authorities, must operate.

We know that we will see further legislative and social changes during the lifespan of this strategy. We will regularly review the priorities we have set monitor our progress with achieving them, to ensure that this document continues to reflect how we as a Council is responding to new housing agenda issues that affect the residents of Peterborough.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the shaping of this Strategy. A full draft of the Housing Strategy was published for public consultation between 28 November 2016 and 16 January 2017. A report summarising the key and most frequently raised issues arising from the consultation can be viewed at [www.peterborough.gov.uk/HousingStrategyConsultation](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/HousingStrategyConsultation)

We look forward to turning this Strategy into action and are committed to working with our partners to achieve the objectives set out in this document.

**Councillor Peter Hiller**

Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development



## The National Context

It is widely reported that we face a national housing crisis, with not enough homes being built to meet ever growing demand. The housing sector is undergoing significant changes and faces a number of new challenges and opportunities. National planning, housing and welfare reforms are impacting on traditional operating practices for local authorities, developers and social housing providers. Peterborough's policy and strategy documents including this Housing Strategy, will need to reflect these changes and respond to the challenges and opportunities that they present.

Below is a summary of the key legislative changes relevant to the housing sector and how they will impact on our capacity to respond to housing needs and demand in Peterborough.

While not yet legislation, it is worth mentioning that on the 7th February 2017, the Government published a new Housing White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market'. To monitor the delivery of this housing strategy, we will produce an annual report, which amongst other things will provide an update on changes in legislation affecting the housing sector. Therefore once these proposals become legislation we will update the Strategy to reflect these changes and their impact on our housing agenda.

### Starter Homes (Introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016)

Starter Homes are newbuild homes which are available for sale to first time buyers aged 23-39 at up to 80% of the open market value. They are a new form of affordable tenure and Local Authorities, subject to confirmation by government, will have a duty to promote the supply of Starter Homes. Further government regulation may require the provision of a specific number of Starter Homes on each new housing development.

**Opportunity:** the sale of new homes at 80% of open market value will make homeownership a more realistic possibility for some first time buyers.

**Challenges:** Not everyone is eligible or will be able to afford a Starter Home. Setting a minimum requirement for Starter Homes provision on all new sites is likely to reduce the

deliverability of other affordable housing products such as affordable rented housing and shared ownership housing.

### National Funding Programmes

The Homes and Communities Agency has a range of funding programmes aimed at enabling the development of new homes. These programmes include loan and grant initiatives and depending on the terms of the funding initiative, can be accessed by Registered Providers, Local Authorities, and large and small scale commercial developers. To reflect government's shift in focus towards home ownership, much of the funding allocated in the Affordable Homes Programme for 2016 -2021 was initially aimed at supporting new homes for Purchase. However in the Autumn Statement the Government opened up the programme, relaxing restrictions on funding so providers can build a range of homes including for affordable rent.

**Opportunities:** Funding is being made available to a wider range of housing providers with the aim of encouraging more bids to support delivering more homes.

**Challenges:** Despite the increased flexibility towards funding for rented homes, the government has stated that while it would allow affordable rented homes to 'underpin swift build out' it still expected 'the majority of expenditure' to support homeownership this continued focus on funding for home ownership tenures will result in a significant reduction in new homes offering rented tenures. This will reduce the housing options available to households unable to afford to buy. The reduction in the provision of affordable housing for rent is likely to impact on our capacity to meet the demand for affordable housing on the Housing Register.

### Vacant buildings credit (introduced by Ministerial statement November 2014 with legal effect from May 2016)

This guidance indicates that where a vacant building is brought back into use, or is demolished to be replaced by a new building, the local authority should offer the developer a financial credit equivalent to the existing floorspace of the building when the local planning authority calculates the affordable housing contribution which will be sought.

**Opportunity:** this policy provides an incentive for brownfield development on sites containing vacant buildings and may lead to more housebuilding.

**Challenges:** this policy will lead to a reduction in the number of affordable homes which can be delivered on sites. The reduction in the provision of affordable housing is likely to impact on our capacity to meet the demand for affordable housing on the Housing Register.

### Office to Residential Accommodation Conversion

Since 2013 there has been a permitted development right which allows developers to create residential units from offices without the need for a planning application, and

introduced new duties on local authorities to keep, and have regard to, registers of people seeking land for self-build and custom housebuilding. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 goes one step further and requires local authorities to grant sufficient suitable development permissions on serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self build and custom housebuilding in their area as evidenced by the register.

**Opportunity:** Individuals and groups wishing to build their own homes will have greater access to serviced plots to facilitate their projects.

**Challenges:** The duty on local authorities to grant sufficient permissions to meet demand evidenced on their register



without the requirement of affordable housing provision and other financial obligations. The temporary measures were due to expire on 30 May 2016 but have now been made permanent with effect from 6 April 2016. The permanent permitted development rights are subject to a new requirement for a noise assessment. This is intended to allow local planning authorities to consider noise mitigation from surrounding commercial uses.

**Opportunity:** Surplus to requirement office accommodation can be quickly converted into housing to help meet the current shortage of new homes.

**Challenges:** The newly converted homes may be in locations that lack the infrastructure and facilities associated with planned residential development.

The lack of planning obligations will impact on the number of affordable homes built and the funding available for infrastructure.

### Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding

The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

may be difficult to achieve, particularly when applicants can register a speculative interest on numerous different local authorities' self-build and custom build registers.

### Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood planning allows local residents and businesses to influence the development of their area by creating localised plans and policies which accord with the Local Plan. Drafting a Neighbourhood Plan is the responsibility of the community. However, local authorities have a responsibility to support communities who wish to engage in the neighbourhood planning process and have a responsibility to use the policies and orders produced.

**Opportunity:** Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping their area and provides the opportunity to set out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop.

**Challenges:** Communities may have unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved through neighbourhood planning given that the neighbourhood plan cannot supercede the policies of the Local Plan.



## Measures to tackle rogue landlords in the private rented sector (Introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016)

Local authorities will be able to apply for a banning order to prevent a landlord/letting agent operating for a minimum period of 12 months where they have committed certain housing offences (once regulations have determined what constitutes a banning order offence). Tenants or local authorities can apply for a rent repayment order where a landlord has committed certain offences. If successful the tenant may be repaid up to 12 months' rent. The Act also introduces a statutory requirement for a national database of rogue landlords/letting agents to be maintained by local authorities. Again regulations are awaited to determine what information should be included on the database.

**Opportunity:** increases the tools available to tackle poor housing management in the private rented sector and provides a means for local authorities to share data on rogue landlords through the national database.

**Challenges:** Largely relies on local authorities to take a proactive role so implementation may vary between areas depending on available resources.

## Right to Buy for Registered Provider tenants (Introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016)

The Right to Buy programme which has been available to local authority tenants since 1980 will be made available to tenants of Registered Providers. This will enable tenants to buy their home at significantly below market value, once they have been a tenant for a qualifying period of time. Following the sale, the landlord will receive compensation by way of a grant from Government which they must invest in the provision of new housing.

The roll out of this policy has been delayed following the extension of the initial pilot studies into a larger regional pilot. It is anticipated that the scheme will be rolled out Registered Providers nationally by 2018 at the earliest.

**Opportunity:** This policy will make homeownership a realistic possibility for many households who would otherwise be unable to purchase their own home.

**Challenges:** The sale of affordable homes could lead to a reduction in the number of homes which are available to new households in housing need. Although compensation for the loss of the home will be paid to landlords there may be strict criteria for spending the grant which could prevent the delivery of new homes. Additionally, there is no certainty that the homes which are sold will be replaced in the same location by a property which is the same size, type and tenure.

## Fixed term tenancies (Introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016)

Since 2012 changes introduced by the Localism Act have meant that local authorities and Registered Providers have had the option to offer fixed term agreements for new tenancies. From April 2016 the Housing and Planning Act 2016 now requires that all new local authority tenancies must be granted for a fixed term of between two and ten years. Indefinite term secure tenancies cannot be granted to new local authority tenants. Although there is no local

authority stock in Peterborough, some local Registered Providers already exercise their existing rights to offer fixed term tenancies to their tenants and this practice may become more widespread to reflect the new requirements for local authorities.

**Opportunities:** This policy is likely to reduce the incidence of households occupying accommodation when they could afford to secure market housing or when their existing home does not match their housing need. This is likely to free up and create greater turnover of social housing.

**Challenges:** Requiring tenants to move out of their homes could unsettle households and communities and result in households reapplying to the Housing Register for suitable alternative accommodation.

## Reducing regulation of social housing (Introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016)

Legislation has been amended to make it easier for Registered Providers to dispose of land and properties. It is no longer necessary to require the consent of the Social Housing Regulator prior to disposing of assets. Additionally the requirement for RPs to allocate the funds only as directed by the Social Housing Regulator, has been abolished.

**Opportunities:** Registered Providers will be free to dispose of properties which due to their condition or location are expensive to manage freeing up their resources.

**Challenges:** This policy allows Registered Providers to dispose of stock in locations where the local authority may consider there is a significant demand for housing. This could also lead to a loss of specific dwelling type which it would be difficult to replace leading to a reduced housing offer within the social sector stock. Additionally, if Registered Providers dispose of dwellings into the private sector due to their poor condition this does not support the Council in their efforts to improve the overall housing stock in the city. It may lead to a cost implication for the council if the condition of the property is not subsequently maintained and enforcement action becomes necessary at some future date.

## Rent reduction (Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016)

This policy requires Registered Providers to reduce social housing rents including social rents and affordable rents by 1% each year for four years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. There are some exclusions to this policy for certain types of supported accommodation including a one year deferral for applying this policy to supported housing rents until April 2017.

**Opportunities:** Reduced rent charges make social housing even more affordable for tenants.

**Challenges:** This policy has had a significant negative impact on Registered Providers' revenue meaning that there may be fewer resources available to invest in the management and maintenance of existing stock and the provision of new affordable homes.

## Housing Benefit capped at Local Housing Allowance rate for social housing tenants (introduced in the Comprehensive Spending Review – November 2015)

This policy will restrict Housing Benefit for social housing tenants to a maximum rate equivalent to the Local Housing Allowance

(LHA) rate from April 2018. The policy for general needs tenancies is applicable for all tenancies entered into from April 2016 onwards although the restriction in benefit will not apply until April 2018. The policy has been deferred for supported housing tenancies until April 2019 but will be applicable to all existing and new tenancies from this date. In response to concerns about the impact of this policy on supported housing provision, the government has said that an amount of funding will be devolved to local authorities to provide 'top up' funding to providers to reflect the higher than average cost of offering supported housing. The policy also limits the amount of Housing Benefit which can be paid to social housing tenants aged under 35 to a single room rate of benefit. This will mean that even if they are benefit dependent and in accommodation which has been deemed to be appropriate for their needs, they will not be able to have their full rent covered by Housing Benefit.

**Opportunities:** The policy may be an incentive for tenants to find work and reduce their reliance of Housing Benefit.

**Challenges:** As the LHA rate hasn't increased in line with market rates this policy is likely to mean that Registered Providers will have a significant reduction in rental income. Additionally, some more vulnerable people living in social housing who may experience difficulty finding employment, will have to make a contribution towards their rent from their own resources which may already be stretched. There is a high likelihood that the number of tenants with rent arrears will increase meaning a potential increase in evictions and homelessness. Supported housing is likely to be impacted by this policy with many providers expressing concern that the 'top up' funding to local authorities for supported housing will not be sufficient to support all schemes in the local authority area. In this event, a funding gap could lead to scheme closures with no suitable alternative accommodation available for tenants to move to and prevent new supported housing schemes from coming forward.

### Universal Credit (Welfare Reform Act 2012)

Universal Credit is a single monthly benefit payment to individuals, couples and families who are out of work or on a low income. It provides financial support for housing, children and childcare, people who have a disability or health condition

and people who care for disabled people. It replaces a range of other benefits including Housing Benefit. In Peterborough it is currently only applicable to new, single claimants but in due course it will be fully rolled out across the city.

**Opportunities:** Universal Credit will give people the support to move into work or to earn more. It is expected to make it easier to transition into short-term or part-time work than the current welfare system.

**Challenges:** Whilst Housing Benefit can be paid directly to landlords, Universal Credit will be paid directly to tenants. This places a greater responsibility on tenants to ensure their rent is paid on time and could lead to additional incidence of rent arrears where tenants do not have the relevant skills to manage their income. Additionally, Universal Credit is not paid for the first seven days following each claim meaning that one weeks rent will always go unpaid at the commencement of any Universal Credit claim.

### Benefit Cap (Welfare Reform Act 2012)

The benefit cap limits the total amount of benefits which each household (exemptions apply) can receive if they are working age and are entitled to benefit to support them to pay for their housing. A household whose income from benefits is assessed to be above the benefit cap will receive a reduction in the level of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit that they receive. The level of the cap is subject to change by regulations.

**Opportunities:** The policy may be an incentive for tenants to find work and reduce their reliance on welfare.

**Challenges:** This policy could lead to an increase in poverty levels as incomes are restricted. Any restriction on benefits is likely to lead to an increase in rent arrears as people may struggle to meet all of their outgoings potentially leading to an increase in evictions by landlords and homelessness.

### Under occupancy charge / Spare Room Subsidy (Welfare Reform Act 2012)

This policy (also known as Bedroom Tax) restricts the level of Housing Benefit which can be paid to social housing tenants by imposing an under occupation penalty where the tenant is



deemed to have larger accommodation than they need. The Council has adapted its Housing Allocations Policy to ensure allocations to social housing properties reflect the occupancy criteria of Housing Benefit.

**Opportunities:** This policy is likely to encourage some tenants who are living in larger accommodation than they need to downsize into accommodation which matches their need. This could result in a greater turnover of social housing stock allowing more offers of accommodation to applicants on the Housing Register.

**Challenges:** Tenants who cannot quickly be offered suitable alternative accommodation will have their Housing Benefit restricted and may not be able to meet the shortfall potentially leading to rent arrears, evictions and homelessness. The policy and the subsequent change to the Peterborough Allocations Policy has led to a significant increase in the demand for smaller properties and there is a mismatch between the size/type of housing which people need and the accommodation which is available. At present there is significant shortfall in the supply of 2 bedroom properties which has slowed down the turnover of households on the housing register and led to an increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation.

**The Care Act 2014**

The Care Act provides a statutory duty on local authorities to promote wellbeing and introduces a new universal eligibility criteria for accessing social care support services. A key focus of promoting welfare in the Act is prevention and re-ablement; investing in services that prevent the deterioration in individual's

welfare and supporting people to regain their independence through intensive short-term support. In terms of housing, local authorities are required as part of its statutory assessment of wellbeing, to consider the suitability of a person's living accommodation and to generally support access to appropriate housing and related services. This could range from ensuring access to housing benefits to ensuring access to suitable housing options, depending on the individual's needs.

**Opportunity:** The Act requires partner agencies to work together to respond to the needs of each individual accessing social care support services resulting in a more holistic approach that includes their housing needs and enabling the most efficient use of Council resources.

**Challenges:** The extended statutory requirements of this Act add to the pressure already on existing Council resources.

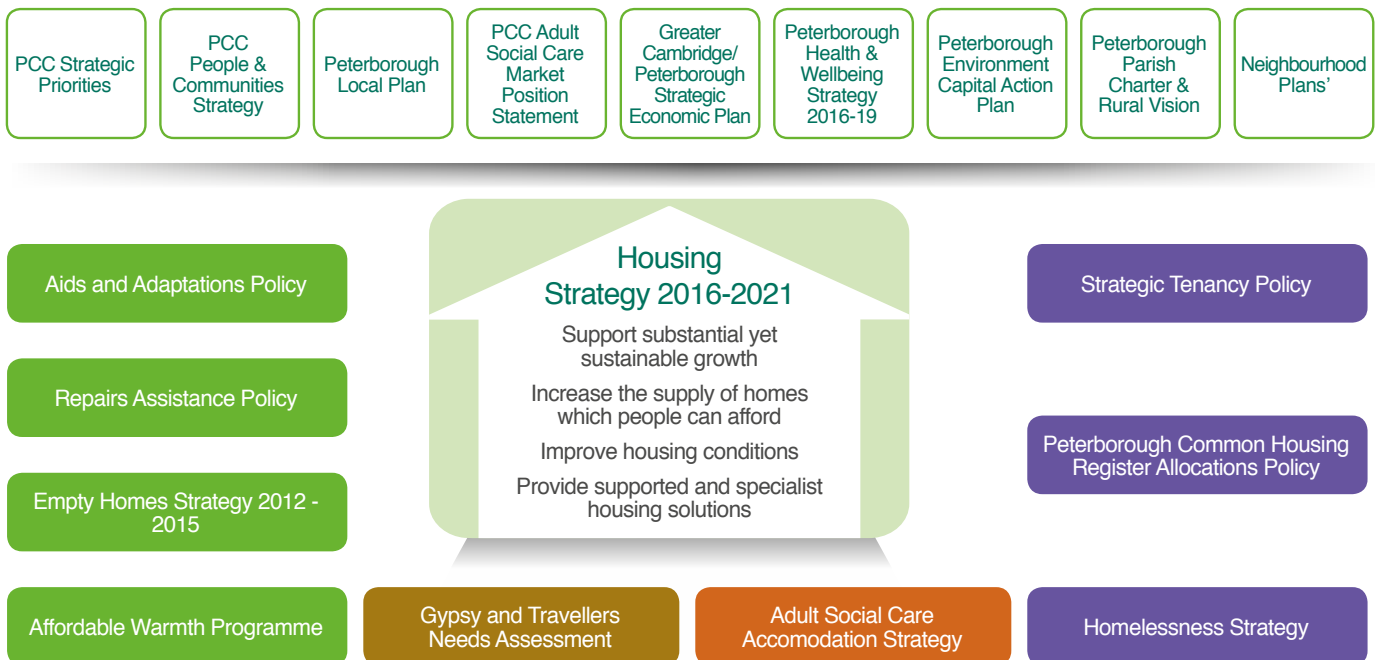
These significant and far reaching changes to national planning, housing and welfare policies have implications for a wide range of housing related issues and will impact on Peterborough's residents. Some measures will create opportunities for Peterborough to further its housing growth ambitions in particular with new market homes available for purchase. Other measures are likely to impact negatively on the delivery of new affordable homes and in particular, homes to rent. Some measures (once implemented through awaited regulations) will provide additional means of tackling poor housing management in the private rented sector, while other welfare reforms will present more challenges for households reliant on benefits in both the private and social rented sectors.

**The Local Context**

There are several key themes in local policies, strategies and plans that contribute and feed into different aspects of the housing agenda in Peterborough. This Housing Strategy forms a central part of a strategic framework in Peterborough. It forms the link between government policy and the local

strategic approach to addressing a range of housing related issues. The Housing Strategy is an overarching document that focuses and co-ordinates a number of other housing related strategies and plans enabling us to address the housing needs of the city.

The diagram below identifies the key local documents that inform and underpin this Housing Strategy:



# The priorities for Peterborough's housing agenda

This Housing Strategy identifies four key priorities for Peterborough's housing agenda. Each priority is underpinned by actions that the Council will take to deliver these priorities. They include actions that seek to maximise the potential benefits of the wide ranging housing reforms that the housing sector is currently undergoing, as well as actions that seek to minimise the possible adverse consequences.

The Council is committed to creating the UK's Environment Capital and the priorities of this strategy play a role in contributing towards the delivery of some of the themes within the Environment Capital Action Plan (ECAP). At the start of the related chapter for each of the four priorities of the Housing Strategy, we have identified the specific themes from the ECAP that the priority supports.

The ECAP is broken down into 10 themes which are set out below. They aim to provide a clear vision for how Environment Capital will be delivered. The themes each contain a vision to 2050 and interim targets to 2016 which detail how the city will change the way it does things to live within the resources of one planet by 2050. A new version of the ECAP is currently being prepared and is due to be published in early 2017. This will include interim monitoring targets to 2020.

Zero Carbon



Sustainable Water



Land Use and Wildlife



Sustainable Materials



Local and Sustainable Food



Zero Waste



Sustainable Transport



Culture and Heritage



Equity and Local Economy



Health and Wellbeing



## Priority One: Supporting Substantial and Sustainable Growth



### Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- The population is expected to increase from 183,961 in 2011 to 227,890 in 2036.
- 1005 new dwellings are needed each year to meet current and projected population growth.
- 4637 new homes were built between 2011 and 2016 of which 28% were affordable housing dwellings. 25% of these affordable homes were shared ownership dwellings.
- There are over 85,000 dwellings in Peterborough.
- 60% of all homes in Peterborough are owner occupied. Of these 1% are Shared Ownership homes

Peterborough continues to successfully grow as city. In January 2016 it was ranked as the third fastest growing city in the UK by population (1.5% annual growth) and as having the fourth highest housing stock growth (at 1.1% annually) with over 2,000 new homes built in the last 2 years. Housing demand is buoyant and it is likely this demand will continue.

We recognise that partnership working is key to supporting substantial and sustainable growth and we play an active role in the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The LEP's function is to help drive forward sustainable economic growth within its wider geographical area. It brings together local businesses, education providers,

voluntary organisations and social enterprises, and the public sector to tackle key barriers to growth such as infrastructure, housing, skills and employment and funding. Peterborough's ongoing involvement in the LEP forms an important part of our ambitious plans to secure greater inward investment and influence major infrastructure decisions that affect the area's economic wellbeing.

Devolution offers another potential opportunity to support Peterborough's growth through joint working. It incentivises collaboration between local councils by devolving power, funding and decisions currently made by central government.

In response to the government's devolution initiatives, all Cambridgeshire local authorities together with Peterborough and the GCGP LEP, have worked together to put forward a proposal to create a Combined Authority.

A Combined Authority can work together to make decisions based on their agreed priorities, not national priorities. If following public consultation, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough devolution deal is supported by residents and approved by government, it will secure decision-making powers and significant funding for areas such as housing, adult education and skills, transport and major rail and road infrastructure schemes. Devolution will provide Peterborough with a further opportunity to work in partnership with other local councils on strategic growth issues that are more effective when delivered together. The devolution proposal includes £170m towards delivering affordable housing (with £70m ring-fenced for Cambridge) as well as £20m per year, for 30 years to support infrastructure.

To ensure that Peterborough is equipped to meet our growth needs, the Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will set out how the city and surrounding villages will grow and develop. This will replace the Council's existing Local Plan which makes provision for 25,500 new homes and 22,000 new jobs in Peterborough between 2009 and 2026.



## Case Study: Supporting substantial growth

The Peterborough Investment Partnership have identified an area close to the South Bank of Peterborough, known as Fletton Quays, for development. Fletton Quays is the first of several city centre sites to be brought forward by the Partnership for redevelopment.

The planning application was submitted in September 2015 with outline consent approved in December 2015. The proposed development will deliver much needed homes, offices and a new leisure offering on the banks of the River Nene in the centre of Peterborough.

The plans include the refurbishment of the existing listed rail buildings, providing a link to the heritage of the site whilst also looking to meet the community's future needs.



The emerging Plan is setting new targets to provide 27,625 new homes and 22,024 new jobs between 2011 and 2036 and will allocate sufficient suitable land to meet our housing demand and our employment growth needs.

These targets in the emerging Plan are informed by evidence in the Peterborough Sub Regional Housing Market Assessment Update 2015 (SHMA) which takes into account factors such as population growth, household formation rates, migration and economic growth to calculate how many new homes and what types of new market and affordable housing is needed to meet the growth needs of our city.

We know that we need all types of housing in Peterborough from high value homes that will enable business leaders to live locally, to affordable housing that meets the housing needs of the most vulnerable groups. We also need to meet the demand for mainstream market housing in the form of homes for purchase and access to a quality private rented sector. Peterborough's rural community makes up 12% of our population and has its own housing challenges. In common with many rural areas, the housing offer is focussed more towards larger owner occupied homes with lower levels of smaller properties and affordable housing than in urban areas. A more balanced mix of property sizes and tenures is needed to meet local demand in many of Peterborough's village locations.

The Council has taken the decision to play a much greater role in the growth and regeneration of the city. In January 2015 the Council established its first development joint venture with a private sector partner. Through this joint venture we will realise more opportunities for growth in Peterborough by bringing forward surplus land in the

Council's ownership to deliver new office, retail, housing and leisure facilities to the city. The Peterborough Investment Partnership has already demonstrated the benefits of the Council's direct engagement in development delivery. Planning permission has been obtained for a landmark regeneration scheme on a site at Fletton Quays which includes the delivery of 280 homes. Construction is expected to begin on site towards the end of 2016.

Separately, in July 2016 the creation of a specifically housing focussed Joint Venture between the Council and Cross Keys Homes was agreed with the objective of delivering new housing of all types and tenures. This will shift the Council's role from 'enabler' to a direct developer of housing. A £20m capital budget has been set aside as potential funding for the Council to invest in the joint venture project and £14.6m of corporate affordable housing capital funding has been allocated specifically to support affordable housing provision in projects that the joint venture, Medesham Homes, will bring forward in Peterborough.

We will continue to support other affordable housing providers to meet affordable housing demand by investing our funds accumulated from developer financial contributions paid to the Council in lieu of providing on-site affordable homes. These funds are ring-fenced for the provision of affordable housing in Peterborough. To ensure we gain maximum benefit for the city from this resource, the Council will explore a range of options with affordable housing providers including grant allocations, loans or equity investment, to determine the type of support that the Council can offer on a case by case basis.



## Case Study: Peterborough's most eco-friendly housing development

Vista is the Morris Homes zero carbon housing regeneration development of 302 homes on the South Bank area of Peterborough, which includes 120 affordable homes owned by Cross Keys Homes.

These homes have been built using the latest cutting edge, sustainable technology, with energy efficient elements such as solar thermal panels, features to reduce water consumption and an advanced boiler that recovers waste heat - lowering homeowners' household bills. This site brings the largest development of its kind in the UK to Peterborough.



### To achieve substantial and sustainable growth we will:

- Keep the Local Plan up to date, with the emerging Local Plan seeking to deliver 27,625 new homes by 2036.
- Support good design which provides a mix of housing, including homes for purchase and affordable homes, to support a wide variety of households in both urban and rural areas and encourage community cohesion within neighbourhoods.
- Support employment growth by ensuring the right number of homes of the right tenure in the right places at the right price for workers.
- Influence the local housing market and contribute to the delivery of our priorities for new affordable housing through the Council's new housing joint venture partnership with Cross Keys Homes, Medesham Homes.
- Support housing providers in the delivery of our priorities for new affordable housing through funding allocations from the Council's affordable housing commuted sums.
- Support the Neighbourhood Planning system to ensure communities have a greater say on the future of the places where they live.
- Collaborate with the development industry to encourage housing sites to be brought forward quickly to improve supply and minimise the gap between the number of new households forming and new homes being built.
- Collaborate with the construction industry to deliver new homes using new techniques and technologies which deliver homes which better meet the objectives of the Environment Capital Action Plan.
- Continually review our understanding of the local housing market to ensure we respond to emerging trends and can meet future needs.
- Encourage the supply of prestige homes through the planning process to support the strategy for long-term economic growth and regeneration in Peterborough.

## Priority Two: Increase the supply of homes which people can afford



### Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- 1211 new affordable homes have been built since 2011 of which 75% have been homes available for rent.
- 20% of all housing is in the social sector.
- Average property prices are lower than the regional and national average.
- Average earnings are below the regional and national average.
- A higher than average proportion of the population are in lower skilled occupations.
- In rural areas, housing need as a proportion of supply is ten times higher than it is in the urban area of the city.
- 40% of households are unable to afford to buy a home on the open market.
- 620 additional affordable dwellings are needed each year to meet current and future housing need.
- The number of households in temporary accommodation is increasing nationally and locally.
- The number of households accepted as being statutorily homeless is increasing nationally and locally.
- Since 2011 2273 new applicants applied to join the Housing Register. 1547 applicants were accepted as homeless. 2096 people were prevented from becoming homeless

The population of Peterborough is expected to rise from around 184,457 in 2011 to 227,890 in 2036. With this increase in population comes a range of opportunities and challenges for housing provision. Everyone needs a home to live in at a price which they can afford and it is a priority of this Housing Strategy to ensure that as Peterborough grows the range of new housing which is built meets the range of needs of new households. The emerging Peterborough Local Plan will set a target for 27,625 new homes to be built by 2036 and 22,024 new jobs created. Average income in Peterborough is below the national average and house prices are also lower than the national average. However, the SHMA indicates that around 620 Peterborough households a year will be in housing need because they are unable to afford private rented housing or purchase a market dwelling. We recognise that measures must be taken to ensure the availability of housing which is affordable for these households.

Tackling empty homes is another means of increasing the supply of housing available to residents. We are committed to reducing the number of empty properties in the city, and dealing with the issues associated with long-term empty homes. Homes that lay empty for long periods are a waste of a scarce resource, and we recognise that more use has to be made of the existing housing stock. We aim to utilise the existing housing stock, whilst reducing the impact of empty homes on neighbouring residents, and highlighting the benefits of reuse to the vacant property owners.

As has already been identified, recent planning, housing and welfare reforms are likely to reduce the supply of new affordable homes for rent. New measures such as the 'Higher Rents for High Income Tenants' policy and the 'Housing Benefit cap to LHA rate' may also restrict the ability for existing tenants to afford their accommodation. There is already a higher proportion of residents in Peterborough living in deprivation than the average for England and around 22% of children and young people in Peterborough are currently living in poverty.



## Case Study: Bringing empty homes back into use

The Council successfully applied for and Empty Dwelling Management Order on a property in 2014. The property was refurbished to an extremely high standard under the supervision of the Care & Repair team, and has been let to tenants since completion.



The Council's costs associated with the refurbishment will be recouped through the rental income, and the property returned to the owner after a seven year period.

Although around 20% of stock in Peterborough is affordable housing, the number of households accepted as 'statutory homeless' resulting in a duty for the Council to offer them temporary accommodation and assistance with re-housing, is higher than the average for England, despite the national picture also showing increases. According to DCLG statistics compiled from local authority returns, on 30th June 2016 the number of households in temporary accommodation in England had increased by 9%, when compared to the figures from 12 months earlier. The number of households being accepted as statutorily homeless also showed a significant increase nationally: for the quarter between 1 April and 30 June 2016, acceptances were up 3% on the previous quarter and 10% on the same quarter of the previous year.

Although we work extensively with households to try and prevent homelessness by providing advice and assistance on their housing situation and alternative housing options, the number of households accepted as statutory homeless increased from 251 in 2013/14 to 440 in 2015/16 and there is currently a significant number of households in temporary accommodation. Research indicates that when people are forced to move in to temporary accommodation their health can suffer. The uncertainty of their situation, often combined with poor living conditions, impacts both physically and mentally on individuals and families.

In January 2017 Peterborough and the other Cambridgeshire Local Authorities secured funding of £736,000 to help them develop more effective ways of tackling homelessness. The funding comes from a new £20 million "Trailblazer" fund set up by the Government to establish "a network of ambitious areas across England" aimed at tackling the root of the problem.

The areas that have been selected to pilot the new approach will look to engage with a wider group of people, not just those who

are owed a statutory duty. They will work with the Government to identify what works best and to share best practice.

The primary focus will be on spotting any early warning signs and improving coordination between all the various agencies to enable them to intervene earlier and provide the appropriate support. Emphasis will also be placed on working closely with landlords to help them maintain tenancies, resolve any problems with tenants and avoid evictions wherever possible. And more attention will be given to making people at risk of becoming homeless aware of the various means of support that are available.

The SHMA has identified that in rural areas, 76% of households are owner occupiers and there is a lower proportion of households living in rented accommodation both in the affordable and private sector. In the smallest villages and hamlets there is a significantly lower proportion of properties for affordable rent. Rural communities tend to have higher house prices and the tenure profile can create problems for younger households in accessing housing which they can afford. Additionally rural areas are dominated by properties with 3 bedrooms or more meaning that not only is there a more limited supply of affordable housing, it is also more difficult to access entry level market housing. A survey undertaken as part of the 2010 Peterborough Strategic Housing Market Assessment found that whilst incomes and savings of persons in rural areas are overall generally higher than in urban areas, given the low level of affordable housing and the limited entry level housing, there can be particular issues in accessing affordable housing locally.



## Case Study: New affordable homes for residents

This project in Peterborough, was delivered in partnership by Longhurst & Havelok Homes and Westleigh Developments. This small estate of 90 homes delivered 43 affordable homes including 2 wheelchair accessible homes.

The site had previously been derelict and the scheme transformed the land into a much-needed residential area, with community green space available for all local people to use.



### To increase the supply of homes which people can afford we will:

- Through implementation of the Council's planning policy we will support the provision of new affordable homes on sites of 15 or more dwellings.
- Ensure a mix of housing tenures are provided on new housing development sites including Starter Homes, shared ownership properties and affordable homes for rent to meet the needs of households with a variety of income levels.
- Work in partnership with Registered Providers to support the provision of affordable housing on sites which they own/ acquire by reducing the infrastructure requirements in line with the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.
- Work with developers and Registered Providers to ensure an ongoing supply of new build affordable housing for rent to meet the needs of households who cannot access home ownership affordable housing tenures
- Work with developers and Registered Providers to ensure that new build affordable rented homes provide the appropriate mix of house types to contribute to rebalancing the affordable housing stock to better meet the housing needs of applicants on the Peterborough Housing Register.
- Work with Registered Providers to encourage any capital raised from the sale of affordable homes as a result of Right to Buy or the reduced regulation of social housing providers to be reinvested to provide new affordable homes for rent in Peterborough.
- Work with Parish Councils and Registered Providers to support the delivery of rural exception sites which contribute to meeting the housing needs of households in rural areas and aids the ongoing sustainability of those communities.
- Reduce incidences of poverty by supporting tenants to reduce their energy costs through a mixture of providing new homes which are thermally efficient and promoting the installation of thermal improvements to existing properties.
- Work proactively with landlords and provide mediation services to prevent incidences of tenants becoming homeless including social housing tenants who may be losing their accommodation as a result of their fixed term tenancies ending in accordance with the end of lifetime tenancies for social housing tenants.
- Work with landlords and tenants to ensure that residents are supported as they transition from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit to prevent rent arrears from accumulating.
- Maintain good relationships with landlords to increase the opportunities for people on lower incomes to access private rented accommodation.
- Utilise Direct Housing Payments to support people to secure appropriate accommodation for rent by offering loan/grant payments for rent in advance and tenancy deposits.
- Support existing tenants of social housing properties, including those affected by the 'Bedroom Tax' to downsize into smaller affordable properties to ensure that they are not accruing unnecessarily large rent and energy costs, by offering them an increased priority on the Peterborough Housing Register in line with the Common Allocations Policy.
- Encourage landlords to support tenants who are adversely affected by the Benefit Cap to ensure that they make the necessary rent payments to avoid rent arrears and maintain their tenancies.
- Support tenants aged up to 35 years of age who are living in flats and houses to respond to the changes in the Housing Benefit legislation which may mean that from April 2018 their maximum Housing Benefit/Universal Credit (Housing) entitlement will be restricted to the Local Housing Allowance Rate for shared accommodation.
- Explore the opportunity of offering Empty Homes Assistance to owners of empty properties in order to carry out refurbishment work to enable the property to be brought back into use and offered to families in housing need.
- Increase the amount and type of temporary accommodation which is available to people to whom the Council owes a duty to rehouse as a result of homelessness legislation.





## Priority Three: Improve housing conditions to support health and wellbeing



### Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- 1,346 Disabled Facilities Grants have been provided since 2011.
- 699 enforcement interventions taken in the private rented sector since 2011.
- A Selective licensing scheme will be implemented on 1st December 2016.
- 20% of all homes are privately rented.
- 3% of homes are in disrepair.
- 13% of owner occupied households and 20% of private rented households are in fuel poverty.
- Life expectancy is lower in Peterborough than the national average. 2096 people were prevented from becoming homeless.

Affordable, warm, dry, secure housing is associated with better health outcomes and helps communities to thrive. Poor housing can contribute towards the prevalence of many preventable diseases and is connected to injuries due to falls particularly in older people. Household overcrowding can result in an increased risk in the spread of infection. Poor housing conditions have also been identified as having an adverse effect on mental health. Fuel poverty and indoor cold is linked with excess winter deaths and cardiovascular problems. The highest concentration of fuel poverty and excess cold in the private sector in Peterborough are found in the urban wards of Central and Park and the rural wards of Barnack, Eye and Thorney and Northborough.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy estimates that poor housing conditions are responsible for over 651 harmful events requiring medical treatment every year in Peterborough. The estimated cost to the local NHS of treating these is £2.2M annually.

Selective Licensing was introduced in designated areas of Peterborough on 1 December 2016. The Housing Act 2004 gives councils the power to require residential landlords to obtain a licence in order to let property to tenants within a designated area. Its aim is to improve the quality of life for all local residents by ensuring a consistent high standard of management of private rented homes in that area. Private rented homes account for just under 40% of the homes in Peterborough's selected licensing areas. Through Selective Licensing we aim to not only improve housing conditions where defects/hazards are identified, but also to improve the image and perception of the area to encourage more settled communities.

Registered Providers in Peterborough have significantly invested in their stock to ensure all dwellings meet the national Decent

Homes standard. However some properties in the private sector are in poorer condition. The estimated number of dwellings in Peterborough's private sector stock with levels of disrepair classed as a serious hazard under the Housing Act 2004 is 7,952. The estimated average cost of mitigating hazards per dwelling is £3,548 resulting in a total cost of £28.2m.

Improving housing conditions in Peterborough will enable better living conditions, reduce illness and promote higher levels of achievements for residents, particularly in education and employment. The Council's proactive approach to improving health and tackling poor housing standards is demonstrated through:

- Working in partnership to utilise a £2.7m grant from the Green Deal Community Fund to provide external wall insulation, loft insulation, boiler and window replacements in 'hard to treat properties' in the city;
- Creating a partnership with Empower Community Management to offer free solar PV to all private sector residents in Peterborough;
- Launching the UK's second Council branded community tariff 'Peterborough Energy' allowing households to switch provider with overall average savings of around £248 per annum;
- Enforcement action against private sector landlords to address unsafe living conditions;
- Implementing a selective licensing scheme from 1st December 2016 which will affect around 6205 privately rented properties raising the standard of private rented accommodation and therefore improving the health and well-being of those tenants;
- supporting disabled, vulnerable, old and frail people by providing adaptations, handy person jobs, repairs and maintenance work to enable people to live safely in their homes; and
- introducing assistive technology to enable people to be more independent, remain in their own homes and participate more in communities.



### Case Study: Free solar panels for Peterborough residents

The Council entered into a strategic partnership with social enterprise Empower Community Management LLP in December 2014.

Commencing a solar panel installation programme from March 2015 in targeted areas of Peterborough and rolling out across all areas of the city from October 2015.



Adaptation and repair work can prevent falls and accidents, reduce the need for, or extent of, domiciliary care, prevent premature moves into residential care and assist hospital release by allowing care to be delivered at home.

Adapting and repairing homes and improving thermal efficiency is a key priority both in improving health outcomes and contributing to the Peterborough Environment Capital Action Plan.



## Case Study: External wall insulation for Park Homes

The programme of providing external wall insulation for park homes is funded by the Repairs Assistance Housing Capital grant funding.

Households benefitting from this scheme are identified as fixed income, older people likely to be in fuel poverty. The programme started in 2015 and is continuing until all local sites have been appraised and the appropriate work undertaken.



### To improve housing conditions to support health and wellbeing we will:

- Deliver a new Home Service Delivery Model which brings together Therapy Services, Re-ablement, Assistive technology and the Care and Repair Improvement Agency, to make grant delivery more effective and customer focussed.
- Provide mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants for adaptations so that people living in all tenures of housing can live independently in their own home.
- Provide support to assist people to move to more suitable accommodation if their existing accommodation is unsuitable for adaptation.
- Explore ways in which the extra Disabled Facilities Grants allocation within the Better Care Fund can be utilised to provide discretionary funding for works that will reduce hospital admissions, readmissions and enable people to be discharged from hospital more quickly.
- Provide minor Aids and Adaptations to assist people to maintain their independence.
- Provide a Handyperson service for vulnerable people to undertake small labour tasks that help to keep them safe at home and to prevent falls and accidents.
- Reduce the number of hazards in homes especially those associated with risk of injury or adverse health conditions through the Repairs Assistance Programme.
- Take housing enforcement action to tackle poor standards within the private rented sector by ensuring landlords provide safe, warm and decent accommodation for their tenants.
- Introduce a Selective Licencing scheme in designated areas of Peterborough on 1st December 2016 to ensure that all private rented properties within the designated area are managed to a satisfactory standard.
- Reduce the number of empty homes in Peterborough by engaging with homeowners, taking enforcement action and undertaking management orders.
- Respond to the measures in the Climate Change Act 2011 which prevent landlords from refusing a tenant's request to have energy efficiency measures installed and requires properties with the lowest energy efficiency ratings to be removed from private rented stock from 2018 onwards.
- Reduce fuel poverty by improving housing conditions and providing access to thermal efficiency measures.
- Target properties with excess cold by working with rural communities that have a large proportion of off-gas heated properties especially those households living in fuel poverty. Review the efficiency of homes and work with communities to improve standards.



## Priority Four: Supported and Specialist Housing



### Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- The number of adults with a learning disability is forecast to rise by 10% by 2030
- The number of people with physical disabilities is forecast to rise by 14% by 2030
- The number of people aged over 65 years is expected to grow by about 28% between 2013 and 2023
- Registered Providers own over 2000 supported housing dwellings.
- Assistive technology has been provided to 1360 people since 2011.
- 79 dwellings in affordable Extra Care schemes have been provided since 2011.
- 45 new homes have been built by Registered Providers for people who come into contact with Adult Social Care services, since 2011.
- Registered Providers have built 517 new homes which meet the Lifetime Homes standard since 2011.
- Registered Providers have built 24 new wheelchair adapted homes since 2011.

The availability of appropriate good quality housing and housing services is key to supporting vulnerable people to live successful and independent lives.

The Council is committed to stimulating and shaping a diverse, active market where people with care and support needs, their families and carers are included and involved in community, economic and social life. Community based independent living can take a number of forms, from living in mainstream general needs housing with floating visiting support for people with low level needs, shared living in houses or bungalows with on-site support for those with higher needs and purpose built supported housing schemes.

As the population of Peterborough continues to grow, so too do the numbers vulnerable people and those with support and specialist housing needs. This increase poses a challenge to the Council both in terms of ensuring the availability of suitable accommodation and promoting the health and wellbeing of these households in response to the requirements of the Care Act 2014. The current Meeting Housing Needs policy in the adopted Local Plan seeks the provision of 30% of dwellings on sites of 15 or more to be provided as affordable housing. The policy indicates the tenure split between rented and shared ownership for the affordable housing provision subject to viability. Within the emerging Local Plan, this policy will be replaced with a new policy which will emphasise prioritising the provision of affordable housing which meets needs of the most vulnerable people living in Peterborough.

The Council's ring-fenced affordable housing capital funds paid to the Council by developers in lieu of providing on-site affordable homes under the requirements of the Meeting Housing Needs policy in the Local Plan, provides another opportunity for the Council to support housing for the most vulnerable members of the community. We will seek to prioritise investment of these funds in schemes providing supported and specialist homes in Peterborough.

### Meeting the needs of Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing Services client groups

The accommodation needs of people who come into contact with Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing Services provided by the City Council have been documented in a portfolio of accommodation strategies. In recognition that these documents now need to be updated, and to provide a consolidated overview of the accommodation needs of all of the various client groups that Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing services support, the Council is now looking to produce a single Commissioning Accommodation Strategy. This document will provide headline information about the accommodation requirements for the following client groups and the tenures and accommodation types identified to meet their needs:

#### Client Groups

- Learning Disability and Autism
- Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment
- Mental Health
- Older People

#### Tenures

- Social Rented
- Private Rented
- Shared Ownership

#### Accommodation Types

- General Needs Rented Housing (with or without adaptations)
- Shared Accommodation (shared general needs accommodation)
- Supported Accommodation (bespoke and purpose built accommodation)
- Sheltered accommodation (older people)
- Extra Care Housing (older people)
- Residential and Nursing





## Case Study: Housing with support for young people

Changemaker House is an Axiom Housing Association Scheme which provides 15 flats for young people aged 16-25 years of age, who are ready to live independently, but with some support in place.

Each flat has its own kitchen and bathroom. There are no shared facilities which makes this excellent 'move-on' accommodation: an option for young people on their journey into full independence.

Each resident has a named key worker who is based at Axiom's sister scheme, Peterborough Foyer, who spends time with them at Changemaker House.



An Adult Social Care Market Position Statement (MPS) has also been prepared by the Council. This tool will influence market activity in the development of additional supported accommodation and care services to meet the specific needs of those Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing services client groups. The MPS analyses the current provision of supported accommodation and the prevalence of each type of accommodation relative to the population. It provides a forecast of the future need for each type of accommodation and projected gaps in provision. In terms of the accommodation needs of people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health problems, there is also a focus on supporting people placed in out of area residential and hospital/secure settings to return to the city to live in community based independent settings.

The MPS clearly sets out that the Council's first priority is to support people to remain or regain their independence whenever possible. This means promoting preventative services including assistive technology to improve independence; holistic care interventions that avoid people being unnecessarily being admitted into hospital; and reablement services that promote earlier safe discharge from hospital. It is recognised, however, that while independent living is the desired outcome for many people, residential and/or nursing care remains important for those unable to live with or without support in independent settings.

The final adopted Commissioning Accommodation Strategy and the Market Position Statement will form part of the housing related strategic documents that sit behind this Housing Strategy.

## Meeting the housing needs of other vulnerable groups

### Rough Sleepers

One of the strategic aims of the Council's current Homelessness Strategy is to reduce and prevent rough sleeping. It includes a range of measures aimed at tackling and preventing rough sleeping including;

- Working with partner agencies to identify people at risk of rough sleeping
- Working with partner agencies to deliver the 'No Second Night Out' (NSNO) initiative which aims to take rough sleepers off the streets by offering immediate shelter and to support them into a more stable environment
- Working with the faith sector to develop service to empower rough sleepers to leave the streets and not sustain street based lifestyles

The Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 which was adopted in November 2014, forms part of the housing related strategic documents that sit behind the Housing Strategy.

### Young people and care leavers

Some young people and especially 16 and 17 year olds who present to the Council as homeless, require additional support to prepare for independence in adult life. A joint protocol between the Housing team and Social Care

ensures that the appropriate services are offered to each young person. The Council works with Registered Housing Providers in Peterborough to ensure that there are a range of accommodation schemes available to meet the needs of young people. These schemes address related issues such as enable access to benefits employment and living skills and are available to young people aged under 25 years.

The Council recognises that suitable, safe housing underpins success in other areas of life. For those leaving the care of the local authority it is particularly important that their housing needs are met promptly. The Housing team work closely with Social Care and other agencies to ensure an appropriate package of support. For care leavers ready to take responsibility for a tenancy, the highest priority for re-housing is awarded. Care leavers also have additional entitlement to Housing Benefit to mitigate the impact of changes to Housing Benefit entitlement for people aged under 35.

### Other specialist housing needs

The housing needs of the following identified specialist housing needs groups is considered within the context of current and projected demand and need from these groups in Peterborough:

#### Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople

The Council has worked in partnership with eight other Local Authorities and consultants to prepare an up to date Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's Accommodation Assessment which was published on 10th October 2016.

The assessment takes into account the definition of Gypsies and Travellers as provided in the revised national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites which came into force in August 2015. This states that households who have ceased travelling permanently, will no longer meet the definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation needs in a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

To inform the assessment a survey was undertaken which attempted to interview all known Gypsy and Traveller households in the study area. Based on the findings from the survey, and applying the updated planning definition, the assessment identified no additional 'known need' for Gypsy and Traveller sites in Peterborough or Travelling Showpeople sites and no 'known need' for Transit sites.

However, the assessment also took into account the potential accommodation needs of the number of households that did not participate in the survey, but may still meet the new planning definition. This 'unknown need' results in a potential need for up to 16 pitches between 2016 and 2036 in Peterborough. Local authorities are not required to identify pitches to meet this 'unknown need' but can use the information to inform their policy development. Therefore while the emerging Local Plan does not identify specific land for the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites to meet this potential 'unknown need' the proposed policy sets out the criteria that the Council will apply when considering individual planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites from households that meet the new planning definition.

The accommodation needs of households that do not meet the new planning definition, i.e. households that have ceased travelling permanently, are now covered under provisions in the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The housing needs of these households will need to be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of the area through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment process and will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in park homes.

**Armed Forces Personnel**

Military service is a unique form of employment and a way of life which for some may have a lasting impact even after they have returned to civilian life. Leaving the military may mean having to relocate, move home, find new employment and undergo a change in lifestyle.

Within Peterborough there is one armed forces base at RAF Wittering which is home to around 1500 personnel. The Council recognises the difficulties which may be faced by armed forces personnel in seeking new accommodation. Accordingly, within the Peterborough Common Housing Register Allocations Policy serving and former members of the forces and bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the forces who are eligible for rehousing will be given additional priority to ensure that their housing needs are addressed at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Student accommodation**

Appropriate and affordable student housing in the city is essential to meet the needs of this currently modest in number but important specialist group. Between 2013 and 2015, there has been growth in the provision of student accommodation in the city and this currently fulfills the needs of the student community. With Peterborough's ambitions for establishing a new independent campus style Peterborough University as part of the Devolution Deal, it will be important to respond to any changes or increases in the accommodation needs of students seeking to study in Peterborough. The vision for Peterborough's University is to have an undergraduate population of 12,500 students by 2035.

**Key worker housing**

Key worker housing is usually provided to key public sector employees who provide an essential service and who may find it difficult to access housing in the area where they work. Key worker housing initiatives can provide discounted home ownership, shared ownership or discounted market rent products in areas where market housing is unaffordable.

Average salaries for nurses, social workers and newly qualified teachers in Peterborough are equivalent to the average median household income in Peterborough.

The SHMA indicates that across the Peterborough Sub region, more than 40% of households have an income which is lower than the median household income in Peterborough and accordingly the provision of housing initiatives which are limited to key workers are not considered to be a higher priority than the general affordable housing policy.

Households which include a key worker are eligible to apply for affordable housing in Peterborough in line with the criteria in the Peterborough Common Housing Register Allocations Policy.





## Case Study: Extra Care Housing

Kingfisher Court is Peterborough's most recently completed high quality extra care scheme. It is provided by Cross Keys Homes and consists of 79 one and two bedroom apartments.

The scheme also offers an on-site restaurant, a communal lounge, a hairdressing salon and landscaped gardens.

There is a dedicated care team on site 24 hours a day to respond to planned care needs and emergency situations.



### To ensure that a range of supported and specialist accommodation is available in Peterborough we will:

- Work in partnership with service users and partners to commission coordinated, effective services and solutions that will prevent or delay escalating support and service needs.
- Continue to support the Personal Care and Support Framework to supply support in the home and in the community for people aged over 65, people with a learning disability and people with a mental health issue to ensure personalised support is provided that seeks to increase levels of independence and access to services enabling people to remain in their home.
- Support re-ablement services which provide intensive social care support aimed at maximising independence, health and wellbeing especially following a period in hospital to enable people to return to their homes.
- Identify housing solutions for adults with mental health needs, learning disabilities, autism and behaviours that challenge to return to Peterborough from out of area assessment and treatments.
- Maximise the opportunity of independent living with the installation and use of Assistive Technology in every setting.
- Broaden the range of independent living with the expansion of the Shared Lives Scheme that supports people to live in the community from every client group.
- Explore opportunities to provide specialist registered accommodation for people whose needs are so complex that they cannot be met within a community based environment, to reduce the use of registered care placements because of the lack of appropriate accommodation and support.
- Work with Registered Providers and private landlords to ensure a range of local accommodation options are available to promote best outcomes for people on the autism spectrum, with a learning disability, mental health illness or a physical or sensory disability.
- Work with providers to re-model under used residential home accommodation for people with a learning disability and encourage the conversion to supported living accommodation.
- Encourage the provision of and access to crisis accommodation and a complex care facility for people with complex mental health needs as an alternative to hospital admission.
- Support the policy in the emerging Local Plan seeking the provision of dwellings as accessible and adaptable designed to Category 2 of Part M of the Building Regulations 2015.
- Support the policy in the emerging Local Plan seeking the provision of a proportion of dwellings as wheelchair user homes designed to Category 3 of Part M of the Building Regulations 2015 on identified new housing sites.
- Work with private sector partners to encourage the provision of additional residential and nursing care accommodation to increase the current provision in Peterborough to meet growing demand for this accommodation.
- Monitor the demand for extra care accommodation and sheltered accommodation to ensure that any increased level of need is identified at an early stage to provide sufficient timing for additional facilities to be developed.
- Work with Registered Providers to ensure that sheltered accommodation is fit for purpose and fully utilised by those with the greatest need.
- Support the provision of accommodation for Gypsy & Travellers in line with the findings of the emerging Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment review.

## Monitoring delivery of the Housing Strategy

To ensure the priorities of the Housing Strategy remain current and appropriate throughout its lifespan, regular reviews will be undertaken and an annual report will be published which sets out:

- Progress towards each of the priorities
- Changes in legislation or local priorities affecting the housing sector
- A profile of new risks and opportunities which impact on the council's ability to meet local housing needs
- An update on any new actions arising

## Glossary of terms

### Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood planning is a right for communities introduced through the Localism Act 2011. Communities can shape development in their areas through the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. These tools empower local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

### Statutorily homeless

A household will be considered as statutorily homeless by their local authority if they meet specific criteria set out in legislation. Broadly speaking, somebody is statutorily homeless if they do not have accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in. In cases where an authority is satisfied that an applicant is eligible for assistance, is in priority need, and has become homeless through no fault of their own, the authority will owe a main homelessness duty to secure settled accommodation for that household. Such households are referred to as acceptances.

### Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force in April 2010. It allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. This includes new or safer road schemes, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health and social care facilities, park improvements, green spaces and leisure centres. Local authorities implementing CIL must produce a charging schedule setting out the charge rates for different types of development in their area.

### Domiciliary care

Domiciliary care is care provided to people who still live in their own homes but who require additional support with household tasks, personal care or any other activity that allows them to maintain their independence and quality of life.

### Residential care

Residential care refers to long-term care given to adults or children who stay in a residential setting rather than in their own home or family home. There are various residential care options available, depending on the needs of the individual.

### Thermal efficiency

The ability to use or produce heat without wasting materials, time, or energy

### Supported housing

Supported housing is an umbrella term which is applied to a whole range of housing based solutions for vulnerable people. It caters for a wide range of client groups with diverse needs who require different levels of support in a range of accommodation models.

### Extra Care Housing

Extra Care Housing is housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property.

### Lifetime Homes

The concept of Lifetime Home design standard was created to make homes more easily accessible and adaptable homes for lifetime use, from young families to the elderly and individuals with temporary or permanent physical impairment. The Lifetime Homes Standard has been replaced by Part M of the updated Building Regulations introduced from October 2015 and includes requirements similar to the Lifetime Homes Standards.







## Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021

Report on comments received in respect of the Consultation Draft version (November 2016) and a response to the Key Issues raised

### Foreword

This document sets out a summary of the comments and issues raised at the Consultation Draft stage (November 2016 – January 2017) of preparing the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021 together with the Council's response to the key issues raised.

This is a public document, and helps meet Peterborough City Council's commitment to consult and keep people informed of progress on the preparation of key policy documents that affect the authority area.

The Housing Strategy Team at Peterborough City Council has prepared this document.

### Introduction

- 1.1. Peterborough City Council is very pleased with the response to the public consultation on the Draft Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021. The consultation took place between 28 November 2016 and 16 January 2017. We particularly thank all those who took the time to write to us with your thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- 1.2. As part of the consultation, the draft Housing Strategy and an online consultation survey was published on Peterborough City Council's website. Emails were sent to a range of key stakeholders to make them aware of the consultation and inviting their feedback.
- 1.3. The purpose of this document is to highlight to everyone a summary of what was said and where possible how we propose to take these comments forward.
- 1.4. Some of the responses received were very detailed in nature. This document cannot summarise every point made, but rather it tries to capture the most important or frequently mentioned issues.
- 1.5. On the following pages, we set out in a standard format the comments received for each policy and explanatory text relating to it. We also incorporate any general comments made in regard to this document.
- 1.6. In most instances, we have kept the comments as anonymous because what is said is more important than who said it.

## Draft Peterborough Housing Strategy 2016-21: Key Issues

Comments relating to question one: Does the draft Housing Strategy cover all the main national and local policies and strategies in the National and Local Context sections of the document?	
Summary of comments received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The national and local context is well explained and clearly informs the four key priorities for the Peterborough housing agenda.</li> <li>The document details the opportunities and challenges provided by a range of current legislative changes relevant to the housing sector and the expected impact on the housing needs and demand in Peterborough.</li> <li>Some national policies have changed since this draft was written and these changes need to be reflected in the full strategy such as the Rents for High Income Tenants (Pay to Stay) policy and delays around the roll out of Voluntary Right to Buy to housing association tenants</li> <li>The national priorities are misguided. Suitable housing for people in the 3rd age is completely missing.</li> <li>National economic development needs to shift from the South East to the North and building should be focused on community not on just housing</li> <li>Neighbourhood planning is currently in spin - local people have little opportunity to influence the developers who are just in it for profit.</li> <li>Neighbourhood plans should form part of the key documents included in the diagram setting out the key local documents that inform and underpin the Housing Strategy – even though there are not any Neighbourhood Plans in place at present it is likely that they will begin to emerge within the life of the Housing Strategy</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support, concerns and comments noted.</li> <li>Updates to the policy context will be updated to reflect changes since the publication of the draft Housing Strategy</li> <li>Neighbourhood Plans will be added to the Key Local documents diagram</li> </ul>

Comments relating to question 2: Do you agree with the four key priorities identified for the Peterborough housing agenda?	
Summary of comments received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree. They are clearly linked to the expected continued economic and population growth in Peterborough from 183,961 to 227,870 by 2036</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority one: Supporting Substantial and Sustainable Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disagree. Over the last 10 years we have seen the population of the city grow and services reduced. To pay for the increased population council homes have been closed, services reduced, property sold off. The reduction of services for the existing community will continue to go downhill with an increasing population.</li> <li>Disagree. Building more houses, particularly on agricultural land, increases the problem of self-sustainability for this country</li> <li>Disagree. Sustainable housing is key transformation of society. Growth is the thing that is wrong.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority two: Increase the supply of homes that people can afford</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable homes is not about 'Starter homes' that are inadequate for the needs of residents. Poorly designed housing has a real cost on a city's healthcare, crime and transport.</li> <li>Housing rent allowances too low.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority Three: Improve housing conditions to support health and wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a vital priority. Housing efficiency is a major climate change intervention. Any second home or rented property needs to add a lot more value to a city. The buy to let sector has created poor disconnected communities.</li> <li>Energy Grants by the LA need to be offered to local persons i.e. pensioners or on benefits where no charge is applied.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority Four: Supported and Specialist Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialist housing is important: the scale of development in this respect is inadequate. The elderly need a whole new sector of housing which helps with healthcare, prevents social isolation and frees up large homes with single occupants. It's not about old people's homes it is a new style of housing neighbourhoods that would attract retired people to continue to be effective participants in society</li> </ul>

Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support, concerns and comments noted.</li> <li>• Peterborough will retain its growth ambitions. The evidence associated with our growth targets justifies this level of growth.</li> <li>• Free solar PV panels are available to private sector residents in Peterborough and Green Deal grant funding is available to improve the energy efficiency of properties to reduce energy bills. PCC offer Repairs Assistance funding when excess cold is identified as a hazard due to inefficient/broken down boiler and central heating systems.</li> <li>• Peterborough's Market Position Statement seeks to address the housing needs of older people.</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments relating to question three: Do you agree with the actions identified to achieve each of the four priorities?</b>	
Summary of comments received	<p><b>Priority one: Supporting Substantial and Sustainable Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the use of s106 commuted sums to fund affordable housing provision in the City but this money is best used to provide direct grant rather than loans. Given that 40% of households cannot afford market housing (rent or buy) it is particularly important to secure the provision of affordable rented homes that may otherwise fail to attract grant funding from national or regional budgets. In addition, grant should also be used to ensure the provision of supported housing that currently requires higher levels of grant per unit due to the impact of the implementation of the Local Housing Allowance on supported housing rents on most supported housing.</li> <li>• It is unclear whether any statistics for owner occupiers with mortgages includes shared owners. Given that this is currently the fastest growing tenure type it would be useful, to have these numbers separated out, in order to ensure the needs of shared owners and potential shared owners are being catered for with all strategic decisions, and numbers can be monitored going forwards.</li> <li>• Large sites are not deliverable in timescales of demand as has been seen. More smaller sites need to be allowed and developed creating local employment and support. Not profit for large house builders or land owners Site from 10 to 45 units are good sites that can be turned around and developed quickly.</li> <li>• Commercial property should not be allowed to remain vacant if it has already been vacant for over one year. Vacant commercial property is also an eyesore and will attract no-one to this city.</li> <li>• Less growth, more quality and more transformation.</li> <li>• Don't build more houses</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support, concerns and comments noted.</li> <li>• It is intended that S106 funds can still be allocated as grant, each funding request will be considered on a case by case basis</li> <li>• Statistics indicating levels of shared ownership will be added.</li> <li>• Site allocation is undertaken as part of the development of the Local Plan. Sites for 10 dwellings or more are included in the site allocation process.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Priority two: Increase the supply of homes that people can afford</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The action point to increase the amount and type of temporary accommodation could be strengthened. There is a real need to develop a comprehensive and proactive strategy to tackle homelessness that includes: emergency accommodation; longer term TA (move-on accommodation); and support and life-skills training to prevent homelessness; and the 'revolving door' effect of repeat homelessness.</li> <li>• There is concern that the need to ensure that Starter Homes are featured in all new housing developments as acknowledged, will exclude both those whom are not eligible to purchase and those who cannot afford this option and that provision of new Starter Homes will affect the provision of affordable rented or shared ownership housing.</li> <li>• New funding programmes/initiatives being made available to deliver more homes for purchase is likely to result, as acknowledged, in a reduction in new homes offering</li> </ul>

	<p>rented tenures - these two developments are likely to affect vulnerable groups adversely and disproportionately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is concern that the statutory requirement to reduce social housing rents by 1% each year for four years will effect Registered Providers' revenue and that this may result in fewer resources being available to invest in the management and maintenance of existing stock and the provision of new affordable homes.</li> <li>• When the Housing Benefit capped at Local Housing Allowance rate for social housing tenants comes into effect, that more vulnerable people living in social housing who may experience difficulty finding employment, will be expected to contribute towards their rent from their own limited income. It can be anticipated that there will be an increase in those with rent arrears, or seeking loans and of potentially being at risk of and/or becoming homeless. Again, this is likely to affect vulnerable groups adversely and disproportionately. Welcome a response as to whether the increase in crisis presentations by people in regard to their ability to maintain their tenancy and/or potential increase in those presenting as homeless, has been scoped and addressed.</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns and comments noted.</li> <li>• Additional text in the National Context will refer to the new Housing White Paper. This indicates a shift in the government's new proposed policy position on Starter Homes</li> <li>• Additional text will be added to the strategy to reflect the council's recent successful bid for additional DCLG funding under the homelessness prevention trailblazer scheme. This funding will help to tackle homelessness by carrying out prevention activity earlier and working with a wider group of people – not just those who are owed the main homelessness duty.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Priority Three: Improve housing conditions to support health and wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross Keys Homes strongly supports this priority. We would also be very interested expanding our own provision of a handyman service at preferential rates in partnership with PCC and continuing to expand the partnership working on assistive technology.</li> <li>• The aim to support health and wellbeing by various initiatives and partnership working is welcomed such as - by providing adaptations, assistive technology, repairs and maintenance work to enable people to live safely and more independently in their homes; and through the implementation of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 in tackling rogue landlords.</li> <li>• Can people if living in privately rented accommodation access adaptations to their homes if such adaptations, especially if structural, are resisted/declined by the landlord? If they are unable to access these adaptations, will the person be supported in finding more suitable housing? Providing aids and adaptations is often a central component to ensuring people can live independently for longer, avoid residential/nursing care and enable effective and timely discharge from acute health settings.</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support welcomed.</li> <li>• Funding for adaptations can be granted to people living in all tenures including private rented homes. If the accommodation is unsuitable for adaptation the household will be supported with moving to more suitable accommodation. Text will be added to the strategy to clarify this point.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Priority Four: Supported and Specialist Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very strong reservations about the proposal contained in the strategy and in the emerging local plan seeking all new build properties to comply with Category Two of Part M of the Building Regulations the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Category One of Part M is sufficient in itself to meet the needs of the vast majority of anticipated residents over the life time of the building. There is no evidence to show that lifetime homes (or their equivalent under the new regulations) have been adapted in significant numbers to meet the needs of existing residents.</li> <li>b) It will increase the costs associated with providing new homes by an estimated 10-15% (due to the additional works required in designing and building a structure that can be adapted in the future).</li> <li>c) Further costs will be incurred when building flat blocks, which will all require lifts regardless of the size of height of the block, or of the intended client group. This</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>additional facility will also increase service charges for residents needlessly.</p> <p><b>d)</b> These additional costs and service charges will contribute to a worsening of scheme viability for affordable rented housing and is likely to lead to an overall reduction in the numbers of affordable housing provided in Peterborough, which is contrary to the other objectives contained in the strategy (and which may particularly be the case if it is more viable to deliver affordable housing in other local authority areas where this policy is not applied).</p> <p>It is suggested that the Council work with developers and RPs to provide an overall proportion of new homes to be specifically designed for households with special needs. This need not be done across every site, but rather should be done in a strategic way, balancing opportunities for provision with assessed housing need for various client groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully support the commitment to build homes for older people with care needs but concerned that the supply of housing suitable for the over 65s without a current support need may be overlooked. The active are often looking to downsize, thereby freeing up larger homes for families, but we need to ensure there is suitable properties available to them, without resorting to sheltered accommodation.</li> <li>• The impending cap on supported housing rents to LHA levels has the potential to have severe impacts on both housing providers and tenants of existing schemes, and on new developments. There is a risk that social supported housing becomes unviable to providers and they seek different tenures when properties become void. There needs to be a clear strategy on how PCC will work with providers to support the existing supported housing and develop new, much needed specialist accommodation.</li> <li>• Needs more clarity on providing specialised housing for those in most need i.e. those who receive NHS Continuous Health Care (CHC) and live in the community. Life-time-homes standard housing are being used inappropriately for people with severe disabilities.</li> <li>• The strategy is well articulated and addresses supported and specialist housing needs for defined vulnerable groups including those with mental health issues. We await the Commissioning Accommodation strategy that will provide more detail and information about the tenure and accommodation needs of these vulnerable groups of people.</li> <li>• Welcome the clear commitment, in line with the 5 year forward view for mental health and as referenced in the Market Position Statement (MPS) on supporting people placed out of area in residential and hospital/secure settings, to be able to return to the City to live in community based independent settings.</li> <li>• In view of the expected growth in population, particularly people with support needs and the need to provide appropriate accommodation, it would be helpful to have comment regarding the links that are in place to address the effect on the City's infrastructure and facilities in supporting and sustaining such growth and expansion – from access to the necessary levels of primary and acute health provision, social care provision, education, and the impact on the transport system. Of particular concern is the expected development of office accommodation into residential developments which does not need a planning application which would have previously considered such infrastructure issues.</li> <li>• Page 17 relating to Armed Forces Personnel; RAF Wittering is described as an army base There are Army bases close by outside Peterborough but it is likely that their personnel might feel a gravitational pull towards Peterborough as the nearest major town/city.</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support, comments and concerns noted.</li> <li>• The proposals regarding extending Category Two of Part M of the Building Regulations to all new build properties will be considered as part of the outcome of the consultation on the emerging Local Plan.</li> <li>• The Local Plan considers infrastructure needs as part of the process of allocating sites for new housing. In the National Context section of the strategy we have</li> </ul>

	<p>highlighted the challenges that permitted development rights which allow conversion of office accommodation to residential present in terms of ensuring that homes are developed in areas with appropriate infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The text relating to RAF Wittering will be corrected.</li> </ul>
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**Comments relating to question four:**

**Are there any key actions missing that would help deliver the priorities?**

Summary of comments received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide finance to educate and incentivise people to have fewer children.</li> <li>• The ability for people to work from home is a vital part of the emerging future - preventing the need to travel and creating more viable communities. It is not a housing strategy it is a community strategy - housing leads to development for profit as the priority.</li> <li>• The priority today is not more housing, it is about transforming communities to address the issue of climate change today, changing needs of young and old populations, radically reduce the cost of dwellings through factory fabrication methods and create communities that do not have the need to commute.</li> <li>• Peterborough needs to significantly improve its city walking and cycling. It may be better than many cities however it is a long way from what is possible and what is needed.</li> <li>• More detailed study needed of who is on the waiting list + closer working with NHS CHC team as to who is living in Peterborough that need more specialised housing and are not getting it.</li> <li>• I would like to see that disabled people and older people are given a chance to tell the council what they need and how their present accommodation is not working for them. I think the council would learn a lot. Education of council personnel on the key differences in the build standards between PrtM4(2) and what is really needed (3b) + some common sense re some of the min dimensions which are a joke in both for electric chair users. Peterborough has failed to provide adequate housing for the most in need in this city and I do not see anything in this document that will correct that failure.</li> <li>• In promoting health and wellbeing, and sustainable development it is often the case that the large social housing provider (Cross Keys) which took over the council's stock, provides a programme of enhancements such as external insulation; solar panels replacing old boilers and old windows and doors. It would be an excellent opportunity if the contractors and Cross Keys could also offer the same refurb or enhancement to the private houses at the same time as they are doing the social housing on the same estate. There would be savings for the owners and where these are private landlords, this would be beneficial for the private tenants. The look of the areas would be enhanced as there will be fewer 'tatty' looking homes amongst the refurbished Cross Keys homes, promoting a self of pride in an area (sadly lacking on many estates). It makes sense because the houses tend to be of standard design so there's an economy of scale which can be passed on to all concerned.</li> </ul>
Response	<p>Comments and concerns noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council is taking a more active role in tackling long term empty sites to bring forward regeneration through the Peterborough Investment Partnership.</li> <li>• Good partnership working arrangements between the council and Cross Keys Homes means that where possible we try to ensure that complimentary funding opportunities are made available in neighbourhoods where improvement programmes are being undertaken.</li> </ul>

**Comments relating to question five:**

**Are there any comments that you would like to make on the draft Housing Strategy that are not covered in the previous questions?**

Summary of comments received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The only specific attention to rural areas is mention being made to rural exception sites and fuel poverty especially in Barnack Ward. The response to the latter is to improve</li> </ul>
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	<p>housing conditions and providing access to thermal efficiency measures but this does not indicate how fuel poverty will be tackled only suggesting measures that will ameliorate but not resolve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An essential consideration of housing development in rural areas is infrastructure. Rural infrastructure both in terms of transport links and services may not be compatible with the desire to expand village boundaries to encourage development. The majority of the Strategy seems to be consumed with providing houses for those in need which is admirable in itself but appears not to recognise the needs of established communities especially those in rural areas.</li> <li>• I would like to see more focus on middle aged to elderly people being assisted to downsize property as they age to free up family sized housing stock</li> <li>• As one of the UK's fastest growing cities, a housing strategy for Peterborough must take into account derelict and vacant commercial property. PCC can take authority on this and should do so before any evictions of residents in order to build new housing.</li> <li>• We are pleased that the specific problems of housing provision in rural areas have been acknowledged in the Strategy. We also concur with the comment that the Right to Buy for registered provider tenants could lead to a shortage of homes for needy households. The Housing Strategy suggests a number of ways in which the shortage of accommodation will be addressed, including the creation of Medesham Homes, the new joint venture between Peterborough City Council and Cross Keys Homes. We would welcome an explanation in the Strategy of how the partnership will achieve its aims. We are also interested in the City Council's reasons for preferring this approach over a return to the old policy of building council houses.</li> <li>• The allocation of £14.6m to support affordable housing provision by Medesham Homes is good news, as is the proposal to ring-fence funds from developer contributions paid in lieu of providing affordable homes. We are also pleased that the devolution proposal for the new Combined Authority of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough includes £170m towards delivering affordable housing. A statement on how far these contributions will go towards satisfying the need for affordable housing in Peterborough would be appreciated.</li> <li>• We support the undertakings in the draft strategy to ensure that new developments provide a mix of housing tenures; that new build affordable rented homes provide the appropriate mix of house types and to encourage capital raised as a result of Right to Buy or the reduced regulation of social housing providers to be reinvested, to provide new affordable homes for rent. However, Barnack Parish Council has serious reservations about the undertakings to support the planning policy which sets the threshold for providing new affordable homes on sites at 15 or more dwellings and to support the delivery of rural exception sites. We feel that in rural areas there should be no minimum size stipulated for a development to qualify for support to include affordable housing. Instead, we would prefer the building of affordable homes to receive support no matter how small the development. This may mean offering proportionally larger economic incentives to small-scale developers of affordable dwellings in rural situations. We are concerned about the strong promotion of rural exception sites. We feel that this weakens the concept of the village building envelope. We would like to see a proviso added, to the effect that building affordable housing outside a village envelope is only acceptable where exceptional need is proven and this need cannot be met by building within the envelope.</li> <li>• Barnack Parish Council broadly endorses the draft Housing Strategy and congratulates Peterborough City Council on its analysis of the problems and its constructive approach to solving them.</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support, comments and concerns noted.</li> <li>• A more detailed description of how Medesham homes plans to achieve its aims can be found in the <a href="#">Cabinet paper</a> of 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016.. Since the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer in 2004 of the council's housing stock to Cross Keys Homes we no longer has the in-house skills in housing management and development to take on the full landlord role</li> </ul>

	<p>again. Cross Keys Homes was a logical choice for partner for a housing joint venture, as the largest residential social landlord in Peterborough and a strategic partner the Council works with extensively already.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy that determines the threshold for providing new affordable homes and the delivery of rural exception sites are part of the existing Local Plan and will be refreshed as part of the emerging Local Plan. Viability informs the threshold for affordable housing provision and therefore determines whether smaller sites can sustain an affordable requirement. The council's rural exception site policy already makes clear that a site will only gain permission where a strong local need is identified and where need cannot be met through the usual planning policy channels.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Comments relating to Question six: Is the strategy easy to read?</b></p>	
<p>Summary of comments received</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• Detailed but accessible.</li> </ul>
<p>Response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support welcomed.</li> </ul>



## Other Proposed amendments

The following section sets out other potential amendments to the Strategy, to ensure the Strategy is up to date and reflects the council's intentions i.e. these changes may or may not be being made as result of a specific consultation comment.

Amendment	Reason
Update text in National Context section to include reference to the new Government White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market'	Since the publication of the draft Peterborough Housing Strategy, the Government has published this White Paper which although not yet a statutory document, will impact on the housing agenda for Peterborough once enacted. Confirmation added that the National context of the strategy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains up to date
Update text in National Context section to reflect changes in government policy since the draft Housing Strategy was published.	The policy plans relating to 'Rents for High Income Tenants' will no longer be a requirement for Registered Providers and therefore reference to this policy will be removed. The roll out of the policy regarding 'Right to Buy for Registered Provider Tenants' have been delayed so the text has been amended to reflect this.
Update diagram in the Local Context to include Neighbourhood Plans in the list of local key documents that underpin the housing strategy	This amendment has arisen out of comments received through the consultation process on the draft Housing Strategy
Strategy text relating to Priority One: 'Supporting substantial and sustainable growth' under the heading 'Key Peterborough snapshot facts' add statistics regarding shared ownership	This amendment has arisen out of comments received through the consultation process on the draft Housing Strategy
Strategy text relating to Priority Two: 'Increase the supply of homes which people can afford' amended to include reference to the new homelessness prevention initiatives funded by successful DCLG bid	This funding has been awarded since the publication of the draft Housing Strategy. New text to explain the impact of the funding and respond to comments received through the consultation process on the draft Housing Strategy.
Strategy text relating to Priority Three: 'Improve housing conditions to support health and wellbeing' amended to include information about access to adaptations funding.	This amendment has arisen out of a query received through the consultation process on the draft Housing Strategy.
Strategy text relating to Priority Four: 'Meeting the needs of other vulnerable groups' under the heading Armed Forces Personnel corrected	This amendment has arisen out of a comment received through the consultation process on the draft Housing Strategy
Wording of strategy text that related to policy HS21 amended so that it better reflects Core Strategy policy CS8, specifically that viability will be taken into account when negotiating the percentage of affordable housing on a site by site basis	This amendment has arisen from comments received through the consultation process.

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