

## STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA  
ITEM NO

## HOUSING COMMITTEE

10 DECEMBER 2019

**10**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>HRA DELIVERY PLAN 2020 - 2025</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To seek approval for the additional strategic priorities and updated HRA delivery plan.
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>The Committee RESOLVES to approve the HRA Delivery Plan and action plan.</b>
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Tenant and leaseholder consultation events STAR survey results Housing Review Panel
<b>Financial Implications and Risk Assessment</b>	This update of the Delivery Plan seeks to review the priorities of the service. Any expenditure will need to be within existing resources, or offsetting savings made elsewhere within the HRA. Lucy Clothier, Interim Accountancy Manager Tel: 01453 754343 Email: <a href="mailto:lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk">lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk</a>  Report author to comment on the Risk Assessment The largest risk is around financial support within and beyond the MTFP, where in order to plan strategically there needs to be serious consideration and decisions made with regard to competing priorities in future years
<b>Legal Implications</b>	There are no legal implications arising from this report Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754369 Email: <a href="mailto:patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk">patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk</a>
<b>Report Author</b>	Kevin Topping, Head of Housing Services Tel: 01453 754196 Email: <a href="mailto:Kevin.topping@stroud.gov.uk">Kevin.topping@stroud.gov.uk</a>
<b>Options</b>	Continue with the existing plan
<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	Report annually to Housing Committee, the first of which will be in June 2020 following a number of changes contained within this report.
<b>Background Papers/ Appendices</b>	<a href="#">Appendix A – HRA Delivery Plan 2020-2025</a> <a href="#">Appendix B – Action Plan</a>

**1.0. Background**

- 1.1. The HRA delivery plan was commissioned in 2016 and supported by a Task and Finish group. The plan was agreed by Housing Committee on 24 January 2017.
- 1.2. A report presented to Housing Committee in June 2019 outlined the process to consult with tenants and leaseholders.
- 1.3. Areas for review were agreed as:
  - Meeting the need for new affordably rented homes within the District
  - Sheltered Housing
  - Estates/Stock Investment

- Service to our customers
- 1.4. This also included a further paper to be brought back to September's committee outlining the feedback and, based on that, to make amendments for the HRA Delivery Plan. This was carried out with a consultation process that ran for a total of eight weeks between June 2019 and August 2019. There were 34 events that were set up at a number of locations including sheltered communal rooms and local community halls Leaseholders were consulted by direct mail. Included within this feedback were the results of the STAR survey carried out earlier in the year.
- 1.5. September Committee suggested additional new priorities as a result of the consultation:
- Satisfaction levels to be addressed
  - Expansion of in-sourced responsive repairs and maintenance service
  - Tackle damp and mould utilising the energy strategy

## **2.0. Current position**

- 2.1. Feedback from these events along with the current Corporate Delivery Plan (CDP) headlines were considered at a meeting of the Housing Review Panel with Housing Committee members being invited.
- 2.2. Based on the information supplied the following priorities were discussed at length with a lively debate and a clear focus on communities and ensuring what we deliver supports the agreed target of Carbon Neutral 2030.
- a) Improve tenant satisfaction and culture exploring different avenues and opportunities to build, enhance and grow communities**

The STAR survey and tenant and leaseholder feedback clearly shows dissatisfaction around specific areas of delivery by the council and its contractors including grounds maintenance, communal cleaning, and communication with officers and services of the council.

**b) Sheltered Housing**

Delivery of the older person's strategy and action plan over the next 5 years including the current programme to modernise our sheltered stock and the quality of the 'housing offer' we can make to current and prospective new independent living (sheltered) tenants is strongly supported.

**c) New development**

We will investigate and explore new and innovative opportunities to build new homes adding to our existing housing stock, working with corporate colleagues, partners and other providers The homes will be adaptable, flexible and energy efficient to deliver sustainably modern homes aspiring to deliver ever growing needs of the district and ensuring that we address the move towards being a carbon neutral district by 2030. A development strategy for new council homes is being drafted to inform what we build

and where the needs that we wish to address and the quantity and quality to be achieved.

**d) Investment in sustainable and attractive estates and stock**

Analysis of the green areas of HRA land in the district and consider conversion of unused green spaces to pasture land, re-wilding projects and community gardens and allotments, this approach works hand in hand in regeneration projects and this should form part of the consultation and decision making process to ensure we deliver aesthetically pleasing, functional and useful land to the community at low cost to the HRA. In the short to medium term the HRA remains financially strong and will allow the council to continue to invest around £30 million over the next 5 years to repair, maintain and invest in its current stock, the updated energy strategy will inform some of the direction subject to detailed analysis of cost and overall benefit. This will also be supported by the insourcing of the repairs and maintenance project and the planned works programme.

**e) Implementation of the updated energy strategy**

The updated energy strategy shows a number of options and opportunities for approach, change in direction and any adoption of new sustainable technology, which will be subject to financial support through revision of budgets

**3.0. Risks and Opportunities**

- 3.1. The lifting of the debt cap has created opportunity for further investment in the new build and sheltered modernisation programmes which remain unfunded in the longer term and should this not be addressed then the delivery of these two areas would have to cease. There is further risk that additional borrowing would impact the 30-year finance plan and debt repayment will potentially need to be extended over the longer term especially with the increase of interest payments to the PWLB.
- 3.2. There is also a potential risk that the receipts may not be sufficient to fund the capital programme. If this were to happen, alternative funding would need to be found.
- 3.3. The HRA is largely sheltered from interest rate changes in the medium term as all of the current borrowing is at fixed interest rates. As loans become repayable, advice will be sought from our treasury advisors on the most advantageous approach to refinancing.
- 3.4. Internal Council Changes - with the appointment of the new Directors of place, resource, transformation and communities may affect the direction of the council and the refresh of the corporate delivery plan could impact on the HRA medium/long term position.
- 3.5. Political uncertainty - Brexit, The General Election in December 2019, and local elections in May 2020.

**4.0. Conclusion**

- 4.1. The priorities reflect the acknowledgement by elected members of the importance of listening to our tenants and leaseholders, believing in the strength of creating and

sustaining communities and environments, and understanding the financial implications of over-commitment outside of the medium term financial plan. The Committee is asked to approve the revised HRA Delivery Plan as set out in Appendix A.