

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE HOUSING SERVICES PARTNERSHIP

**EMH GROUP, Memorial House, Stenson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire,
LE67 4JP**

9.00 – 12:00 10 JULY 2015

Developing our Housing Strategy for 2016-2021

1. CONTEXT

1.1 Local Plan - we are preparing a new Local Plan for the district, which sets out where development should take place over the next 15 to 20 years.

The new Local Plan will guide future development and will look at:

- Housing needs
- Economic needs
- Community facilities
- Infrastructure - roads, public transport, flood defences and sewerage
- Measures to protect the environment
- The effects of climate change
- The design of new buildings.

The plan will affect everyone in the district. It will make decisions about where homes, roads, offices and shops are built, and which open spaces will be created and protected. The aim is that the Local Plan will be adopted in December 2016.

1.2 Housing Strategy - whilst the Local Plan will deal with spatial development for the district up to circa 2030-35, including infrastructure, the Housing Strategy 2016-21 will provide the overarching strategic document to inform future housing related plans, strategies and policies for the next five years.

Our new Housing Strategy will:-

- set out any main changes in the housing market
- identify the key challenges in delivering new homes and housing services locally

- set out our ambitions to help meet both current and future housing and housing support needs and aspirations over the next five years, and how we intend to achieve them

1.3 Other plans and policies that feed into the housing strategy – Appendix 1 outlines the links between the various strategies and plans the council has/will have in place that all feed into the housing strategy.

1.4 Priorities - the following table shows the priorities from our existing strategy

Current Priorities	i.e.
'Homes for all'	Increasing housing supply across all tenures
'Healthy Homes'	Improving existing homes (all tenures)– green and decent, Housing, Health & Safety Rating System etc
'Fair and equal access'	Making sure everyone has the opportunity to live independently regardless of age, ethnicity, disability etc
'Content and confident communities'	Making sure different client groups know where to go for advice and assistance

2. CHALLENGES

A recent workshop type meeting of Housing Choices staff sought to identify current and likely future challenges that we will need to consider in developing our new strategy. We will spend time discussing these at the partnership meeting on 10 July 2015 and some further background information is provided at Appendix 2 that you might find useful.

The following challenges, many of which are inter-linked, have been identified by Housing Choices:-

CHALLENGES	POTENTIAL DISCUSSION POINTS
Supply and demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mismatch between what the council has and what is needed • Allocations policy and Choice based lettings scheme – are they both fit for purpose? • Implication of any changes • What about cross tenure support for all vulnerable groups? • Supported accommodation? • What's our approach to empty homes?
Stock condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decency or 'decency +' for NWL stock? • Asset management strategy • What about the private sector? • When was last private sector stock condition survey?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources are available from general fund or elsewhere? Carrots and sticks • Disabled facilities grants and adaptations (direct matches to existing homes? How do we best provide for waiting list cases with specific adaptation needs?)
Right to buy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed changes pose risk to Registered Providers' business plans – could lead to reduced numbers of affordable housing coming forward via this route and • Reduce their capacity to pick up s106 units that we've negotiated on site. Does the council need to consider setting aside funds that will enable it to pick up a number of these using the Acquisitions Policy? • Could also pose a risk to the housing service business plan if the council has to sell off our valuable empty homes to subsidise the scheme
Welfare Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Credit –Sep 2015 • Benefit Cap reduced to £23k. How many will be affected? • Scrapping of automatic Housing Benefit for under 21s; • Leicestershire Welfare Provision review Sep/Oct 2015
New build	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What, how many, when, where? • Ensuring demand • What vehicle? – Right to buy implications (See above) • Impact of Summer Budget on new supply
Prevention cuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hostel places for single homeless down from 56 to between 20-30 countywide from October
Ageing population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will we meet housing and support service demand? • Do we really know what sort of housing our older district residents want? How do we find out? • Role of extra care schemes
Regeneration of Coalville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick and Shovel • Town centre improvements • Empty sites

Question

What have we missed?

Have a think about challenges your own service will face. Do they need to be included separately or do they fall under one of the headings above?

3. PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW STRATEGY

Given the perceived challenges, the Housing Choices team feel that the existing priorities are still very relevant and have suggested that the new strategy should focus on:

- Increasing housing supply
- Improving existing homes

- Helping people to live independently and sustain tenancies

Following our meeting and the workshops on 10 July 2015, the Strategic Housing Partnership will be asked to recommend our future priorities

4. VISION

The vision for the district as set out in the council's corporate plan is that

North West Leicestershire will be a place where people and businesses feel they belong and are proud to call home

Question

Should we have a separate (albeit aligned) vision for housing that is set out in the strategy?
Please give this some thought ahead of the meeting.