

Date of despatch: Thursday, 13 April 2017

**To the Members of Slough Borough Council**

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend a Meeting of the Council of this Borough which will be held in the The Curve - William Street, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 1XY on **Tuesday, 25th April, 2017 at 7.00 pm**, when the business in the Agenda below is proposed to be transacted.

Yours faithfully



**ROGER PARKIN**  
Interim Chief Executive

**PRAYERS**

**AGENDA**

***Apologies for Absence***

**PAGE**

1. Declarations of Interest

*All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Pecuniary or non pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 3 paragraphs 3.25 – 3.27 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 3.28 of the Code.*

*The Mayor will ask Members to confirm that they do not have a declarable interest. All Members making a declaration will be required to complete a Declaration of Interests at Meetings form detailing the nature of their interest.*

2. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 31 January 2017 and 23 February 2017 1 - 20

3. To receive the Mayor's Communications.

**Public Questions**

4. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.

**Recommendations of Cabinet and Committees**

*[Notification of Amendments required by 10 a.m. on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017]*

5. Recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 18th April 2017 21 - 100
- Housing Strategy
6. Recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting held on 13th April 2017 101 - 128
- Annual Scrutiny Report 2016/17

**Member Questions**

7. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10 (as tabled).
8. Exclusion of the Press and Public

It is recommended that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item in Part 2 of the Agenda, as it involves information relating to an individual and the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding the information) as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (amended).

**PART II**

9. Part II Minutes - 31 January 2017 129 - 130

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

The Council allows the filming, recording and photographing at its meetings that are open to the public. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings. Anyone proposing to film, record or take photographs of a meeting is requested to advise the Democratic Services Officer before the start of the meeting. Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the meeting room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non hand held devices, including tripods, will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Democratic Services Officer.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held at The Curve - William Street, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 1XY on Tuesday, 31st January, 2017 at 7.00 pm

**Present:-** The Worshipful the Mayor (Arvind Dhaliwal), in the chair; Councillors Ajaib, Anderson, Bains, Bal, Bedi, Brooker, Carter, Chahal, Chaudhry, Dar, Davis, Amarpreet Dhaliwal, M Holledge, N Holledge, Hussain, Mann, Matloob, Munawar, Nazir, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Rana, Rasib, Sadiq, A Sandhu, R Sandhu, Sarfraz, Shah, Sharif, Smith, Sohal, Strutton, Swindlehurst, Usmani and Wright

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillors Cheema, Chohan, Coad and Morris

### 48. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bal declared that his daughter worked at Slough Borough Council

Agenda item 5: Petition Ten Pin Bowling - Councillor Brooker declared that his daughter was employed at Salt Hill Leisure Facility and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

### 49. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council held on 29 November 2016 and 22 December 2016.

**Resolved** - That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and Part I minutes from 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2016 be approved as a correct record.

### 50. To receive the Mayor's Communications.

The Mayor informed the meeting that Councillor Morris had recently been admitted to hospital and was waiting to be transferred to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford for surgery later that week. Members wished Councillor Morris best wishes for his surgery and return to better health.

### 51. Questions from Electors under Procedure Rule 9.

The Mayor advised that two elector questions had been received within the relevant time period. It was noted that the questioners were not present and a written copy of the replies would be forwarded to them.

**52. Petition: Salt Hill Leisure Facility - Ten Pin Bowling**

*(Councillor Brooker left the meeting during consideration of this item)*

The Mayor invited Mr Whitehouse, Chief Executive of Slough Community Leisure (SCL) who had organised the 1518 signature petition, and Mr Ali, Trustee of SCL to address the meeting.

Following completion of the subsequent debate,

It was moved by Councillor Bal,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

“That no further action be taken with regard to the petition.”

A prior request having been made for the record of the voting:

There voted for the proposal:

Councillors Ajaib, Anderson, Bal, Bedi, Carter, Chaudhry, Dar, Davis, M  
Hollidge, N Hollidge, Hussain, Mann, Matloob, Munawar, Nazir, Pantelic,  
Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Rana, Rasib, Sadiq, A.Sandhu, Sarfraz, Shah, Sharif,  
Sohal, Swindlehurst and Usmani ..... 29

There voted against the proposal:

Councillors Bains, Chahal, Amarpreet Dhaliwal, R S Sandhu, Smith, Strutton and  
Wright ..... 7

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor Arvind Dhaliwal ..... 1

**Resolved** – That no further action be taken with regard to the petition.

*(Councillor Brooker re-joined the meeting)*

**53. Recommendations of the Cabinet from its meetings held on 19th December 2016 and 23rd January 2017**

'A' - Proposal to Establish Housing Company Group Structure

It was proposed by Councillor Ajaib,  
Seconded by Councillor Munawar,

- “(a) That the Cabinet decision taken on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016 to establish two wholly owned subsidiary housing companies be noted, including the matters resolved as detailed in paragraph 6.1 of the report.

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- (b) That up to £3.1m of additional capital expenditure be incurred for Slough Homes to acquire suitable properties, which will be secured on property, and that £28m be allocated to Herschel Homes and £23.4m allocated to Slough Homes in the period to 31 March 2019 to acquire properties as set out in the business plan.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried by 30 votes to 7 votes with 1 abstention.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the Cabinet decision taken on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016 to establish two wholly owned subsidiary housing companies be noted, including the matters resolved as detailed in paragraph 6.1 of the report.
- (b) That up to £3.1m of additional capital expenditure be incurred for Slough Homes to acquire suitable properties, which will be secured on property, and that £28m be allocated to Herschel Homes and £23.4m allocated to Slough Homes in the period to 31 March 2019 to acquire properties as set out in the business plan.

‘B’ - Five Year Plan 2017-2021

It was proposed by Councillor Munawar,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

“That the refresh of the Five Year Plan, attached at Appendix A to the report, be agreed.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**Resolved –** That the refresh of the Five Year Plan, attached at Appendix A to the report, be agreed.

‘C’ – Housing Revenue Account Rents & Service Charges 2017-18

It was proposed by Councillor Ajaib,  
Seconded by Councillor Munawar,

- “(a) That Council house dwelling rents for 2017/18 to decrease by 1% over the 2016/17 rent with effect from Monday 3rd April 2017. This is in line with current government guidelines and legislation.
- (b) That Garage rents, heating, utility and ancillary charges to increase by 2.0% with effect from Monday 3rd April 2017. This is based upon the September RPI figure.
- (c) That Service charges to increase by 2.0% with effect from Monday 3rd April 2017. This is based upon the September RPI figure.

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- (d) That 'other committee' property rents to increase by an average of 2.0% from Monday 3rd April 2017 in line with the September RPI figure."

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried unanimously.

### **Resolved –**

- (a) That Council house dwelling rents for 2017/18 to decrease by 1% over the 2016/17 rent with effect from Monday 3rd April 2017. This is in line with current government guidelines and legislation.
- (b) That Garage rents, heating, utility and ancillary charges to increase by 2.0% with effect from Monday 3rd April 2017. This is based upon the September RPI figure.
- (c) That Service charges to increase by 2.0% with effect from Monday 3rd April 2017. This is based upon the September RPI figure.
- (d) That 'other committee' property rents to increase by an average of 2.0% from Monday 3rd April 2017 in line with the September RPI figure.

## **54. Review of Constitution**

It was proposed by Councillor Hussain,  
Seconded by Councillor Munawar,

- “(a) That the Developer’s briefings to Planning Committee Protocol as set out at Appendix A be approved and incorporated into the Constitution.
- (b) That the amendments to Part 5.2 of the Constitution - Code of Conduct for Councillors and Officers in relation to Planning and Licensing matters as set out in Appendix B be approved.
- (c) That Part 3.6 of the Constitution – Scheme of Delegation to Officers – Proper Officer Functions – Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 be amended as set out in Appendix C.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried unanimously.

### **Resolved –**

- (a) That the Developer’s briefings to Planning Committee Protocol as set out at Appendix A be approved and incorporated into the Constitution.
- (b) That the amendments to Part 5.2 of the Constitution - Code of Conduct for Councillors and Officers in relation to Planning and Licensing matters as set out in Appendix B be approved.

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- (c) That Part 3.6 of the Constitution – Scheme of Delegation to Officers – Proper Officer Functions – Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 be amended as set out in Appendix C.

**55. Appointment of Interim Head of Paid Service**

It was proposed by Councillor Munawar,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

“That Roger Parkin, Interim Chief Executive, be appointed as the Council’s Interim Head of Paid Services with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2017.”

The recommendation was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**Resolved** - That Roger Parkin, Interim Chief Executive, be appointed as the Council’s Interim Head of Paid Services with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2017.

**56. Appointment Process for Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)**

Councillor Munawar moved, as an amendment,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

- “(a) That the job description, person specification, terms and conditions and the advert for the post of Chief Executive as attached at Appendices A to D of the Council report) be approved;
- (b) That, in view of the nature of the post, an exception be made to the Council’s Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure and that the recruitment process be as follows:
- The post be advertised internally and externally simultaneously;
  - All internal applicants that meet the person specification for the post be guaranteed an interview.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried by 36 votes to 1 vote with 1 abstention.

**Resolved -**

- (a) That the job description, person specification, terms and conditions and the advert for the post of Chief Executive as attached at Appendices A to D of the Council report) be approved;
- (b) That, in view of the nature of the post, an exception be made to the Council’s Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure and that the recruitment process be as follows:
- The post be advertised internally and externally simultaneously;

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- All internal applicants that meet the person specification for the post be guaranteed an interview.

**57. To consider Motions submitted under procedure Rule 14.**

A) Electoral Fraud

It was moved by Councillor Bains,  
Seconded by Councillor Amarpreet Dhaliwal,

“This Council resolves to:

- Welcome the Government’s announcement in December 2016 that it will introduce a number of measures to combat electoral fraud, in response to Sir Eric Pickles’ independent report [‘Securing the Ballot’](#), and
- Encourage the Council’s Returning Officer to work with the Cabinet Office to ensure that Slough bids to be involved in a pilot scheme to trial recommendations such as piloting the use of ID in polling stations across Slough at the next Local Government elections in 2018.”

The motion was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**Resolved -**

- That the Government’s announcement in December 2016 that it will introduce a number of measures to combat electoral fraud, in response to Sir Eric Pickles’ independent report [‘Securing the Ballot’](#), be welcomed and
- That the Council’s Returning Officer be encouraged to work with the Cabinet Office to ensure that Slough bids to be involved in a pilot scheme to trial recommendations such as piloting the use of ID in polling stations across Slough at the next Local Government elections in 2018.

*(Councillor Sharif left the meeting)*

B) Education Funding Reductions

It was moved by Councillor Hussain,  
Seconded by Councillor Brooker,

“This Council opposes the governments planned £12.4 million cuts to Slough’s schools. Therefore the Council resolves to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Education to oppose these cuts and seek assurances that they will not adversely affect our children’s attainment;
- Write to our local MP to ensure that the cuts facing our schools are raised in Parliament;
- Write to Slough’s schools to ensure they are prepared for the level of cuts they face and ascertain what support they require to continue to provide our children with an excellent education;



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- Request the Education and Children’s Service Scrutiny Panel look into the cuts planned for Slough’s schools as a matter of urgency.”

It was moved by Councillor Amarpreet Dhaliwal, as an amendment,  
Seconded by Councillor Bains,

“This Council opposes the governments planned £12.4 million any funding cuts to Slough’s schools. Therefore the Council resolves to:

~~Write to the Secretary of State for Education to oppose these cuts and seek assurances that they will not adversely affect our children’s attainment;~~  
~~Write to our local MP to ensure that the cuts facing our schools are raised in Parliament;~~  
~~Write to Slough’s schools to ensure they are prepared for the level of cuts they face and ascertain what support they require to continue to provide our children with an excellent education;~~

- Engage the government through the Schools National Funding Formula Stage 2 consultation to articulate the issues faced by Slough and put forward its own recommendations towards the fairer funding formula.
- Request the Education and Children’s Service Scrutiny Panel look into the any cuts planned for Slough’s schools when the new fairer funding formula is released.
- Appoint a dedicated Education & Children’s services cabinet commissioner to focus on resisting and mitigating against any detrimental funding outcomes.

The amendment was put to the vote with 7 votes for 29 against and 1 abstention. The amendment to the motion was lost.

It was moved by Councillor Hussain, as an amendment to the original motion,  
Seconded by Councillor Brooker,

“This Council opposes the governments planned £12.4 million cuts and any funding cuts to Slough’s schools. Therefore the Council resolves to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Education to oppose these cuts and seek assurances that they will not adversely affect our children’s attainment;
- Write to our local MP~~s~~ to ensure that the cuts facing our schools are raised in Parliament;
- Write to Slough’s schools to ensure they are prepared for the level of cuts they face and ascertain what support they require to continue to provide our children with an excellent education;
- Request the Education and Children’s Service Scrutiny Panel look into the cuts planned for Slough’s schools as a matter of urgency.”

The amended motion was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**Resolved** – That the Council opposes the governments planned cuts and any funding cuts to Slough’s schools and resolves to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Education to oppose these cuts and seek assurances that they will not adversely affect our children’s attainment;
- Write to our local MPs to ensure that the cuts facing our schools are raised in Parliament;
- Write to Slough’s schools to ensure they are prepared for the level of cuts they face and ascertain what support they require to continue to provide our children with an excellent education;
- Request the Education and Children’s Service Scrutiny Panel look into the cuts planned for Slough’s schools as a matter of urgency.

**58. To note Questions from Members under Procedure Rule 10 (as tabled).**

A copy of the question, and reply to the question, submitted by Councillor Swindlehurst was tabled.

**59. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved** - That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item in Part 2 of the Agenda, as it involves information relating to an individual and the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding the information) as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (amended).

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm and closed at 9.33 pm)

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council for the Borough of Slough held at The Curve - William Street, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 1XY on Thursday, 23rd February, 2017 at 7.00 pm

**Present:-** The Worshipful the Mayor (Arvind Dhaliwal), in the chair; Councillors Ajaib, Bains, Bal, Bedi (from 7.15pm), Brooker, Carter, Chahal, Chaudhry, Chohan, Dar, Davis, Amarpreet Dhaliwal, M Holledge, N Holledge, Hussain, Matloob, Munawar, Nazir, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Rana, Sadiq, A Sandhu, R Sandhu, Sarfraz, Shah, Sharif, Smith, Sohal, Strutton, Swindlehurst (from 7.08pm), Usmani and Wright

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillors Anderson, Cheema, Coad, Mann and Rasib

### 62. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bal declared that his daughter worked for Slough Borough Council.

### 63. Mayor's Announcement

The Mayor announced, with great sadness, that Councillor Morris had passed away earlier that morning. Although Councillor Morris had been unwell in recent weeks, this was very unexpected and sad news. The Mayor stated that Councillor Morris was a dedicated and committed Councillor and on behalf of the Council conveyed condolences to his family and friends.

A number of Members paid tribute to Councillor Morris, following which a minute silence was held in memory of Councillor Morris.

### 64. Revenue Budget 2017/18

It was moved by Councillor Munawar,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

- “(a) That in pursuance of the powers conferred on the Council as the billing authority for its area by the Local Government Finance Acts (the Acts), the Council Tax for the Slough area for the year ending 31 March 2018 is as specified below and that the Council Tax be levied accordingly.
- (b) That it be noted that at its meeting on 19 December 2016 Cabinet calculated the following Tax Base amounts for the financial year 2017/18 in accordance with Regulations made under sections 31B (3) and 34(4) of the Act:
  - (i) 41,174.7 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities

(Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations) as the Council Tax Base for the whole of the Slough area for the year 2017/18; and

(ii) The sums below being the amounts of Council Tax Base for the Parishes within Slough for 2017/18:

a)	Parish of Britwell	840.7
b)	Parish of Colnbrook with Poyle	1,866.4
c)	Parish of Wexham	1,329.6

(c) That the following amounts be now calculated for the year 2017/18 in accordance with sections 31A to 36 of the Act:

(i) £385,640,524 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A (2)(a) to (f) of the Act.(Gross Expenditure);

(ii) £332,938,555 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A (3) (a) to (d) of the Act.(Gross Income);

(iii) £52,701,969 being the amount by which the aggregate at paragraph c (i) above exceeds the aggregate at paragraph c (ii) above calculated by the Council as its council tax requirement for the year as set out in section 31A(4) of the Act. (Council Tax Requirement);

(iv) £1,279.96 being the amount at paragraph c(iii) above divided by the amount at paragraph b(i) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, including the requirements for Parish precepts.

(v) That for the year 2017/18 the Council determines in accordance with section 34 (1) of the Act, Total Special Items of £223,349 representing the total of Parish Precepts for that year.

(vi) £1,274.54 being the amount at paragraph c (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at paragraph c (v) above by the relevant amounts at paragraph b (i) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

(vii) Valuation Bands

<b>Band</b>	<b>Slough Area</b>	<b>Parish of Britwell</b>	<b>Parish of Colnbrook with Poyle</b>	<b>Parish of Wexham Court</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
A	849.69	44.06	32.93	24.48

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B	991.31	51.41	38.42	28.56
C	1,132.92	58.75	43.91	32.64
D	1,274.54	66.10	49.40	36.72
E	1,557.77	80.79	60.38	44.89
F	1,841.00	95.47	71.36	53.05
G	2,124.23	110.16	82.33	61.21
H	2,549.08	132.19	98.80	73.45

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at paragraph c (iv) and c (vi) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5 (1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 36 (1) of the Act, as the amount to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (viii) That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 the Thames Valley Police Authority precept has been increased by 1.99%. The following amounts are stated in accordance with section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Thames Valley £</b>
A	113.52
B	132.44
C	151.36
D	170.28
E	208.12
F	245.96
G	283.80
H	340.56

- (ix) That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority has been increased by 1.99% as the following amount in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Royal Berkshire Fire Authority £</b>
A	41.66
B	48.60
C	55.55
D	62.49
E	76.37
F	90.26
G	104.15

H	124.98
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***These precepts have not been formally proposed or agreed by the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and may be revised when agreed.***

- (x) Note that arising from these recommendations, and assuming the major precepts are agreed, the overall Council Tax for Slough Borough Council including the precepting authorities will be as follows:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Slough</b>	<b>Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Thames Valley</b>	<b>Royal Berkshire Fire Authority</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
A	849.69	113.52	41.66	1,004.87
B	991.31	132.44	48.60	1,172.35
C	1,132.92	151.36	55.55	1,339.83
D	1,274.54	170.28	62.49	1,507.31
E	1,557.77	208.12	76.37	1,842.26
F	1,841.00	245.96	90.26	2,177.22
G	2,124.23	283.80	104.15	2,512.18
H	2,549.08	340.56	124.98	3,014.62

- (xi) That the Section 151 Officer be and is hereby authorised to give due notice of the said Council Tax in the manner provided by Section 38(2) of the 2012 Act.
- (xii) That the Section 151 Officer be and is hereby authorised when necessary to apply for a summons against any Council Tax payer or non-domestic ratepayer on whom an account for the said tax or rate and arrears has been duly served and who has failed to pay the amounts due to take all subsequent necessary action to recover them promptly.
- (xiii) That the Section 151 Officer be authorised to collect (and disperse from the relevant accounts) the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rate and that whenever the office of the Section 151 Officer is vacant or the holder thereof is for any reason unable to act, the Chief Executive or such other authorised post-holder be authorised to act as before said in his or her stead.
- (xiv) Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2017/18 (excluding Parish precepts) is £52,478,620.
- (xv) That in the event that there are any changes to the provisional precept of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

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arising from their precept setting meeting being held on 27 February 2017, the Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to enact all relevant changes to the Revenue Budget 2017/18, Statutory Resolution and council tax levels, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Leader of the Opposition Group.

**Fees and Charges –**

- (e) That the Council resolves to increase Fees and charges as outlined in Appendix F for 2017/18.

**Pay Policy –**

- (f) That the Pay Policy outlined in Appendix M be noted for Council approval:

**Local Government Finance Settlement 2017/18 -**

- (g) It must be noted that the government has delayed its debate on the Local Government Finance Settlement 2017/18 until after this report is published. Consequently, it is agreed that if there is any substantial changes in the amount of funding received by the Council at the final settlement, the Section 151 Officer will be authorised to use the Council’s reserves to balance the overall budget for 2017/18.
- (h) That details contained within appendices A to M, as attached to the report, be noted.
- (i) That the tabled documents setting out the Leadership’s priorities for the Revenue Budget 2017/18 be noted.”

No amendments were put.

The recommendation was put and carried and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 a record of the vote was taken as follows:-

There voted for the recommendations:-

Councillors Ajaib, Bal, Bedi, Brooker, Carter, Chaudhry, Chohan, Dar, Davis, M Holledge, N Holledge, Hussain, Matloob, Munawar, Nazir, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Rana, Sadiq, A.Sandhu, Sarfraz, Shah, Sharif, Sohal, Swindlehurst and Usmani ..... 28

There voted against the recommendations:

Councillors Bains, Chahal, Amarpreet Dhaliwal, R S Sandhu, Smith, Strutton and Wright ..... 7

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor Arvind Dhaliwal ..... 1

**Resolved –**

- (a) That in pursuance of the powers conferred on the Council as the billing authority for its area by the Local Government Finance Acts (the Acts), the Council Tax for the Slough area for the year ending 31 March 2018 is as specified below and that the Council Tax be levied accordingly.
- (b) That it be noted that at its meeting on 19 December 2016 Cabinet calculated the following Tax Base amounts for the financial year 2017/18 in accordance with Regulations made under sections 31B (3) and 34(4) of the Act:
- (i) 41,174.7 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations) as the Council Tax Base for the whole of the Slough area for the year 2017/18; and
- (ii) The sums below being the amounts of Council Tax Base for the Parishes within Slough for 2017/18:
- |    |                                |         |
|----|--------------------------------|---------|
| a) | Parish of Britwell             | 840.7   |
| b) | Parish of Colnbrook with Poyle | 1,866.4 |
| c) | Parish of Wexham               | 1,329.6 |
- (c) That the following amounts be now calculated for the year 2017/18 in accordance with sections 31A to 36 of the Act:
- (i) £385,640,524 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A (2)(a) to (f) of the Act.(Gross Expenditure);
- (ii) £332,938,555 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A (3) (a) to (d) of the Act.(Gross Income);
- (iii) £52,701,969 being the amount by which the aggregate at paragraph c (i) above exceeds the aggregate at paragraph c (ii) above calculated by the Council as its council tax requirement for the year as set out in section 31A(4) of the Act. (Council Tax Requirement);
- (iv) £1,279.96 being the amount at paragraph c(iii) above divided by the amount at paragraph b(i) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, including the requirements for Parish precepts.
- (v) That for the year 2017/18 the Council determines in accordance with section 34 (1) of the Act, Total Special



Items of £223,349 representing the total of Parish Precepts for that year.

- (vi) £1,274.54 being the amount at paragraph c (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at paragraph c (v) above by the relevant amounts at paragraph b (i) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

- (vii) Valuation Bands

<b>Band</b>	<b>Slough Area £</b>	<b>Parish of Britwell £</b>	<b>Parish of Colnbrook with Poyle £</b>	<b>Parish of Wexham Court £</b>
A	849.69	44.06	32.93	24.48
B	991.31	51.41	38.42	28.56
C	1,132.92	58.75	43.91	32.64
D	1,274.54	66.10	49.40	36.72
E	1,557.77	80.79	60.38	44.89
F	1,841.00	95.47	71.36	53.05
G	2,124.23	110.16	82.33	61.21
H	2,549.08	132.19	98.80	73.45

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at paragraph c (iv) and c (vi) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5 (1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 36 (1) of the Act, as the amount to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (viii) That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 the Thames Valley Police Authority precept has been increased by 1.99%. The following amounts are stated in accordance with section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Thames Valley £</b>
A	113.52
B	132.44
C	151.36
D	170.28
E	208.12

F	245.96
G	283.80
H	340.56

- (ix) That it be noted that for the year 2017/18 the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority has been increased by 1.99% as the following amount in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band	Royal Berkshire Fire Authority £
A	41.66
B	48.60
C	55.55
D	62.49
E	76.37
F	90.26
G	104.15
H	124.98

***These precepts have not been formally proposed or agreed by the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and may be revised when agreed.***

- (x) Note that arising from these recommendations, and assuming the major precepts are agreed, the overall Council Tax for Slough Borough Council including the precepting authorities will be as follows:

Band	Slough £	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Thames Valley £	Royal Berkshire Fire Authority £	TOTAL £
A	849.69	113.52	41.66	1,004.87
B	991.31	132.44	48.60	1,172.35
C	1,132.92	151.36	55.55	1,339.83
D	1,274.54	170.28	62.49	1,507.31
E	1,557.77	208.12	76.37	1,842.26
F	1,841.00	245.96	90.26	2,177.22
G	2,124.23	283.80	104.15	2,512.18
H	2,549.08	340.56	124.98	3,014.62

- (xi) That the Section 151 Officer be and is hereby authorised to give due notice of the said Council Tax in the manner provided by Section 38(2) of the 2012 Act.
- (xii) That the Section 151 Officer be and is hereby authorised when necessary to apply for a summons against any

## **Council - 23.02.17**

Council Tax payer or non-domestic ratepayer on whom an account for the said tax or rate and arrears has been duly served and who has failed to pay the amounts due to take all subsequent necessary action to recover them promptly.

- (xiii) That the Section 151 Officer be authorised to collect (and disperse from the relevant accounts) the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rate and that whenever the office of the Section 151 Officer is vacant or the holder thereof is for any reason unable to act, the Chief Executive or such other authorised post-holder be authorised to act as before said in his or her stead.
- (xiv) Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2017/18 (excluding Parish precepts) is £52,478,620.
- (xv) That in the event that there are any changes to the provisional precept of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority arising from their precept setting meeting being held on 27 February 2017, the Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to enact all relevant changes to the Revenue Budget 2017/18, Statutory Resolution and council tax levels, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Leader of the Opposition Group.

### **Fees and Charges –**

- (e) That the Council resolves to increase Fees and charges as outlined in Appendix F for 2017/18.

### **Pay Policy –**

- (f) That the Pay Policy outlined in Appendix M be noted for Council approval:

### **Local Government Finance Settlement 2017/18 -**

- (g) It must be noted that the government has delayed its debate on the Local Government Finance Settlement 2017/18 until after this report is published. Consequently, it is agreed that if there is any substantial changes in the amount of funding received by the Council at the final settlement, the Section 151 Officer will be authorised to use the Council's reserves to balance the overall budget for 2017/18.
- (h) That details contained within appendices A to M, as attached to the report, be noted.
- (i) That the tabled documents setting out the Leadership's priorities for the Revenue Budget 2017/18 be noted.

**65. Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18**

It was moved by Councillor Munawar,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

“That the Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18, as at Appendix A to the report, be approved.”

The recommendation was put and carried and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 a record of the vote was taken as follows:-

There voted for the recommendation:-

Councillors Ajaib, Bains, Bal, Bedi, Brooker, Carter, Chahal, Chaudhry, Chohan, Dar, Davis, Amarpreet Dhaliwal, M Holledge, N Holledge, Hussain, Matloob, Munawar, Nazir, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Rana, Sadiq, A.Sandhu, R S Sandhu, Sarfraz, Shah, Sharif, Smith, Sohal, Strutton, Swindlehurst, Usmani and Wright ..... 35

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor Arvind Dhaliwal ..... 1

**Resolved** - That the Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18, as at Appendix A to the report, be approved.

**66. Capital Strategy 2017/23**

It was moved by Councillor Munawar,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

“(a) That the capital strategy of **£300m** and the Minimum Revenue Provision be approved.

(b) That the Council notes the notional costs of borrowing for the capital programme to the revenue budget will be an increase of up to **£4.2m** per annum commencing during the period of the capital strategy to fund borrowing.

(c) That the principles underpinning the capital programme in paragraph 5.1.2 and the Minimum Revenue Provision principles in section 6 be approved.

(d) That appendices A and B detailing the capital programmes (subject to these having approved Final Business Cases by the Capital Strategy Board) be approved.”

The recommendation was put and carried and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 a record of the vote was taken as follows:-

**Council - 23.02.17**

There voted for the recommendations:-

Councillors Ajaib, Bal, Bedi, Brooker, Carter, Chaudhry, Chohan, Dar, Davis, M Holledge, N Holledge, Hussain, Matloob, Munawar, Nazir, Pantelic, Parmar, Plenty, Qaseem, Rana, Sadiq, A.Sandhu, Sarfraz, Shah, Sharif, Sohal, Swindlehurst and Usmani .....28

There voted against the proposal:

Councillors Bains, Chahal, Amarpreet Dhaliwal, R S Sandhu, Smith, Strutton and Wright ..... 7

There abstained from voting:

The Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor Arvind Dhaliwal ..... 1

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the capital strategy of **£300m** and the Minimum Revenue Provision be approved.
- (b) That the Council notes the notional costs of borrowing for the capital programme to the revenue budget will be an increase of up to **£4.2m** per annum commencing during the period of the capital strategy to fund borrowing.
- (c) That the principles underpinning the capital programme in paragraph 5.1.2 and the Minimum Revenue Provision principles in section 6 be approved.
- (d) That appendices A and B detailing the capital programmes (subject to these having approved Final Business Cases by the Capital Strategy Board) be approved.

**67. Appointment of Directors**

It was moved by Councillor Munawar,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

- “(a) That the appointment of Alan Sinclair to the statutory role of Director of Adult Social Care be approved and confirmed.
- (b) That the appointment of Cate Duffy to the statutory role of Director of Children, Learning and Skills be approved and confirmed.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**Resolved -**

- (a) That the appointment of Alan Sinclair to the statutory role of Director of Adult Social Care be approved and confirmed.

## **Council - 23.02.17**

- (b) That the appointment of Cate Duffy to the statutory role of Director of Children, Learning and Skills be approved and confirmed.

### **68. Calendar of Meetings 2017/18**

It was proposed by Councillor Munawar,  
Seconded by Councillor Hussain,

- “(a) That the calendar of meetings for the period May 2017 to December 2018 attached as Appendix A be approved.
- (b) That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make amendments to the calendar resulting from any constitutional changes that may be agreed, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.”

The recommendations were put to the vote and carried unanimously.

#### **Resolved -**

- (a) That the calendar of meetings for the period May 2017 to December 2018 attached as Appendix A be approved.
- (b) That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make amendments to the calendar resulting from any constitutional changes that may be agreed, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.00 pm and closed at 7.27 pm)

**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Council                      **DATE:** 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
**CONTACT OFFICER:** Nick Pontone, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
**(For all Enquiries)** (01753) 875120  
**WARD(S):** All

**PART I**  
**FOR DECISION**

**RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CABINET FROM ITS MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017**

**HOUSING STRATEGY FOR SLOUGH**

1. **Purpose of Report**

To consider the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017 to approve the Housing Strategy for Slough.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Council is requested to resolve that the draft Housing Strategy 2016-2021, as at Appendix C, be approved.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

The Housing Strategy will act as the delivery mechanism to achieve a number of the Council's corporate aims and is well aligned with the JSNA. The Strategy is specifically aimed at delivering Outcome 4 of the new Five Year Plan: "Our residents will have access to good quality homes." The Housing Strategy has been developed in tandem with the preparatory work for the Local Plan.

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The connection between health and wellbeing and good quality housing is well established. The Housing Strategy sets out the Council's ambition to regenerate neighbourhoods, improve the quality of housing and to contribute to the supply of new homes in Slough.

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The Housing Strategy is specifically aimed at delivering Outcome 4 of the Council's overarching Five Year Plan 2017 -2021:

"Our residents will have access to good quality homes"

However, there are strong links with all the other outcomes, under our banner of "putting people first";

Outcome 1: Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.

Outcome 2: Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs.

Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.

Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow business and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents.

#### 4. **Other Implications**

##### (a) **Financial**

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. However, given the wide-ranging nature of the policy proposals within the Strategy there will be financial impacts arising from the delivery of those policies. These will be highlighted as each individual policy item is brought forward for consideration.

##### (b) **Risk Management**

There are no reported risks associated with this report. The draft Strategy itself deals with a number of Housing matters and policies where there are risks around delivery, both for the council and for residents. These are discussed in detail in the body of the report.

##### (c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

The draft Strategy deals with the Council's statutory responsibilities in a number of different areas of activity, for example;

- Powers of enforcement against private landlords;
- Obligations towards homeless households;
- The Council's responsibilities as a landlord.

Where relevant, legal implications relating to these areas are discussed within the body of the Strategy.

##### (d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The strategy advances equality and all reasonable steps have been taken to understand and mitigate negative impact. An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached to this report. If following a review of the allocation policy a decision is made to change it a further review will be required to understand the impact on protected groups.

#### 5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 The Slough Housing Strategy sets out the priorities, opportunities and challenges for housing in Slough over the five years to 2021. However, it also forms one of the building blocks for the growth and development of the town over the next 20 years, so that Slough becomes a place where people work, play, rest and stay. It has been developed alongside the preparatory work for the Local Plan to ensure a consistency of approach in looking over this longer timeframe. So in addition to some shorter term objectives the Strategy introduces some ideas which look to the



much longer term such as the future of the Council's housing stock, the provision of a better range of homes for older people and providing a balance of homes to rent and to buy.

## 5.2 The Strategy sets out 5 key themes;

**Theme 1; New Housing Supply** – ensuring the right supply and mix of new homes and increasing affordable housing through the efficient use of land and capital resources.

**Theme 2; Private Sector** - that the private housing sector provides sufficient good quality market housing through support for landlords and tenants and, where necessary, robust quality control and regulation.

**Theme 3; Council Homes** - are managed and maintained to a high standard and the Council builds new homes for Slough residents

**Theme 4; Homelessness and Housing Need** - that homelessness and rough sleeping are reduced through prevention

**Theme 5; Special Needs and Vulnerable Groups** - that specialist accommodation is available for vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our community particularly young people, older people, people with disabilities and those on restricted incomes.

## 5.3 Within the document, each objective is accompanied by key points of evidence and an Action Plan. The latter are reproduced at the end of the Strategy as a consolidated Action Plan which will be the format in which progress will be monitored over the next 5 years. Publication of the final document will be accompanied by an Evidence Base supporting the proposals in the Strategy.

## 5.4 **Theme 1; Supply of New Homes** The Strategy sets out in detail the case for planning for more new homes in Borough over the next 5 years and beyond to meet existing demands and to cater for population and economic growth. This new provision needs to be both to buy and to rent and to be balanced to meet the full range of housing needs, including key workers who currently have difficulty in finding suitable accommodation. A major priority will be the provision of affordable housing for households who cannot accommodate themselves in the market, incorporating the range of affordable types envisaged by the National Planning Policy Framework. The Strategy sets out how the Council itself intends to take a proactive lead in ensuring the delivery of new homes. Key points in the Action Plan include;

- Enabling the provision of 927 new units of housing per year for Slough in line with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- A commitment that the Council will directly deliver or facilitate a programme 200 units per year of new housing, including affordable housing, over the life of the Strategy and beyond.
- Develop a new Affordable Housing Policy for Slough encompassing the idea of a *Slough Living Rent*.

- Maximising the provision of affordable housing on Council-owned land through infill development and estate renewal, including the net gain of up to 1,000 units on HRA land over the period 2016 to 2031.
- Prioritising available funds and council assets to provide for the delivery of affordable housing schemes in partnership with SUR and Housing Associations.
- Working with private and public sector partners to acquire and assemble sites to facilitate the delivery of new housing.
- Developing initiatives to increase housing opportunities for key workers.
- Improving partnership arrangements with housing associations to facilitate the delivery of new affordable homes.
- Extending the programme of Council mortgage lending through our existing LAPP scheme.
- Providing new homes for particular groups within the community where required, for example those needing extra care or care leavers.

## **Theme 2; Private Rented Sector**

- 5.5 One family in four in Slough rents their home from a private landlord and this number is growing. Whilst most landlords provide a good service a significant minority do not meet their legal obligations and are responsible for tenants living in unsuitable and sometimes dangerous conditions. National statistics show that this is the Housing sector most likely to display poor housing conditions. This is compounded in Slough by very high levels of overcrowding. This can lead to poor health and educational and economic disadvantage. The Council has important legal obligations to ensure good standards in private sector homes.
- 5.6 The draft Housing Strategy commits the Council to adopting a pro-active approach to supporting good landlords and taking rigorous enforcement action against poor ones. Key action points include;
- Using the two, new wholly-owned Subsidiary Housing Companies, Herschel Homes and James Elliman Homes, to act as exemplar private landlords in the borough and to assist homeless households and others on low or modest incomes to access affordable private sector homes.
  - Undertake a feasibility study for introducing a borough-wide Landlord Registration Scheme. This is to protect good landlords and drive out rogue or criminal landlords from Slough.
  - Following the announcement of the expansion of mandatory HMO licensing, implement the scheme once the commencement date has been announced.
  - Undertake rigorous enforcement and prosecution against rogue landlords who have a history of breaking the law.
  - Support responsible landlords and work with them to become professional and grow their business.
  - Use all available powers to bring empty properties back into use.
  - Work with utility companies and other agencies to insulate homes and improve the energy ratings of older buildings.
  - Through partnership working, particularly with Adult Services, Public Health and the CCG, develop services to allow elderly and disabled residents to live independently in their home and reduce the impact of poor housing on the health of borough residents.
  - Build a well-resourced and self-financing Private Sector Housing Service to support good landlords and carry out the Council's statutory responsibilities towards tenants and landlords.

### **Theme 3; Council Homes**

5.7 The Council's housing stock is a vital resource for the residents of Slough. The 7,100 rented and leasehold properties are the Council's most valuable physical asset. The finances relating to the homes are handled in a separate financial account – the Housing Revenue Account (HRA.) The Council is committed to investing in its housing stock to further improve the quality of residents' homes and to build new council homes. In the short term the HRA is stable with plans to invest £100m in existing homes over the next 7 years and £40m in new council homes. However, there are threats and uncertainties in the medium term, mainly resulting from changes in Government policy. These issues include a mandatory 1% reduction in rents and a requirement by Government for the Council to pay it a capital sum resulting from the sale of higher value voids. The re-commissioning of the repairs, maintenance and investment services will offer the opportunity to shift the emphasis of these services to 30% routine repairs and 70% planned maintenance and investment works. The new contract will also provide opportunities deliver a more streamlined, accessible service to residents.

5.8 The draft Housing Strategy proposes the following key action points;

- In the light of the results of a new stock condition survey and the provisions of the Housing and Planning Act, produce an updated HRA Business Plan in March 2017.
- In partnership with residents, undertake a formal asset management review and Options Appraisal of the Council's housing stock for completion by December 2017.
- Complete the existing programme of 190 new homes on Housing-owned land and seek to continue the programme beyond 2020.
- Adopt the following priorities for improving the services to residents;
  - o Awarding a new Repairs, Maintenance and Investment contract for council homes to improve the quality and responsiveness of repair for residents and to act as a catalyst for the development of local and in-house capacity to provide maintenance services.
  - o Engaging and enabling residents so as to create a culture of accountability and responsibility and to broaden opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to be involved in the development and monitoring of services.
  - o Increasing resident satisfaction through greater responsiveness to customers and in particular through the greater use of digital technology.
- Develop a new Tenancy Strategy for council tenancies in the light of the Housing and Planning Act

### **Theme 4; Homelessness and Housing Needs**

5.9 The Housing Strategy sets out in some detail how the combination of the pressure of a growing population, rising rents and house prices and static or reducing levels of welfare benefits have led to increasing levels of homelessness in the last 2 years. This is evident both in the numbers of households accepted as homeless and in the scale of the use of temporary accommodation, including Bed & Breakfast. The number of Rough Sleepers also appears to be on the rise. For Slough, unlike other boroughs which are facing some of the same pressures, there is the additional factor of the pressure of the placement of homeless families into Slough by other councils and in particular London Boroughs. This is placing additional pressure on the local housing market, stretching local health and care services and leading to unsatisfactory outcomes for the households concerned. The overall approach of the Strategy is to focus on homelessness

prevention in collaboration with partner agencies. The headline action points are to;

- Develop and adopt a Preventing Homelessness strategy in collaboration with clients, landlords, the voluntary sector and other partner agencies.
- Develop new partnerships with private and third sector landlords to maximise opportunities for tenancies for homeless families and individuals.
- Use James Elliman Homes to acquire homes to alleviate the pressures on temporary accommodation and Bed & Breakfast provision.
- End the use of Bed & Breakfast for families with children.
- Review the Council's Allocation Scheme to re-evaluate the priority which homeless people receive under the scheme.
- Work with the Health sector and other agencies to monitor and address the health and care needs of vulnerable homeless people placed in Slough by other Local Authorities and require those authorities to review their placement and notification policies.
- Introduced improved arrangements for Rough Sleepers, especially during periods of cold weather.

### **Theme 5; Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable People**

5.10 Against a background of a growth in the number of older people in the Borough over the next 20 years the Housing Strategy discusses the requirements for specialist accommodation both for people who need support and for people who have mobility problems or a disability. It also highlights the links between health and poor housing conditions. Going forward the document stresses the need for close collaboration in the development of services between Housing, the Children's Trust, Adult Social Care and Public Health. Amongst the key action points are to;

- Build on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on health and disability housing needs and undertake further detailed work with partners and stakeholders to examine what housing options are required to best meet current and future demand and changing needs.
- Through our new Subsidiary Housing Company, James Elliman Homes, develop new partnerships with the Children's Trust, Health services and Adult Social Care to maximise opportunities for specialist and alternative accommodation to be delivered locally and more cost effectively.
- In collaboration with the Children's Trust, ensure there is an adequate supply of accommodation for care leavers.
- Deliver up to 3 new mixed use extra care schemes in the borough during the life of this strategy where there is established local need.
- Develop an Older Persons Housing Strategy for Slough.
- Within the review of the Scheme of Allocation, ensure full account is taken of the needs of people with a disability.

### **Significant changes since the consultation draft**

5.11 A number of changes have been made to the document since the publication of the consultation draft. These reflect both comments made in the consultation

itself and areas where updating was required. The most significant areas of change have been in the following areas;

- *Affordable Housing Policy*; Theme 1 of the strategy contains an extensive discussion of the provision of affordable housing in the Borough. This section has been updated to state that the Council will now be producing an updated Affordable Housing policy, including the introduction of a “Slough Living Rent” as an affordable rented housing option to sit alongside traditional social housing Target rents.
- *Housing White Paper*; In February 2017 the Government issued a Housing White Paper entitled “Fixing our Broken Housing Market.” The Strategy now makes reference to this, particularly in relation to Intermediate forms of Affordable Housing.
- *HRA Business Plan and Options Appraisal*; The Council has now produced an updated Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan to succeed that published in October 2016. This sets out the financial plan for council homes over the next 30 years. The revised HRA Business Plan records progress on the Options Appraisal which has been established to look at the future of council homes over the next 20 years and how to maximize the number of new council homes which can be provided over that period. The Housing Strategy has been updated to reflect this.
- *Private Sector Housing, BRE Survey*; The document now reflects the results of a survey commissioned by the Council from the Building Research Establishment (BRE) into the condition of private sector homes in the Borough. This will provide valuable data to allow for the targeting of intervention to improve housing conditions in this sector.
- *Homelessness Reduction Bill and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*; Later in 2017 the Homelessness Reduction Bill will place new responsibilities on local authorities which widen the requirements to prevent homelessness and provide services and assistance to people threatened with homelessness. The document has been strengthened to reflect this new legislation and how it will feed into the development of a Homelessness Prevention Strategy for the Council.
- *Housing and Public Health*; Theme 5 has been extended to amplify the linkages between Housing and Public Health and the collaborative work required between those agencies and Adult Social Care.
- *Accommodation for care leavers*; This section in Theme 5 has been updated to better reflect the work that has taken place since the Autumn of 2016 between Housing service and the Children’s Trust to improve the range of accommodation available for care leavers.
- *General updating of statistics*; In a number of areas the document has been amended to update statistics where they have been available.

### **Monitoring of the Strategy**

- 5.12 The high level outcomes of the Housing Strategy will be monitored under Outcome 4 of the Five Year Plan: ‘Our residents will have access to good quality homes.’ The Strategy aims to deliver more and better homes with a focus on local people. The focus for the monitoring of progress will be the consolidated Action Plan at the end of the document. Progress against this will be reported on a regular basis to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to Cabinet. The Council will consider holding an annual conference to monitor progress against the Strategy following the successful consultation event held in January 2017.

## **Consultation on the Strategy**

- 5.13 The draft Strategy was the subject of a public consultation which concluded on 17 February 2017. This included a Housing Conference held at The Curve on 23 January 2017. More detail on the consultation can be found in Annexes A and B to this report. Officers have had full regard to comments made in the Strategy in producing the final draft of the document.

## **6. Comments of Other Committees**

- 6.1 The draft Housing Strategy was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 20 December 2016.
- 6.2 The Cabinet will consider the matters detailed in this report at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Any amendments to the recommendations will be reported to Council.

## **7. Conclusion**

The Housing Strategy is the main vehicle for the delivery of Outcome 4 of the Council's Five Year Plan, that "Our residents will have access to good quality homes." The strategy is wide-ranging in its scope and covers the range of housing tenures and the key Housing issues facing the people of the Borough. The Council intends to be proactive in providing and enabling the construction of new homes and in improving the Housing opportunities for the people of the Borough. However, successful delivery of the Strategy will also depend on the experience and expertise of a wide range of partners and agencies from the private, public and voluntary sectors working in collaboration. It is proposed that the Strategy now be formally approved.

## **8. Appendices Attached**

- 'A' - Feedback on Housing Conference, 23 January 2017
- 'B' - Housing Strategy Consultation
- 'C' - Slough Housing Strategy
- 'D' - Equalities Impact Assessment

## **9. Background Papers**

- '1' - Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020
- '2' - Learning Disability Plan 2016-2019
- '3' - Community Safety Plans
- '4' - Children and Young Peoples' Plan 2015-2016
- '5' - Centre of Slough Strategy 2015 onwards
- '6' - Draft Local Plan 2016-2036
- '7' - Economic Development Plan for Growth 2014-2018
- '8' - Asset Management Plan 2014-2017
- '9' - Get Active Leisure Strategy
- '10' - Climate Change Strategy 2011-2014

# Feedback from the Housing Strategy Conference

## 23 January 2017

### 1. Introduction

This was Slough Borough Council's first Housing Strategy for a number of years. The draft Housing Strategy 2016-2021 was developed through the analysis of a large number of data sources before going out to consultation with a range of partners, stakeholders and Council officers. In order to consult as widely as possible, a conference was held on 23 January 2017 at The Curve in Slough.

Conference attendees included representatives from:

- 7 Housing Associations
  - Radian
  - Catalyst
  - Paradigm Housing Group
  - Red Kite Community Housing
  - A2 Dominion
  - Housing Solutions
  - Inqualib Housing Association
- Slough Business Community Partnership
- Slough Urban Renewal
- The Property Bank
- Ron Hothi (local private landlord)
- Asian Carers Group
- Slough CVS
- Life Charity
- Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company
- Shelter
- Health Watch Slough
- Chiltern District Council
- NHS CCG
- Slough CCG
- Patrick Ruddy Homes (property developer)
- Colleagues from across Slough Borough Council, including Housing the Children's trust, Adult Social Care and Public Health.

Cllr Ajaib, Commissioner for Housing and Urban Renewal and Deputy Leader opened the conference, setting out the vision and ambition for housing in Slough. Mike England, Interim Director for Resources, Housing and Regeneration set out the scope of the strategy and the five key themes:

- Theme 1: New Housing Supply

- Theme 2: Private Sector Housing
- Theme 3: Council Homes
- Theme 4: Homelessness and Housing Need
- Theme 5: Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable Groups

The conference included two sessions for group working where attendees were asked to:

1. Consider the opportunities and challenges for housing in Slough
2. Partnerships and Delivery – how do we make it work and how can we make a difference?

## **2. Opportunities and Challenges**

### **2.1 Slough's Proximity to London**

A common theme across most tables was the pressure on Slough from the London Boroughs, not only in terms of numbers and the impact on the availability of affordable private rented accommodation to the Council, but also in terms of:

- knowing who was being placed in Slough - numbers and location
- any vulnerabilities or support needs of those household members
- the details of any problem families moving into Slough

### **2.2 Heathrow Expansion and Crossrail**

The impact of the expansion of Heathrow Airport together with the Crossrail announcement both on house prices and market rents in Slough was widely recognised together with the increase in demand for homes to house those working on these projects.

It was also recognised that both schemes would present opportunities for Slough to boost its night-time economy and attract young professionals from London who could benefit from Slough's lower house prices and lower market rents.

2.3 Theme 5 and the recognition for the need for specialist housing was welcomed. Particular issues were raised in relation to care leavers and the lack of accommodation (and support) available to them. Concerns relating to housing ex-offenders, vulnerable people and those fleeing domestic violence.

The issue of affordability and the cost of failing tenancies, particularly for housing associations, were raised with the recognition of the need to provide tenancy sustainment support. Housing associations were also keen to test affordability and tenants' ability to afford the rent.

### **2.4 Developing New, Affordable, Homes**

The impact of the 1% reduction in social rents was recognised alongside the significant increase in house prices and private rents. Some developers raised concerns about the lack of construction skills and labour together with the increase in the cost of materials post-



Brexit. This, combined with the lack of land, constituted a considerable challenge to developing new, affordable homes.

The rise in office-residential conversions was noted, together with the ability to do this without requiring planning permission.

However, opportunities to offer training and apprenticeships to Slough people was noted as a positive.

It was widely agreed that an innovative approach would need to be taken to agreeing the right tenure mix to meet demand. Market sale and market rented properties would help to meet the demand, however 'affordability' was key. There was widespread enthusiasm for the idea of a Slough Living Rent.

In terms of plans for the town centre, it was suggested that high rise living can prove problematic to manage and can, unless managed carefully, lead to community breakdown. Sufficient car parking was also noted as a concern and caution urged around relying on people to use public transport. Concerns were raised in general around ensuring that the infrastructure to support extra housing is put in place.

It was felt that more innovation and looking outside of Slough was important with one attendee suggesting Slough should think about what Denmark and Japan are doing to deliver affordable housing. It was suggested that Slough needs to look at the financing opportunities available to build and to work in partnership with housing associations to achieve its aspirations.

### **3. Partnerships and Delivery: How do we make it work? Where can we make a difference?**

#### **3.1 Theme 1: Housing Supply**

The group agreed that partnership working with developers and RSLs was key to delivering the 900+ homes needed each year in Slough. A proactive approach to land acquisition and planning was also required to support this.

The message that new development should deliver Slough homes for Slough people was clear, but the group queried who this should be aimed at and who could afford it. Investment in the private rented sector is vibrant in Slough and A2 Dominion noted their intention to invest in the PRS to generate funds to support their development aspirations.

Rents and affordability were discussed, together with the impact of arrears on providers. One RSL noted that of the 28 local authorities where they have stock, 2/3 had target rents and a number of their tenants unable to sustain the higher rent levels. The view was expressed that as Slough was cheaper to live in compared to London, there was a danger that it would continue to attract "sink estates" from the South East. Increasing pressures on homelessness prevention meant that other boroughs are directing people to Slough.

#### **3.2 Theme 2: Private Rented Sector**

The group agreed that the main issue with private rented homes was quality and that licensing arrangements and enforcement action were key to driving improvements in the sector. The group felt that homelessness funding could be used to prevent homelessness and also meet the funding gap between private rents and Housing Benefit (LHA) levels.

It was felt that pre-tenancy training would help people to budget and prevent fuel poverty. Partnership working between Health, Housing and Social Care was also needed to support vulnerable people living in private rented accommodation to sustain their tenancy.

The review of the Allocations Policy was welcomed to put Slough people first, combined with closer working with the London boroughs.

Overall the group felt that a Landlord Registration Scheme would be useful in finding hidden landlords and cutting out delays on repairs.

### **3.3 Theme 3: Council Housing**

Overall the group agreed that the Council's housing stock was in a fairly good condition although elderly people could be better supported to maintain their homes. The view was expressed that the Council could offer better quality homes to encourage residents who wanted/needed to downsize to move to.

The following points were raised during the discussion:

- The LHA rate needs to change
- Communication with residents needs to improve
- The Council needs to retain staff and offer career progression to retain knowledge and talent

The review of the Allocations Policy was welcomed, however some members of the group expressed frustration at the slow turnaround of void properties.

### **3.4 Theme 4: Homelessness**

The group felt that the Homelessness Forum should assist in developing the Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan through sharing best practice and communicating with the groups/protocols that are already in place.

The collection and analysis of the available data would help to ensure that services are directed appropriately as well as helping to diagnose local problems would assist in signposting people to appropriate support agencies and private sector partners.

The group agreed that there was a demand for more specific, supported housing in Slough but that it must be properly managed.

### **3.5 Theme 5: Specialist Housing**

The group felt that partnership working was needed to deliver and manage specialist housing, for example joint operations between Housing and the Childrens' Trust to support care leavers. It was noted that the Council has statutory responsibilities towards children leaving care that it would be inspected on.

The group agreed that the conference offered an opportunity to hold an honest conversation to identify gaps in service provision. Stakeholders (outside of Housing) would welcome the opportunity to feed into the review of the Allocations Policy.

Partnership working, at a strategic level, was needed between Housing, Health, the Childrens' Trust and Adult Social Care to look at the bigger issues and address the needs of the increasingly aging population. It was felt that the conversation should begin with residents before they become elderly to discuss and identify their future housing options.

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### Housing Strategy Consultation

1. The Housing Strategy consultation gathered views from a range of sources;
  - A Housing Strategy Conference held at The Curve on 23 January 2017, attended by more than 80 people;
  - Written responses to the draft Housing Strategy;
  - Via the Council's website;
  - Via social media platforms Facebook and Twitter.
  
2. Written responses were received from;
  - Adult Social Care, SBC.
  - Public Health, SBC.
  - Radian Group.
  - Slough Children's Services Trust.
  - Slough Labour Party
  
3. The comments received have been collated and summarised in the table below.

<b>Comments on Housing Strategy Consultation</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Consider a housing provider protocol for a common approach to tenancy sustainment.	
Scale of recent rent/price increases has put many people on lower incomes under extreme pressure and problems affording rents/mortgages.	
Council should work to ensure correct match of accommodation for local demand/needs. General market is not supplying this. Instead marketing homes in London adds to local pressures.	
More affordable housing for those who are Slough residents, to be purchased as a home and not buy to let. I have lived in Slough all my life but cannot afford to buy my own home.	
Slough housing should be a priority for Slough residents and workers. With a qualification period.	
Slough is already overcrowded and need no new residents sort out the ones we have now before more are dumped on us.	
Slough Borough Council are accepting tenants from London as the rent is sky high there and housing them in Slough as the London councils are able to pay the rent in this area. Hence why they want to send people up north so Slough Council can ay the cheaper rents up there.	
Overall Strategy is well-written and very ambitious.	
<b>Theme 1; New Housing Supply</b>	
I object to the proposal to develop a garden suburb in South Bucks. It is unfair to people who chose to live in a semi-rural location.	
How will the whole infrastructure cope with the increased population?	
The council need to keep rents at social rents not market rents.	

What about shared ownership schemes in Slough for people who can't get on the Housing register? Buying on the open market is not an option but there are not enough shared ownership properties coming up.	
New Housing sometimes very costly for families with a single earner. They can't raise a deposit for a property they want to buy.	
While largely in agreement I object to the search for other land, eg garage areas where this would have a negative impact. The Council should provide new homes via larger complexes.	
Can the Council ensure it will not accept financial settlement instead of affordable accommodation?	
On smaller developments all developer contributions to be used to provide additional affordable accommodation.	
Provision of new affordable housing restricted to key workers is a retrograde step as for RPs this creates void periods. Better to address this through the Allocations policy.	
Unhelpful the SHMA does not differentiate between the need for "target" rent and "affordable" rent. As this is crucial in meeting housing need and overall scheme viability.	
Slough should develop a clear policy on provision of social rented/affordable rented housing as there is a direct correlation between delivering a small amount of social rented housing and more affordable rented.	
Not enough homes available at low (genuinely affordable) rents in Slough.	
May be an opportunity for Slough to attract grant on land disposals, SOAHP for non-S106 units which can deliver rent to buy units and there may be grant available for affordable rented and shared ownership and land led schemes.	
Establishment of subsidiary housing companies is a positive move but important they unlock sites that would otherwise not come forward.	
Need a proper definition of what percentage of income is "Affordable." 70%+ of market rent is o use as affordable either.	
Should be a reasonable ratio of housing costs to earnings.	
New supply generated by the Council should be at social rents levels or close to it, not at market rent.	
Rents should be benchmarked a proportion of the national minimum wage or average local earnings.	
Housing companies should be used to increase availability of social housing, not just add to those available at market rates.	
If green belt sites are to be released they should be designated for social/affordable homes.	
Council should commission more housebuilding. Small numbers proposed barely exceed Right to Buy sales.	
Infrastructure required to support new homes doesn't seem to be properly considered – schools, GPs surgeries, Parking. Planning must ensure development is sustainable in the long term.	
Important to bring empty homes and flats above shops into use.	
Saturation of new flats in former office blocks around Town Centre is not valuable new supply in addressing Slough's issues. Dormitory area around Slough station have no sense of community.	
Slough High St is dying. Slough needs housing for local families – with gardens, not more high-rise flats.	

<b>Theme 2; Private Sector Homes</b>	
There are units in Slough that the Borough Council has responsibility for maintaining that are in a shocking condition, eg XXXXXXXX. Will the Council undertake to repair these long-standing issues that are affecting peoples' lives and health?	
Borough-wide Registration scheme is required but only effective with enforcement, tackling the worst/rogue landlords. Appears to be limited at the moment.	
Is there a "Rogue Landlords Hotline? If so it should be publicised.	
Good communications with landlords about their responsibilities is important. More and better communication may help them understand consequences of letting to other boroughs.	
Council should establish better working relationships with local estate agents to help prevent London Boroughs renting en bloc.	
Request all semi-independent accommodation for young people register as an HMO	
How will Housing work with the private rented sector to ensure it contributes to meeting the needs of vulnerable households?	
<b>Theme 3; Council Homes</b>	
People who were on the housing list and taken off because they were private renting should be given new housing first. People who have lived in Slough all their lives and paid into the system should come first	
There must be extra points for families with young children in social housing. They must not be on the register more than a year	
It's wonderful that the Council is being pro-active in its housing strategy but they need to work with, not against council tenants who are having their Housing benefit restricted.	
More council rented properties as private rented properties have families in one room with shared kitchen/bathroom.	
Council housing should be expanded with a legal protection that it should never be sold.	
I was second on the housing list whilst I was private renting. Then the new housing register came in and because I was adequately housed I was not allowed to re-join the list.	
I got taken off the list after 5 years. The reason was I was in the private sector renting and I was adequately housed for my needs. Maybe but the cost of private renting is excessive.	
You can start by putting local people in the houses instead of leaving families on the list from Britwell and putting people from Langley in the houses just built in Britwell.	
Houses for people who just arrive here.	
It's not fair with the people living in Slough for decades they should get first priority.	
Council houses should only be available to those born and bred in the town and private rentals should have the amount charged capped at the same price as council owned properties.	
Give priority for council homes to people who work unless they have a disability. Stop selling social housing.	
Increase resources for investigations into fraudulent tenancies and improper Right to Buy sales.	
New build proportions are too low for social/affordable homes. Local	

people will be priced out of forced out of Slough.	
Affordable rents should be pegged to average local income. And flexible to respond to circumstances, eg losing a job. Council should not be relying on Housing benefit or Universal Credit as an income stream.	
Concierge services in larger Council blocks would make them feel safer, more secure and desirable. They are scary places at present.	
Council Estate managers are moved around too often/too quickly. No continuity of service.	
Usually takes calls to several officers to get even simple things done. No one takes responsibility for solving anything and they all relentlessly pass the buck. Service charges are hefty for not much service.	
Massive changes in national housing policy make a 30 year Business Plan meaningless. Council should have a detailed 10 year plan for Housing with longer-term sketched out for flexibility.	
How can Housing make better use of communal facilities such as lounges for the benefit of the wider community – eg to reduce social isolation.	
More joint work with Public Health overcrowding and HMOs to improve physical and mental health, educational attainment and personal safety.	
BRE report has done a good job in identifying Slough housing stock. We can use this to direct health interventions.	
<b>Theme 4; Homelessness and Housing Need</b>	
This is excellent as I am a volunteer working with homeless people. At last some good news on the horizon.	
The Council should restrict the number of people taken into the Borough on behalf of London councils as this eats up homes locally.	
I think the housing crisis in Slough is awful. Stop letting people come to Slough when they are homeless for temporary accommodation and for social/council houses and help house the people who have lived in Slough all their lives.	
Residency test/proof of local connection an effective tool to make supply of social/affordable homes available to meet local need.	
There are more homeless in Slough than you are saying and actions speak louder than words.	
Council should be more pro-active in block-leasing new build accommodation for its own needs – seems limited at the moment.	
Slough staff esp. housing section are poorly trained and have no respect for people. No one likes to be homeless. The way they handle cases is unprofessional.	
I'm currently sofa surfing and desperate for accommodation. I'm single. No kids. Is there an age restriction?	
Can the Council ensure that the difficulties incoming homelessness may cause will not distract it from having an effective policy to house all in need in Slough?	
There is a view the council has reduced its provision (for homeless people) eg no longer using the Foyer and relying on the charity sector. The Council still has an obligation to lead.	
Will the Council adopt a policy of meeting the very basic needs of people to have warmth from the elements during the day?	
Integrated resource to work with individuals in sustaining them within their own home.	
Consider how to include care and support needs in development of	



Homelessness Prevention Plan.	
Health/Housing joint working to address health and care needs of vulnerable homeless people placed locally.	
<b>Theme 5; Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable Groups</b>	
Can we be confident the Housing Strategy will protect vulnerable people including those with mental health needs and problems with drugs and alcohol? In the past they have been regarded as unsuitable tenants.	
Not enough specialist accommodation available for vulnerable people or young people.	
Stock of accommodation for care leavers is important.	
Who will run the 3 "mixed-care" facilities? Quality management is important	
Quality, modern, older peoples' housing is required. particularly to encourage older people to downsize and liberate family homes. Quality is more important than a £1,000 cheque to incentivise moving.	
Proper strategy for older peoples' housing is required. Bill for care could be reduced with more fit-for-purpose accommodation.	
Ground-floor dwellings in Council flatted blocks should be reserved for those with mobility restrictions. Too many tenants with health/mobility problems are stuck on upper floors.	
Public Health can work with Housing to target low income families in supported housing to improve resilience and mental wellbeing as well as signpost to activities and interventions that enhance quality of life.	
Explore the provision of a 'training flat' to help young people develop their independence skills, and to prepare them for full independence in their own accommodation	
Commitment to work more closely with Health/CCG	
Commitment to explore how good practice examples from the "Healthy New Towns" initiative can be incorporated into new developments in Slough	
How to lever in alternative funding resources into the development more specialist supported housing provision including ensuring government grant opportunities are fully utilised in Slough.	
Ensure new housing design factors in long term sustainability by being flexible enough to meet future needs such as Lifetimes Homes Standards	
Include statement about exploring the incorporation of "age friendly" design principles in new housing developments	
Building sufficient accommodation suitable for wheelchair users or other people with disabilities including sensory needs.	
Incorporate Housing First approach to meeting future needs rather than larger hostel type developments especially for single homeless, people with mental health problems and vulnerable young people.	
Commitment to join up information and advice/housing options/prevention advice as effectively as possible to ensure peoples wider needs are met	
A statement on how housing will work in partnership/ integrate into the health/care and support offer	
Ways to ensure intelligence on all housing needs is fed into the JSNA to make future commissioning more effective.	

How the DFG can be the vehicle for better integrated working between housing/health and Care and ensure adaptations maintain people in their accommodation for longer.	
Statement of how housing can contribute to avoiding delays in hospital discharges.	
Develop improved information sharing agreement between ASC and Housing Services to help improve outcomes for at risk clients.	
It is essential to hold a longer term view on how to address the housing needs of older people for suitable housing; to emphasise “rightsizing” rather than “downsizing”, to create self-supporting communities rather than building houses, to focus on care and repair services and finally to ensure that all new homes are built to enable occupiers to age in place.	
A different “design logic” than in conventional senior housing is required, but offer the opportunity for a more meaningful housing offer, that is future-proof.	
Public Health can work with Housing and planning to ensure that the new housing stock is planned with this in mind.	
Older People in Private Rented Accommodation In the longer term, homeownership is likely to decline for future generations as the private rented sector continues to expand. Increasing numbers of older people find and will find themselves living in rented property.	
Proactive identification by environmental health of properties in a bad state of disrepair to protect older vulnerable tenants especially where it represents a health hazard	
Improve accessibility and heating standards, and offer better protection from bad landlords.	
Ensure private tenants have better access to DFGs and other forms of assistance that support independent living.	
Encourage institutional investors and housing associations to deliver higher quality private rented housing that is suitable for older people in terms of flexible tenancies, accessibility, regular maintenance, location and cost.	
Continue to support older tenants to find suitable alternative accommodation where their home has become unsuitable or a danger to their health and well-being.	
Work with partners to improve information and advice to vulnerable older people who are experiencing problems.	
Special attention should be given to regulated older tenants who are vulnerable to harassment and illegal eviction or who struggle to get repairs carried out. Public Health Yes- with a future commitment to produce a joined-up Older persons Strategy to address these wider issues.	

# **Slough Borough Council**

## **Housing Strategy 2016 to 2021**

**March 2017**

## **Foreword**

I am delighted to introduce the new Housing Strategy for Slough.

We have ambitious plans for the success and growth of our borough over the next 20 years. We want Slough to be a place where people work, rest, play and stay. We understand that supporting economic growth means providing a full range of housing opportunities in good quality homes that our residents can afford.

This Housing Strategy is an important building block of our future, alongside our new Local Plan which is currently in development. This Strategy covers the next five years but we are also looking further ahead, so that in 20 years time we have a range of housing and support services and the right infrastructure that matches the ambition and needs of our residents.

The population of Slough and the number of people living here will grow dramatically over the next 20 years. We need to provide housing both for people who are already here and for those residents who will come as a result of infrastructure developments such as Crossrail. This means providing a balance of housing to rent and to buy, but with a particular emphasis on homes that are affordable for local people.

A good and secure home is central to the quality of life. It affects physical and mental health, job prospects, educational attainment and the ability for our residents to prosper. So although most residents in the Borough are well-housed, that is why we need to tackle the known problem areas:

- One household in four in Slough rents their home from a private landlord. Most landlords provide a good and valuable service. But we need to address the minority of landlords who are exposing their tenants to poor housing conditions and ill health.
- We have a growing homelessness problem, some of it exported from London. It is vital for the sake of the families concerned that we work harder to prevent homelessness occurring in the first place.
- We need to do more to meet the needs of people in our communities who have specific housing needs, such as care leavers or older people needing extra care.

We have a vital and valuable resource in the 6,000 rented homes that the Council owns and we need to make sure that we nurture and improve those homes for the benefit of existing residents and those that are to come. We are committed to doing this despite the changes that are currently being imposed by the Government. This means developing a clear vision for what our homes and neighbourhoods will look like in the longer term.

This Housing Strategy commits the Council to pro-actively promoting the development of new homes, including delivering or facilitating the provision of at least 200 new homes each year. However, the success of the Strategy will depend also on the activities of others, including private developers, statutory agencies, the voluntary sector, housing associations, and our regeneration partner Slough Urban Renewal and residents themselves.

The council will continue to work hard with its many partners to deliver all the action plans within our Housing Strategy and I look forward to seeing them delivered over the coming months and years.

*photo*

***Councillor Zaffar Ajaib, Cabinet Member for Housing and Urban Renewal  
Slough Borough Council***

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## Executive Summary

The Housing Strategy is an important element of the Council's plans to build a town where people want to work, rest, play and stay. It covers a five year period but we are also looking to the longer term, so that in 20 years time we have a range of housing and support services that match the ambition and needs of our residents. The Strategy is presented under 5 themes.

### Theme 1: New Housing Supply

- The population of the Borough is expected to grow rapidly over the next 20 years **by at least 15%** to 169,611 in 2036. When added to the existing demand for homes this means Slough needs to provide around 20,000 new homes by 2036.
- Rising house prices and private sector rents at over 40% in the last two years mean that many residents cannot afford accommodation at market rates in the borough.
- The Government's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified the need for Slough to provide 927 new homes each year up to 2036. The Council will seek to achieve this ambitious target, but this depends on there being enough land and sites available for development in the Borough.
- Whilst many of the new homes will be built by private developers and other agencies, the Council itself will be very pro-active in bringing forward sites for development. This Strategy commits the Council to delivering or facilitating an average of at least 200 new homes each year over the life of this Strategy and beyond.
- A balance of new homes to rent and to own is required but a particular priority will be the provision of a range of affordable housing for people who cannot accommodate themselves in the market. This will include homes for key workers.
- Our new Subsidiary Housing Companies named Herschel Homes and James Elliman Homes will assist us in increasing housing supply. James Elliman Homes will also provide more housing options for vulnerable groups such as care leavers

### Theme 2: Private Sector Housing

- At least one Slough household in four rents their home from a private landlord and the proportion is growing.
- We understand that most landlords provide a good service and standard of accommodation.
- However, national statistics show that the worst housing conditions are found in the private rented sector. Rogue landlords provide poor and unhealthy accommodation.
- The Council intends to actively support good landlords but will vigorously use its legal powers, including prosecution to make rogue landlords comply with their obligations. It will investigate a new registration scheme for private landlords and implement the expansion of mandatory HMO licensing.
- The Council will actively use its powers to bring empty properties back into use.
- Our two new Subsidiary Housing Companies will act as exemplar private landlords in the Borough and provide alternative housing options for homeless and vulnerable households and others on modest incomes to access homes in the private sector.

### Theme 3: Council Homes

- The Council owns over 7,000 tenanted and leasehold homes. This housing stock is the Council's most valuable physical asset and plays an increasingly significant role in the borough in providing accommodation for people on low or modest incomes and those with vulnerabilities.
- Major investment plans are in place which will mean a £100 million spend on improving and maintain existing homes over the next 7 years and the building of at least 190 new Council homes.

- Service improvements are planned through a new Repairs, Maintenance and Investment contract due to start in 2017 and wider engagement with our residents.
- The financing of council housing is in a period of uncertainty, largely because of changes introduced by the Government. One of these is the forced reduction in rents over the 4 year period from 2016/17, which has removed substantial income from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA.) A major review of the HRA Business Plan has taken place because of these factors, though our previous prudent assumptions appear robust.
- In collaboration with residents the Council will undertake a major Options Appraisal to look at the future of the Council's homes over the next 20 years.

#### **Theme 4: Homelessness and Housing Need**

- Homelessness is increasing. More people are being accepted as homeless and the number of families in temporary accommodation aside from Bed and Breakfast accommodation is rising very sharply.
- Rough sleeping is an emergent issue that may be on the rise and a new collaborative approach and service delivery is required.
- The increase in homelessness is mainly due to rising prices in the private sector where local people are being priced out of their accommodation and static or reducing levels of welfare benefits which makes rents unaffordable for many.
- The problem is being exacerbated in Slough by homeless families moving from London, mostly placed here by London Boroughs. Often this is without adequate notification to services in Slough and this can lead to vulnerable people not fully accessing services and increasing demand on local resources.
- The Council will develop a Preventing Homelessness Strategy in partnership with the voluntary sector and other agencies.
- We have ended the use of Bed and Breakfast for families with children in the last 6 months and are committed to not use it going forward.
- The Scheme of Allocation for social housing will be reviewed to look at the priority homeless people and vulnerable groups receive;
- Our subsidiary housing company James Elliman Homes will acquire new accommodation to alleviate pressure on temporary accommodation.
- The Council will work with Adult Social Care and other relevant agencies to monitor and address the health and care needs of vulnerable homeless people placed in Slough.

#### **Theme 5: Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable Groups**

- Population projections show that the number of people in Slough aged over 65 will grow by 40% in the next 10 years. The number over 85 will grow even more sharply.
- The number of people with long-term health problems or a disability will also increase. There is a clear link between poor housing conditions and poor health.
- Although there is already a range of specialist accommodation available significantly more will be required to meet the growing demand. A greater range of options is also required, including for people who are currently owner-occupiers.
- The Council will develop a long-term strategy for older persons housing in the Borough.
- Joint working between Housing and Adult Social Care will deliver up to 3 new mixed use extra care schemes in the borough and other forms of supported accommodation.
- Our new Subsidiary Housing Company James Elliman Homes will be used to look at opportunities for specialist and alternative accommodation to be delivered locally and more cost-effectively for a range of vulnerable groups.
- There will be an adequate supply of suitable accommodation for care leavers.

## Introduction

Improving Housing quality and standards is a key component of the Council's ambition to make Slough a place to work, rest, play and stay over the next 20 years. In order to meet the needs of existing residents and to support the increase in population and jobs alongside the economic growth that will accompany it, we need to provide a broad and balanced range of new accommodation to own and to rent. We also need to improve the quality of existing housing.

Housing forms one of the major outcomes for the Borough in the Council's new 5 Year Plan 2017-2021. Outcome 4 reads: "Our residents will have access to good quality homes"

This Housing Strategy will help to deliver this outcome as well as the broader objectives of the overarching Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy to support and sustain our diverse communities. It draws together the key housing issues in the Borough into one document and summarises the Council's approach to addressing them. It has been prepared in parallel with the development of the Local Plan which will set out the planning and spatial framework to deliver the necessary infrastructure for the Borough in the period up to 2036.

Our plans are ambitious, both for the Borough and for the provision of housing. We want to welcome the growth that is coming and harness it to fashion a high quality and successful environment where people want to stay and have access to good quality accommodation that they can afford.

We recognise that success will involve many different organisations and agencies. Residents, private developers, statutory agencies, housing associations and the voluntary sector all have an important part to play. The Council cannot by itself meet the significant housing challenges facing the Borough. We hope that this Strategy will form the framework against which our partners can join together to improve housing opportunities for all the residents of the Borough.

### Structure of the Strategy

The document is structured into five key themes:

- **Theme 1: New Housing Supply** - *Ensuring the right supply and mix of new homes and increasing affordable housing through the efficient use of land and capital resources.*
- **Theme 2: Private Sector Housing** - *Ensuring that the private housing sector provides sufficient good quality market housing through support for landlords and tenants and, where necessary, robust quality control and regulation.*
- **Theme 3: Council Homes** - *Ensuring council homes are managed and maintained to a high standard and the Council builds new homes for Slough residents.*
- **Theme 4: Homelessness and Housing Need** - *Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping through effective prevention work.*
- **Theme 5: Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable Groups** - *Ensuring that specialist accommodation is available for vulnerable people and those with special housing needs, for example, young people, older people and people, people with disabilities.*

The Action Plans from each of the themes are brought together at the end of the document in a format which will be used to monitor the strategy over the next few years.



## Theme 1 : New Housing Supply

Ensuring the right supply and mix of new homes and increasing affordable housing through the efficient use of land and capital resources.

### Evidence Base - Key Points

- Slough has 54,123 homes accommodating 149,400 people with a predicted growth of a further 18,000 people over the next 20 years.
- Housing supply: 52% of households own their own home/have a mortgage; 28% are private rented, 20% are socially rented homes (council and housing association homes);
- Slough has high levels of overcrowding compared to neighbouring areas;
- House Prices average £365,908 (Zoopla, February 2017), with one of the highest rates of increase in the country over the previous two years;
- Affordability; the ratio between average house prices and average income levels is now 13:1.
- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) indicates a requirement for 927 new homes per year over the next 20 years.
- Pressure on housing supply is indicated by the growth of homeless households in temporary accommodation which has almost doubled to over 300 in the 2 years to January 2017;
- Housing services are under increasing pressure from households moving from London, including homeless households placed in Slough by London Boroughs;
- Land supply is a key constraint for building new homes in Slough.
- Low development viability on brownfield sites has traditionally restricted the capacity to provide affordable housing and contributions to community infrastructure. We intend to address this requirement through the new Local Plan and we expect green field sites to deliver a substantial amount of affordable housing.

1.1. This chapter describes the overall position on housing and housing need in Slough and sets out the current information on the need for new homes. It also outlines the pro-active role the Council itself intends to play in ensuring the delivery of new homes for residents.

### Our Objectives

1.2. In setting out our Strategy on the supply of new homes we have a number of objectives;

- To provide homes that will support economic growth and enable residents to build their lives and careers by staying in Slough;
- To meet the new build requirements set out in the SHMA
- To provide a balance of new housing to own and to rent to cater for the requirements of all income groups;
- To provide affordable housing for the range of income groups who need it;
- To facilitate opportunities for households to move to different types of housing for people at all stages in their life and as their circumstances change;
- To make the best use of resources in providing new housing;
- To provide for new homes for special needs groups and vulnerable people within the community;

- To ensure that new homes are of high quality and make a contribution to the quality of life in Slough.

## **Background**

### ***Population and Housing in Slough***

1.3. Slough has the most diverse population in Berkshire, which had already grown by 18% between 2001 and 2013. Slough had an estimated population of 147,821 in 2016 and the population is currently estimated at 149,400. The population is projected to be around 169,611 by 2036. During the lifetime of this 5 year strategy the population is expected to grow by 6,900 (ONS). Overall it is anticipated there will be an increase of around 20,000 households between 2016 and 2036.

1.4. It is anticipated that these increases will be accompanied by an increase in the workforce by at least 15,000 (ONS). Currently around 39,000 people commute into Slough mainly for high skilled jobs and a similar number commute out mainly for lower skilled work out of a working population of around 80,000 people (ONS 2015 business register and employment survey)

1.5. In keeping with the Local Plan, this strategy recognises the importance of increasing the skills of the local population to maintain Slough as a major employment hub and the links between its economic regeneration and having a suitable supply of quality housing to keep and attract skilled workers to the Borough.

1.6. A particular characteristic of households in Slough is the very high level of overcrowding. In the 2011 Census 21% of households were living in overcrowded conditions compared to just 8.5% for England as a whole. This figure represented a growing increase in overcrowding in Slough since 2001. Allied to this is the very high level of "concealed" households; that is, households living within other households (often with relatives) and yet to form. The number of such households has doubled since 2001 and is now the 3rd highest in the whole country. Slough also has a relatively high proportion of larger families, with 15% of households containing five or more people. The majority of overcrowded families live in the private rented sector.

1.7. Our recent surveys indicate that currently 52% of households in Slough own their own home; 28% rent their homes from private landlords, and 20% are social housing tenants (renting from the Council or housing associations). These proportions have changed sharply since 2001, with a reduction in the proportion of households owning their own homes and a significant increase in those housed in the private rented sector.

1.8. Housing in Slough is rapidly becoming more expensive. In August 2016, average house prices reached £304,000 with an affordability ratio of 11:1 (Zoopla). By February 2017 the average house price had risen again to £365,908 with an increased affordability ratio of 13:1 (Zoopla). It is clear that Slough continues to experience some of the most rapid price increases in the country, which means homes for sale and private sector rents are becoming more difficult for local people to afford.

1.9. This brief outline of the housing situation in Slough points to a future in which the Borough is looking forward to rapid growth in the population and the workforce, to add to existing pressures on the housing market. The very high levels of overcrowding and the rapid rise in house prices and rents suggest both that substantially more homes are required over the period of this Strategy and beyond, and that the "affordability" of these homes will be a major consideration and challenge for our residents going forward.

### ***The Strategic Housing Market Assessment***

1.10. The Borough has the benefit of a major new assessment of the need for new homes, published early in 2016. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is a detailed study of the Housing situation in Slough (and neighbouring authorities), drawing on information about current housing requirements and future need arising from population and economic growth.

1.11. Slough is set within a wider "Housing Market Area" which also includes the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and South Buckinghamshire. The SHMA identifies the "objectively assessed need" to provide 927 new homes year on year in Slough over the period 2016 to 2036. This is higher than the Council's current annual target of 550 homes and higher than either of the other two local authority areas within the Housing Market Area.

1.12. As part of its detailed analysis, the SHMA also made recommendations for the size of dwellings to be provided, to be used as a guide on individual developments. It follows that the majority of new homes required are family sized 2 and 3 bed houses or flats.

1.13. The Council accepts the analysis of the SHMA (subject to the analysis of housing need below) and the need for the provision of new homes on the scale proposed. This is consistent with its long term vision for the economic growth of Slough and with its ambition to provide an adequate supply of high quality accommodation for people who want to live and stay in the Borough.

1.14. This Strategy commits the Council to maximising the supply of new homes as far as development is sustainable and consistent with the other objectives of the new 5 Year Plan.

### **Other Measures of Housing Need**

1.15. The urgency of the need to provide additional housing at the recommended scale is amplified by consideration of local pressures that we believe are not fully taken account of in the SHMA. The SHMA is concerned in particular with longer-term economic and population trends, using nationally available, but inevitably broad-brush data sources. The Council itself has access to numerous other data sources which reflect the rapidly increasing day to day pressures experienced by residents of the Borough.

### ***The Housing Register***

1.16. One such source is the Housing Register. From January 2014 the Council restricted access to its Housing Register in order to reflect the limited availability of social housing and the fact that many people then on the Register had no realistic prospect of receiving an offer of social housing. Prior to that, around 8,000 households had expressed a wish to be considered for an offer of social housing in the Borough. Of these, 43% required 1 bedroom; 31% required 2 bedrooms, 20% required 3 bedrooms and 5% needed 4 bedrooms or more. Since 2014, the Register has been reduced to a figure of around 2,500 households. Even so, the shortage of affordable accommodation still means a long wait for applicants. In 2015/16, households had waited an average of 2.65 years for a 1 bedroom home, 3.9 years for a 3 bedroom home and over 5 years for a home of 4 bedrooms or more.

### ***Homelessness***

1.17. A further key issue is homelessness. The Council has statutory responsibilities to provide accommodation for homeless households. Frequently, this is temporary accommodation, often in accommodation owned by private landlords. As families on low or modest incomes find it increasingly difficult to accommodate themselves in the private rented sector as a result of rising rents, static wage rises, and falling levels of benefits. These economic pressures increasingly emerge as homelessness.

1.18. The use of temporary accommodation is therefore a sensitive “bellweather” of the pressure being felt in the local housing market by households on lower or modest incomes.

1.19. In Slough, the use of temporary accommodation is rising rapidly. At 31 March 2015, the Council had 156 households in temporary accommodation. A year later this had risen to 225. By September 2016 the total in temporary accommodation stood at over 300 households. At this rate of change, the position in Slough will soon be approaching that of a typical London Borough. Each year, the Department for Communities and Local Government publishes data on the level of homelessness acceptances in each local authority area, expressed as a proportion of the population. For 2015/16, the rate for Slough was 4.43 per 1,000 of the population, higher than the 3.04 for the London Borough of Hillingdon and only slightly behind the Hounslow figure of 5.52.

1.20. However, this expresses only a part of the current pressures on the Borough. Published statistics refer to the **placing authority**, not where they are placed. In reality, the pressure on the housing market in Slough is being made considerably worse by movement outwards from London and from other neighbouring authorities in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. Most of this is however caused by the placement by London Boroughs and other authorities of homeless households in temporary accommodation **in** Slough. Some of the issues arising from this for the households concerned are discussed further under Theme 4: Homelessness and Housing Need.

1.21. Councils placing outside their area are required to notify the receiving authority of the placement. Over the last 3 years Slough has been notified of some 450 placements into the Borough by 28 different authorities. These include all the other Berkshire authorities, South Bucks and 11 different London Boroughs. It is believed that the true level of placements is far higher than this and that in reality not all placements are notified. It is believed this figure excludes some instances where other authorities have purchased properties in Slough, have used accommodation on nightly-rates or where they have discharged their homelessness duty into the private sector. Our officers believe that it is likely that the total number of placements into Slough over this period is at least a 1,000 households or around 335 per year.

### **Key Workers**

1.22. The Council is aware that there are some vital services, for example in education, which are being hampered in their recruitment of key staff because of the difficulty of securing suitable and affordable accommodation. It is often the case that while such staff may not be able to afford to buy a home or to pay market rents, they are also excluded from the usual routes into affordable housing and in particular social housing. There is a very limited stock of accommodation for this group of workers, who may be able to afford rents which are higher than social housing rents but who cannot afford accommodation in the market. The Council wants to try and address this through the work of this strategy. This could be via new models of provision, which are being considered by the new Subsidiary Housing Companies, or provided through a smaller proportion of new affordable homes specifically for this group.

### **Heathrow Expansion**

1.23. The Government has recently announced its intentions on the expansion of Heathrow. This is welcomed by the Council particularly for the benefits of new jobs and will become an increasingly significant factor pointing to an increased requirement for more new homes in the Borough.

1.24. The Council believes that these special and live pressures on the housing market in Slough will not fully have been taken into account in the SHMA and that they amplify the need for additional accommodation at the recommended level.

## **Affordable Housing**

1.25. Market housing in Slough, both to rent and to buy is becoming more expensive. There has been a 40% increase in average house prices over the last 3 years with a 20% increase in the last 12 months alone. As noted above, the ratios between prices and incomes are widening rapidly and it is becoming more difficult for households on even average incomes to find accommodation in the market. This position is unlikely to ease during the lifetime of this strategy.

1.26. Housing demand is set to increase further with the expansion of Heathrow, the regeneration of the Town Centre, the introduction of Crossrail offering reduced commuter journey times into central London and the promise of future fast rail links with Birmingham and the North with HS2. Substantial numbers of new homes are already planned as part of Slough's regeneration, but demand for new housing will also continue to increase due to the growth in employment opportunities and population in the borough. It is therefore important that other opportunities for housing development are identified and existing housing committed housing sites are encouraged to come forward for delivery, especially during the next five years.

1.27. While it will be important to achieve a balance in the new housing which is provided the Council sees it as a high priority to provide sufficient affordable housing to allow people to establish themselves and to stay in Slough even if they cannot afford market accommodation. The information earlier in the chapter points to the wide-ranging evidence that significantly more affordable housing is required. The Local Plan sets a target that 40% of all dwellings in all very large housing developments built in Slough should be "affordable" to help meet local housing need. The ability to deliver this through planning applications has been hampered by low development values and viability. The review of the local plan will need to reassess the viability of the local plan requirements as part of an examination of the deliverability and soundness of the plan.

1.28. Over the last few years the term "affordable" has been used in variety of different ways as illustrated below.

### ***The SHMA and Affordable Housing***

1.29. The SHMA itself includes a considerable amount of material on the need for additional affordable housing. It uses the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) definition that affordable housing is "social rented", "affordable rented" or "intermediate" housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. "Intermediate" housing is taken to include shared ownership and rented housing provided to households who can afford to pay between 80% of market rates and the full market rate. "Social rented" homes are provided by Local Authorities or Housing Associations at or below "Target" rents. "Affordable rented" housing provided by Housing Associations or local councils at rents between Target rents and a figure which is 80% of the market value. In other words, the SHMA discusses affordable housing as accommodation available to a wide range of income groups whose common factor is that they cannot afford to house themselves in the market.

1.30. The SHMA report also makes some general assessments on the annual household income required to purchase or rent in Slough without additional subsidy. For purchase in the lowest quartile of the market the figure is £50,000 (this assessment is before the sharp rises in house prices in the year to August 2016.) For rental the equivalent figures are; lower quartile private rent, £23,100; affordable rent, £18,500; lower quartile social rent, £15,000. Across the study area as a whole, one fifth of households had an income of below £20,000 per year and a further one third of between £20,000 and £40,000.

1.31. By making assumptions about what proportion of their income households could be expected to spend on their accommodation the SHMA is able to make a broad assessment of the scale of how many of the households requiring accommodation in Slough over the period to 2036 would need “affordable” housing to this definition. Looking at the likely demand and comparing this with the supply of existing affordable housing over that period the SHMA quotes a net requirement of 671 affordable homes per year. It emphasizes that this cannot be compared directly with the overall requirement of 927 units per year because it has been derived through a different method.

1.32. Equally the SHMA suggests that this cannot be directly applied as a target and that it needs to be balanced with a range of other issues, not least whether it is practicable and viable to provide affordable homes on this scale. Nevertheless, it is a useful marker for the fact that a significant proportion of households looking to build their lives in Slough will be unable to do so with out some intervention that brings their housing costs below market levels.

1.33. The SHMA also make some broad recommendations about the type of affordable housing to be provided. It suggests that approximately 20-25% of the need for affordable housing could be met by “intermediate” rent homes that are between 80% of market rent and full market rent. The remainder would be met by rented housing at 80% of market levels or below. It does not make recommendations about the appropriate split between “social rent” and “affordable rent” due to the complexity of the relationship between the two, the changing nature of the funding arrangements and the role of the availability of Housing Benefit to support rent payments by households on low incomes.

#### ***Starter Homes and Intermediate Housing***

1.34 In addition to revised funding arrangements for affordable housing in recent years the Government has introduced the concept of Starter Homes. The original proposal for the provision of 20% of new homes on each new development to be “starter homes” for sale has now been modified by government in their White Paper (February 2017) and a range of affordable and intermediate rent products such as rent to buy, traditional shared ownership, and discounted market renting (Build to Rent) schemes are being developed. These homes will count towards the affordable housing contribution on larger developments and the market discount will need to come from the same pot of developer contributions that is used for other affordable housing and infrastructure needed to address development.

1.35. These affordable housing products may in future be the route through which the assessment within the SHMA of the need for homes at between 80% and full market levels will be met. They may also become the primary route into home-ownership for households aspiring to own their own home for the first time. The Council will need to take account of the potential contribution of these Intermediate products as they develop.

#### ***The Council’s Approach***

1.36. The Council wishes to support the future growth and development of the town through the provision of a balance of new housing which allows residents to build their lives and stay in the town and which also provides opportunities to move on to a range of other accommodation as their careers and circumstances develop and change. This means planning for a range of high quality affordable housing as well meeting the needs of those who will look to the private market for their accommodation.

1.37. The Council is determined to maximise the provision of affordable housing. This will come from a mixture of Council land and initiatives combined with private developments via the planning system. Primarily, new affordable homes will be to rent, although the Council is now looking for a wider range of opportunities to facilitate low cost home-ownership and a range of affordable rent products to meet the aspirations of local residents to remain in the

Borough and have greater access to lower cost home-ownership and secure rented accommodation. This may be helped by the growing range of Intermediate housing products as outlined in the new White Paper. These include Build to Rent, Rent to Buy, Shared Ownership and Starter Homes.

1.38. In thinking about the cost of affordable rented homes there are a number of considerations;

- First, the viability of individual schemes in an era where there is no longer national subsidy available for affordable rented housing. Depending on the site, the provision of affordable housing will be easier in some places than in others. There will often be a trade-off to be made between the number of affordable units which can be achieved and the level of rents. Viability may also vary between parts of the Borough. Accommodation at lower rent levels may be more viable on greenfield sites than on Town Centre or complex brownfield sites. As stated, we expect green field sites to deliver a substantial amount of affordable housing and ;
- Second, many of the households seeking accommodation are on low incomes and cannot afford rents even at “affordable rent” levels without subsidy;
- Third, however, the SHMA has shown that amongst the households which would be looking to access affordable rented housing there is a wide spread of incomes, including families who could afford to pay rents up to 80% of market rates’ but who cannot afford to house themselves in the market. These households commonly do not have access to council or housing association accommodation through traditional routes and there is a very limited stock of accommodation in the Borough available to this group. In this sense they are caught between their inability to access the market and the limited likelihood of ever accessing social rented housing.

1.39. Balancing these factors together the Council will therefore promote affordable rented housing at a range of rents, from traditional social housing rents to rents that are within the reach of households on middle incomes. However, it would not normally wish to see new affordable rented housing provided at rents above the Local Housing Allowance levels which are accessible to people claiming Housing Benefit. This is currently around 60-70% of market levels for most sizes of property.

1.40. As part of the delivery of this Strategy the Council will develop a new policy on Affordable Housing. On rented homes, this will develop the ideas already promoted in London, Manchester and elsewhere to encompass a range of rents. This new policy will introduce a *Slough Living Rent* based on average local incomes. This will sit alongside a *Slough Affordable Rent*, akin to existing Target rents in social housing. We will also expand the Council’s existing affordable housing policies to encompass the developing models of Intermediate housing and apply them to the local situation in Slough.

## **Delivery of New Homes**

### ***Performance in Recent Years***

1.41. The task in delivering new homes on the scale envisaged by the SHMA is challenging. However, performance in recent years demonstrates that this may be achievable. In 2015/16, across all housing tenures, 789 new homes were completed, well in excess of the Local Plan target of 550. This followed a total of 507 in 2014/15. The great majority of delivery in these years was on large sites.

### ***Projected Future Delivery***

1.42. The Slough Housing Trajectory estimates the number of homes likely to be completed over the period to 2036. Over the next 5 years, to 2020/21, the availability of known large sites means that delivery is likely to average between 700 and 750 homes per year. In the 3

years beyond that the combination of known large sites and other "core options" shows the prospect of reaching the SHMA target of 927 homes per year, taking account of how long it may in reality take to build our strategic sites. In the years after that, i.e. from 2024/25 onwards, the scarcity of sites in Slough appears to make the prospect of meeting the SHMA target difficult or impossible within the boundaries of the Borough.

### ***Support for Private Sector Delivery***

1.43. The Council recognises that the majority of new homes provided in the Borough will be built by private sector developers. We will support the development process through the Planning service via the provision of timely guidance about the preferred mix and tenure of homes on individual developments. This will include the required contribution of affordable housing products from private sector developers as this is where we expect the majority of new affordable housing development to come from. Where appropriate, we will support private sector development through assistance via site assembly and asset management, especially where the Council has neighbouring or ancillary assets that can be used to facilitate development. This will particularly be the case where active asset management can achieve wider regeneration benefits for Slough over and above the provision of new homes. Where possible, the Council will look to use its Subsidiary Housing Companies (see below) to support and encourage private sector development of new homes.

### ***A Leading and Pro-Active Role for the Council***

1.44. The Council has already recognised that in order to achieve the delivery of the new homes required for the people of Slough now and in the future, it will itself need to act as the leading player and catalyst for development. It will not be sufficient to rely on the private sector to deliver the homes required. It is already aggressively promoting and achieving the delivery of new homes through a variety of mechanisms. It is a commitment of this Housing Strategy that the Council will directly facilitate the delivery of an average of 200 new homes per year during the life of this strategy and the Local Plan. This will be through a combination of direct delivery and provision by partners on behalf of the Council. These homes will be of a range of tenures but with the main emphasis on affordable housing.

### ***Development on Council-Owned Land - General Fund Sites***

1.45. The Council is already directly using surplus General Fund land for the provision of new homes;

- At Ledgers Road, Chalvey, the handover of 73 new homes began in the Autumn of 2016. 23 of these will be passed as social rented housing to the Council's Housing Revenue Account, while the remainder are for market sale to local people who currently live in the SL1,2, and 3 postcode areas and excluding buy to let landlords;
- A further scheme of 103 homes at Wexham Nurseries will provide 33 homes for the Council's affordable rented stock and 70 homes for sale also restricted to local people on the same basis to ensure that the Council's new housing supply is for local people in line with our 5 Year Plan.

### ***Council Land - Housing Revenue Account Sites***

1.46. The Council intends to maximize the development potential on its own land held within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) A new Business Plan for the HRA was agreed by the Council's Cabinet in October 2016 which outlines;

- A programme of 190 new council homes will be delivered in the years up to 2019/20 on existing identified sites, using a combination of retained Right to Buy receipts, S106 contributions and council funding;
- The Council is looking for further sites, such as under-used garages to allow for an increase in the scale of the programme;



- The Council is looking actively at the scope for wider estate renewal. This follows successful regeneration schemes at Common Road Langley and at Britwell. The overall aim would be to increase the amount and quality of residential accommodation, improve the overall quality of the environment and ensure there is an appropriate mix of house types and tenures.
- The next major scheme will be at the Tower and Ashbourne House tower blocks, which are already being decanted prior to demolition, a total of 120 flats. An appraisal of the site is currently being carried out to determine the best mix for the future development while maximising the number of replacement units.

1.47. The new HRA Business Plan also commits the Council to undertake a fundamental Option Appraisal of its housing stock, for completion by December 2017. This will help determine the future of existing homes and estates over the next 15 to 20 years and look at how overall quality can be improved while maximizing the overall potential of HRA land. It is estimated that over the 15 years from 2016 a net gain of approximately 1,000 housing units can be achieved on HRA land.

### ***Joint Venture Delivery; Slough Urban Renewal***

1.48. The Council is confident it can deliver its ambitious programme for the delivery of new homes. We have established Slough Urban Renewal (SUR), a joint venture with Morgan Sindall (MSIL) which has already proven successful in developing new homes for both sale and rent. The sites at Ledgers Road and Wexham are current examples. SUR is also delivering a range of community projects, including vitally-needed extensions to schools. The Council sees SUR as a key vehicle in enabling it to deliver new homes in the next few years, through a variety of means.

1.49. For example, it has been a long-term ambition of the Council to create a high-quality, mixed-use residential scheme at the end of the Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal. To date, the redevelopment of this area has been stalled due to an inability to assemble land required to meet the Planning objective of delivering a comprehensive scheme. In October 2016 the Council's Cabinet agreed to grant an option to SUR to redevelop Slough Basin in partnership with Waterside Places, the joint venture entered into by the Canal and Rivers Trust. This will provide 240 new homes.

### ***Site Assembly and Pro-Active Asset Management***

1.50. Slough Basin is an example of where the Council has used its strategic role to promote the assembly of sites and actively used the leverage of its own assets to help deliver development and regeneration. The Council is working on this basis on other sites in the Borough and will continue to do so in order to deliver the development of the new homes required either directly, via SUR or by the private sector.

### ***Strategic Acquisition***

1.51. The Council has already developed the capacity for the strategic acquisition of sites. Given the land constraints already referenced in the Housing Trajectory it will actively look for opportunities for acquisition, either directly or via SUR, in order to assist in the delivery of sites identified in the local plan.. It will do so in particular to increase the delivery of affordable housing.

### ***One Public Estate***

1.52. Combined with our assertive asset management approach we have a shared ambition with our public sector partners to make efficient and productive use of our joint estates and to see land and property as an enabler for growth and service transformation. We will be pooling data on asset holdings and developing joint plans with our partners. One current example is at Upton Hospital, where there is the potential to release surplus land and

buildings which can be reused for housing and new enterprise, boosting local jobs, growth and house building in the longer term.

### ***Horizon Scanning for Large Sites***

1.53. We will co-ordinate the work of this Strategy with that on the emerging Local Plan to look to identify large sites which are suitable for the provision of significant numbers of homes in the medium and long term. One such example are the Akzo-Nobel (ICI) and National Grid (gas works) sites which potentially have the capacity for up to 1,400 new homes.

### ***Subsidiary Housing Companies***

1.54. The Council has established two wholly-owned Subsidiary Housing Companies – Herschel Homes and James Elliman Homes. Two companies were required in order to allow for intervention in different areas of the market.

The companies are in the business of acquiring existing or newly-built homes. They can contribute to the provision of homes in a number of ways;

- Providing a potential buyer for new developments, for example at sites such as Slough Basin or those to be developed by private developers;
- Bringing empty properties back into use;
- Using existing accommodation to provide more affordable housing;
- Providing specialist accommodation for particular groups, for example care leavers or key workers.

### ***Compulsory Purchase***

1.55. Elsewhere in this Strategy we set out the Council's determination to pro-actively intervene to improve standards in the private rented sector. This will include the use of compulsory purchase powers to increase the supply of homes by bringing long-term empty properties back into use. As an example, the Council's Cabinet in November 2016 approved a proposal to issue CPOs on 7 long-term void properties in the Borough and this action is already proving effective and has set the direction of travel for the delivery of this strategy.

### ***LAPP (Local Authority Partnership Purchase Scheme)***

1.56. The Council has introduced the LAPP scheme. This is a modern shared ownership scheme to help local people buy a home in the borough. It is aimed at buyers who can afford mortgage repayments, but who cannot afford to buy a property outright, or who may not have the large deposit often required. The scheme is available on properties for sale up to the value of £400,000 and within the Slough postcode area.

LAPP helps people to buy up to 70% share of a home by obtaining up to a 90% loan to value mortgage on their share. Slough Borough Council will buy the remaining 30%. The buyer will then pay rent to the council for this share of the property. It is hoped that the scheme can eventually be expanded to help 100 Slough households into home-ownership.

### ***Partnership with Housing Associations***

1.57. The Council recognises that Housing Associations already make an important contribution towards Housing in the Borough and in particular the provision of social housing. 7% of households in Slough rent their homes from Registered Providers (Housing Associations.) We also recognize that Associations have the potential and the capacity to deliver new homes that the Borough requires, including affordable housing, but that this potential is not currently being fully exploited. We therefore intend to re-invigorate the partnership arrangements with local Housing Associations both to encourage the development of new affordable homes and to involve them more fully in programmes to improve the quality of life in the borough.

### ***Provision for special needs groups***

1.58. The Council is committed to improving housing options for vulnerable groups ensuring availability within local communities particularly for young people including care leavers, older people and people with disabilities as required. The Council will be working with its various health and other partners to develop new and relevant accommodation options where there is an identified need. It is a specific commitment of this Housing Strategy to facilitate the provision of more extra care units alongside the development programme to maximise the delivery of new homes.

### **The Local Plan and Land Constraints**

1.59. This chapter has demonstrated that the Council has adopted a vigorous and interventionist approach in seeking the delivery of new homes to own and to rent. It accepts the high level of housing need and will actively seek to meet the new homes target set out in the SHMA. This is to ensure that existing and future residents of Slough have access to good quality homes appropriate to their needs. The Council will maximise the use of its own land and actively acquire sites, either directly or through other delivery vehicles, in order to increase the level and rate of completions. It will work positively through the planning process to encourage well designed developments that enhance the built environment. It will build partnerships with other agencies, including private developers, housing associations and other public sector bodies to assist delivery on other potential housing sites. It will use its strategic powers to assemble sites and build partnerships to allow development to be brought forward. Over the period of this Strategy there are sites and opportunities already identified which will deliver significant numbers of new homes.

1.60. In the medium and longer term, the pipeline of suitable housing sites may require further support to ensure that they come forward and in order to deliver the necessary housing. It is anticipated that the review of the Local Plan currently underway will seek to address this issue. Considerations include the question of whether it is feasible to meet all of the housing need up to 2036 within the borough boundaries or whether it will be necessary to pursue options for housing in other local authorities. The option for substantial housing to be located in South Buckinghamshire, possibly taking the form of a new “garden suburb” will require co-operation of the local authority and may also require considerable master planning input.

#### **Action Plan**

- Seek to enable the provision of 927 new units of housing per year for Slough in line with the SHMA.
- Require private developments to include affordable housing via the planning system
- The Council will directly deliver or facilitate a programme 200 units per year of new housing over the life of this Strategy and beyond, including affordable housing.
- Develop a new Affordable Housing policy, including the introduction of a Slough Living Rent.
- We will maximize the provision of affordable housing on Council-owned land through infill development and estate renewal, including the net gain of 1,000 units on HRA land over the period 2016 to 2031.
- Prioritise available funds and council assets to provide for the delivery of affordable housing schemes in partnership with SUR and Housing Associations.
- Work with private and public sector partners to acquire and assemble sites to

facilitate the delivery of new housing.

- Improve partnership arrangements with housing associations to facilitate the delivery of new affordable homes
- Extend our programme of Council mortgage lending through our existing LAPP scheme.
- Produce a plan to improve housing opportunities for key workers.
- Provide new homes for particular groups within the community where required, for example those needing extra care or care leavers.
- Use our Subsidiary Housing Companies to assist in providing homes for vulnerable groups within the community.
- Pro-actively use powers to increase the supply of homes by bringing long-term empty homes back into use.

## Theme 2 : Private Sector Housing

Ensuring that the private rented sector (PRS) provides sufficient good quality market housing through support to landlords and tenants and, where necessary, robust regulation and quality control.

### Evidence Base - Key Points

- The Council has commissioned the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to do a full survey of private sector housing in Slough. The private sector provides 80% of homes in Slough with 52% in owner occupation and 28% in the Private Rented Sector (PRS.)
- Most landlords provide a good service and standard of accommodation but a minority are rogue landlords who provide unsatisfactory and unhealthy accommodation.
- In Slough, overcrowding is a key issue for landlords to address as it is prevalent even in good quality private rented homes.
- Nationally, bad housing conditions are most commonly found in the private rented sector. One third do not meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard.
- The number of service requests from private rented housing, including complaints and requests for advice, rose from 683 in 2014/15 to 918 2015/16;
- It is estimated that there are around 1,849 Houses in Multiple Occupation in the Borough.
- 68 HMOs are currently licensed under Mandatory Licensing and a further 42 HMOs under the Chalvey Additional Licensing Scheme. Many more will come under the proposed new licensing scheme.
- 1,172 dwellings in the private rented sector currently have category 1 HHSRS hazards. This equates to 8% of properties which is lower than the national average. The total cost of mitigating category 1 hazards in Slough's private sector stock is estimated to be £11.3 million
- The average SAP rating for all private sector dwellings in Slough is 60, which is better than both England (57) and South East (58).
- 5% (2,156) of private sector dwellings and 3.8% (576) of private rented dwellings in Slough are estimated to have an EPC rating below band E.
- In the private sector stock as a whole there are an estimated 13,319 dwellings with un-insulated cavity walls and 7,452 dwellings with less than 100mm of loft insulation.
- The Council's Housing Regulation Team is currently working on 14 long-term empty properties.

### Objectives

2.1. The Council wants to ensure that Slough has good quality, affordable private sector housing which meets the needs of residents, improving health, well-being, and social mobility ensuring that Slough is a thriving place to live and work. To achieve this we have the following objectives;

- Improve the condition of private sector homes through assistance to residents and landlords and by robust regulation where necessary to ensure health and safety standards are met;
- Improve the standard of the management of private sector homes in the Borough and reduce overcrowding;
- Support residents to access affordable, well-managed private sector homes;

- Prevent homelessness and unnecessary evictions through timely and effective intervention with landlords;
- Develop new and stronger partnerships with a range of agencies including Adult Social Care, Public Health and the CCG to better support vulnerable and disabled home owners and tenants to live independently in safe, secure and warm homes;
- Increase the supply of private sector housing by bringing empty properties and abandoned commercial buildings back into residential use;
- Support residents to access affordable, well managed private rented homes through building effective partnerships with local landlords and increasing housing supply through our subsidiary housing companies.

## Background

2.2. The great majority of residents in Slough live in privately-owned homes, both owner-occupied and privately-rented. Private housing is therefore a critical resource for the Borough, its residents and its economy. To a large degree the private sector satisfies the requirements of many residents to own their own homes or to occupy accommodation which is suitable for them at particular times in their lives.

2.3. As in most other parts of the country the proportion of Slough households living in privately-rented homes has been increasing. The latest information suggests that over 28% of households now rent their home from a private landlord, much higher than the national figure of 17%. Most landlords provide good quality homes which are well-managed and cater for a wide range of income groups. The largest issue affecting private sector homes remains overcrowding due mainly to economic circumstances as many households are unable to afford a property of the right size, particularly larger families who need three bedrooms or more.

2.4. The Council itself has a range of partnership arrangements with private landlords, particularly where it is preventing families becoming homeless or placing residents in private rented accommodation as an alternative to expensive and unsuitable Bed & Breakfast hotels. Private sector homes are a vital resource when there is not enough permanent social housing available.

2.5. However, while most private sector homes provide a good standard of accommodation, there are also some severe problems;

- Nationally, conditions in the private rented sector are worse than in other housing tenures. A third do not meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard;
- Many tenants in Slough are living in overcrowded conditions;
- Research by Shelter nationally shows that over half of tenants had experienced at least one of the following problems over the previous 12 months; mould or damp; leaking roofs or windows; electrical hazards; pest infestations; a gas leak or inadequate heating. 10 % of tenants reported their health has been affected in the last year because their landlord has not dealt with repairs and poor conditions in their property and 9% of parents said their children's health has been affected;
- The Building Research Institute (BRE) has estimated that that poor housing is costing the NHS over £1.4 Billion per year nationally;
- Poor housing conditions, particularly associated with the private rented sector, have an adverse effect on public health and well-being and exacerbate health inequalities;
- The energy efficiency standard of a home and inadequate heating systems can lead to fuel poverty for low income households and further exacerbate the health effects of living in poor quality housing;

- For a number of elderly, disabled or vulnerable residents, particularly owner-occupiers, they now need support or adaptations to their homes to allow them to continue to live independently;
- In a small minority of cases, landlords are deliberately keeping their properties empty. Empty homes are a wasted resource and can be a major source of nuisance to local residents. The Council is proactively working on 14 sites and 7 of these are currently at an advanced stage towards a Compulsory Purchase Order.

### ***Dealing with Rogue Landlords***

2.6. The Council will target rogue landlords who exploit vulnerable people by renting out unsafe, illegal and overcrowded structures. We will use our stock modelling and other available intelligence to take robust action against rogue landlords who persistently break the law. We will develop a pro-active programme of inspections of properties rented by rogue landlords and estate agents and use all our statutory powers to ensure they comply with their legal duties. The Council has set up a multi-agency taskforce help tackle this issue and will not hesitate to use the full force of the law to eliminate rogue landlords from Slough.

### ***Landlord Registration Scheme***

2.7. Many Councils in London, the South East and other cities across the UK have concluded that one of the most effective ways to improve the private rented sector, protect tenants and reasonable landlords alike; would be mandatory registration of rented properties. This would promote 'letting properties' as a business and help the Council to have a programmed and methodical approach in regulating the worst condition properties and drive out the rogue and the criminal elements from the market. We will be investigating the feasibility of introducing borough wide registration of all rented properties. This would mean that for a relatively small fee the landlords register their properties with the Council. This would then give landlords access to expert advice and support by Council Officers as to how they should ensure they make best use of their investment.

### ***Regulation of HMOs***

2.8. The Council has statutory responsibilities to ensure there are good standards of accommodation in the private sector and regulatory and enforcement powers available to assist in achieving this objective. The use of these powers of regulation will be extended following the announcement in October 2016 that Government will expand the mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). As indicated, a further 215 HMOs will come under our proposed new licensing scheme.

### ***Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)***

2.9. The Housing Regulation Team in partnership with Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers take a holistic approach in dealing with ASB. ASB is a tenure blind issue and affects the residents across the board. Investigations of ASB often expose a range of housing related issues including overcrowding, hoarding, unfit premises and unsafe/ illegal business activities such as dog breeding. We have included the reduction of ASB as part of a Housing Neighbourhood KPI. We will be recording and monitoring the impact of our approach in reducing ASB and associated criminal activities which will be reported to the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel

### ***Improving Data on Private Rented Housing***

2.10. The Council has recently completed a full review of privately rented homes in the Borough using research carried out by the Building Research Establishment (BRE.) The main outcomes of the research achieved were;

- For the first time, a fully up to date picture of private rented homes in the Borough;

- To identify and highlight the extent of the main “Category 1” hazards found in homes in Slough. This is a hazard that presents a serious and immediate risk to a person’s health and safety;
- To identify where to target resources to achieve the greatest health outcomes, for example by relieving excessively cold homes, fuel poverty, dampness and overcrowding.
- To collate sufficient data to identify a range of factors related to private sector housing at ward level.

### ***Energy Efficiency***

2.11. The private rented sector has the highest proportion of poorly-insulated, energy-inefficient buildings. The Energy Act 2011 contains powers such that from 2018 landlords should ensure their properties meet a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E or that they have installed the maximum package under the Green Deal.

2.12. The Council will use the evidence from its BRE stock modelling to build a business case for bringing external investment to improve energy efficiency into all of the housing stock in the Borough, particularly the older private sector stock in the owner-occupied and private rented sectors.

### ***Using the RMI***

2.13. The start of the Council’s new Repairs, Maintenance and Investment (RMI) contract in December 2017 provides an opportunity for the Council to provide a package of support to private landlords and help them to provide a better standard of accommodation.

2.14. This will also make it more attractive for the landlords concerned to offer their properties to the Council rather than to London Boroughs as has happened on a large scale over the last few years. In conjunction with our ambition to bring in external funding for energy efficiency, the RMI can also help to tackle fuel poverty amongst older or vulnerable residents. As a delivery vehicle, this contract would help complete the package from funding perspective alongside our Home Improvement Agency which provides much needed aids and adaptations to help our vulnerable and disabled residents maintain their independence and stay in their own homes.

### ***Prevention of Homelessness***

2.15. The Housing Regulation Team plays a key role in stemming the flow of people presenting as homeless due to conditions in their rented accommodation. The Council has a statutory duty to investigate and remove Category 1 Hazards from privately rented accommodation. This together with ensuring that any private rented accommodation is suitable and not overcrowded assists the Council’s Homelessness prevention activities. Through this strategy we aim to strengthen our effort in Homelessness prevention and increase the supply of good quality affordable housing in the private rented sector and through our subsidiary housing company James Elliman Homes – See Theme 4; Homelessness and Housing Need

### ***Primary Authority***

2.16. The purpose of the Primary Authority (PA) scheme is to allow businesses to obtain from their partner Local Authority consistent, reliable and robust advice concerning regulatory compliance. The PA scheme allows Local Authorities to recover from the PA partner all costs incurred in providing advice. The scheme is well established nationwide in the areas of Licensing, Trading Standards, Food Safety and Health and Safety but there appears to be far fewer PA relationships covering the area of Housing. Slough Borough Council’s Housing Regulation Team has just formed its first PA partnership with Superdrug



and it is hoped that the team can take advantage of the current 'gap in the market' by actively seeking out opportunities to form new relevant PA authority partnerships.'

### ***Tackling Long Term Empty Properties***

2.17. The Council has adopted a zero tolerance approach to empty residential properties that are left empty and abandoned in a derelict state. The impact of such properties is well documented as well as being a waste of valuable housing resources. The Council is currently dealing with 14 sites, seven of which are at an advanced stage of a Compulsory Purchase Order. This demonstrates that the Council is determined to use all available powers to improve housing supply in Slough across all tenures and will continue to do so throughout the life of this strategy.

#### **Action Plan**

- Build a well-resourced Private Sector Housing Service to support good landlords and carry out the Council's statutory responsibilities towards tenants and landlords.
- Undertake rigorous enforcement and prosecution against rogue landlords who have a history of breaking the law.
- Undertake a feasibility study for introducing a borough-wide Landlord Registration Scheme to protect good landlords and drive out rogue or criminal landlords.
- Implement the expansion of mandatory HMO licensing.
- Support responsible landlords and work with them to become professional and grow their business.
- Ensure our subsidiary Housing Companies act as exemplar private landlords in the Borough.
- Use the new RMI contract to provide support and repair services to private landlords.
- Use all available powers to bring empty properties back into residential use.
- Work with all partner agencies to tackle the problem of illegally-occupied outbuildings through a range of approaches.
- Work with utility companies and all relevant agencies to reduce fuel poverty, insulate homes, help with the cost of healthy living and improve the energy ratings of older private sector buildings.

## Theme 3; Council Homes

Ensuring council homes *are managed and maintained to a high standard and the Council builds new homes for Slough residents.*

### Evidence Base - Key Points

- The Council owns 7, 400 tenanted and leasehold homes, managed through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- Over the next 7 years there will be £100m investment programme in existing homes and £40m invested in building new council homes.
- The award of a new repairs and investment contract to start in 2017 will provide a focus for improved services to tenants.
- However, there are threats to the viability of the HRA, mainly brought about by Government policy. These are the mandatory reduction in rents for 4 years from 2016/17; and a potential requirement to make a payment to the Government following the sale of “higher value” council homes when they become void.
- The Council is undertaking an Options Appraisal to look at the long-term future of council homes.

### Objectives

3.1. The Council has a number of important objectives in planning the future of Council homes in the Borough;

To place tenants and leaseholders at the centre of the development of services and planning for the future of council homes;

To keep homes in good repair and to maximise the potential of council homes for the long-term benefit of the people of Slough;

To take opportunities to provide additional affordable homes on council-owned land;

To develop and provide high quality and responsive services for tenants and leaseholders.

### Background

#### ***The Significance of Council Housing***

3.2. Slough Borough Council owns and manages 7,400 rented and leasehold properties across the borough. This is the Council’s most valuable physical asset. These homes are financed through a special account – the Housing Revenue Account (HRA.)

3.3. A wide and diverse range of residents are accommodated in council homes across a range of income groups. However, council homes are a particularly important resource for households on low or modest incomes who cannot afford to house themselves in homes available on the private market. Its significance is increasing as house prices and private sector rents escalate. Demand for council homes is high and far outstrips supply. This explains the length of the Housing Register and the growing need to use temporary accommodation for homeless households.

3.4. The Council’s housing stock is a particularly vital resource for people who are vulnerable or disabled or elderly, who will not be able to find a home elsewhere. In an environment where market housing is increasingly unaffordable for many residents, council

housing is also vital for the economic future of the town in that it provides affordable accommodation for people who work in the borough.

3.5. For all of these reasons the Council wants to retain and enhance its homes for the long-term benefit of Slough. At the same time, as this Strategy is being written, council housing in Slough, as elsewhere, is subject to fundamental external change and pressure. This means taking a long-term look at the future of this critical asset and maximising its contribution to the future of the town.

#### ***Residents at the Centre of Services***

3.6. The Council wants to place residents – tenants and leaseholders – at the centre of its strategy for council homes. This means improving the responsiveness of the services provided and broadening the ways in which residents can become involved in monitoring and developing services. Central to this will be the use of digital technology to improve the delivery, quality, timeliness and value of services.

3.7. The centrepiece of the Council's drive to improve services to residents will be a new Repairs, Maintenance and Investment contract which will begin in December 2017. This will cover both day to day repairs and planned maintenance and improvements and will allow for a long-term and more planned approach to maintaining and enhancing these important physical assets. A particular priority will be to shift the balance of works to property so that 70% is planned, cyclical maintenance and investment and only 30% is reactive routine repairs. The Council will also take the opportunity of this new contract to build local. In-house capacity to carry out maintenance work on public and private assets.

#### ***Responding to Change***

3.8. At the time of writing this Strategy the Government is introducing a number of changes through the Housing and Planning Act and other legislation which will have a major impact on the future of council homes in the Borough. Chief amongst these are;

The Government has taken control of council rents and these will fall by 1% in each of the 4 years from 2016/17. While this benefits existing tenants it will have a major impact on the HRA, including money available for investment;

After April 2018 the Council will be forced to sell some its higher - value homes as they become empty and pass some of the proceeds to the Government;

The Government is changing the rules on new council tenancies and the granting of fixed-term as opposed to lifetime tenancies. This will not affect the position of existing tenancies.

3.9. These changes are being introduced at the same time as further measures to reform the benefit system, particularly the reduction in the Overall Benefit Cap and the further rollout of Universal Credit, both of which could significantly affect the finances of individual tenants and the HRA itself.

3.10. The combination of these measures means that the Council will need to look fundamentally again at access into council homes and how to ensure that homes are used to their greatest benefit. This will include a review of the existing Tenancy Strategy, the Scheme of Allocation and at the effectiveness of existing policies to encourage under-occupying households to move into smaller accommodation.

#### ***HRA Business Plan***

3.11. In 2012, the Government of the day reached an agreement with Local Authorities which still owned their housing stock, aimed at providing long-term stability for the HRA. This "Self-Financing" regime included a settlement on outstanding debt and the transfer of risk to

the Council. In return, the Council would be free to plan its housing finances for the long term.

3.12. The changes outlined above effectively set that agreement aside. A new 30 year Business Plan has been prepared and this will be subject to a further major review in 2018 when more will be known about the Government's intentions on rents and high value voids. The latest version of the Business Plan has incorporated headline data from a comprehensive Stock Condition Survey and the Council now has high quality and up-to-date information about the condition of its homes.

### ***Options Appraisal***

3.13. Major changes are already in train. For example;

- The regeneration of Britwell has included the provision of around 300 new homes;
- The current development programme will provide a further 190 affordable Council homes over the next 3-4 years;
- The council has decided to redevelop the tower blocks at Tower House and Ashbourne House.

3.14. However, alongside residents, the Council has decided to take a fresh and long-term look at the future of the assets which are its council housing; the resources which will be available for keeping good-quality existing homes in good repair; and the need and scope for replacing homes which are outdated and worn-out with more and better homes which maximise the potential benefit for the residents of Slough.

3.15. This Options Appraisal began in November 2016 and will report in December 2017. An interim report to the Council's Cabinet in March 2017 reported that "doing nothing" was not an option if the Council wished to maintain the number of council homes in the face of continued Right to Buy sales. Equally, transferring the housing stock to another landlord – a Registered Provider - was not financially viable. The Options Appraisal will now look at the range of means available for sustaining existing homes and maximising the provision of new affordable housing.

### **Action Plan**

- Publish a baseline 30 year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account in the Autumn of 2016.
- Undertake a comprehensive survey of the condition of the Council's housing stock, for completion by January 2017.
- In the light of the results of the condition survey and the implementation of the provisions of the Housing and Planning Act, produce an updated HRA Business Plan in March 2017.
- In partnership with residents, undertake a formal asset management review and option appraisal of the Council's housing stock for completion by December 2017.
- Complete the existing programme of 190 new homes on Housing-owned land and seek to continue the programme beyond 2020.
- Adopt the following priorities for improving the services to residents;
  - Awarding a new Repairs, Maintenance and Investment contract for council homes to improve the quality and responsiveness of repair for residents and to act as a catalyst for the development of local and in-house capacity to provide maintenance services
  - Engaging and enabling residents so as to create a culture of accountability and responsibility and to broaden opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to be involved in the development and monitoring of services ;
  - Increasing resident satisfaction through greater responsiveness to customers and in particular through the greater use of digital technology.

- Develop a new Tenancy Strategy for council tenancies in the light of the Housing and Planning Act.
- Undertake a formal review of the scheme for the Allocation of social housing in Slough.
- Develop proposals for the more effective use of council homes by increasing the number of tenants choosing to downsize when their family circumstances change.

## Theme 4: Homelessness and Housing Need

*Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping (living on the streets) through effective prevention work.*

### Evidence Base – Key points

- 2500 applicants on the Housing Register (people needing accommodation)
- The Council had a total of 2,373 homelessness approaches in 2015/16; of these 963 needed housing advice and 1,410 were on an emergency basis;
- The number of households accepted as homeless in Slough increased from 74 in 2013/14 to 241 in 2015/16, an increase of 225%.
- The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation increased from 156 at 31 March 2015 to 225 a year later. By September 2016 the total had exceeded 300 including some households in bed and breakfast accommodation.
- The market in Slough is experiencing increasing pressure from other Authorities, particularly London Boroughs, who are placing homeless households in Slough.
- The effect of Welfare Reform is to create more homelessness through the impact of the affordability of private sector accommodation.
- Rough sleeping (living on the streets) is an issue that may be increasing and requires a better joined-up approach.

### Objectives

4.1. The Council has a number of important objectives in addressing Homelessness in the Borough;

- To prevent homelessness and minimize the need to place households in temporary accommodation;
- To ensure there is a good advice and support network in Slough for both statutory and non-statutory households, including single homeless people;
- To ensure there is a supply of affordable alternative accommodation available to assist in preventing homelessness;
- Where it is necessary to use temporary accommodation, to ensure that it is suitable and of a decent standard;
- To minimize the cost to the council tax payer of the use of temporary accommodation;
- To address the issue and needs of rough sleepers (living on the streets) as part of a wider health prevention strategy.

4.2. This chapter summarises the current position on homelessness in Slough. It sets out the causes of the pressure in the market and commits the Council to building a new Homelessness Prevention Strategy to tackle homelessness and better meet the needs of our homeless population through wider partnership working.

### Background

#### *Pressure from the Market and from Benefit Changes*

4.3. In Slough, those households on low or modest incomes who cannot access home ownership or social housing are accommodated in the private rented sector. Households in this position have been under increasing pressure in the last few years.

4.4. This is due to partly to the effect of the growth of population as described in the previous themes. However, it is also more directly due to rapidly increasing rents and restrictions in the availability of benefits.

4.5. Following the introduction of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which capped the level of Housing Benefit available, the “affordability gap” between the LHA and market rents has grown. The table below illustrates the current gap faced by the majority of households on benefits seeking private rented accommodation in Slough.

<b><u>Property Type</u></b>	<b><u>Monthly LHA rate</u></b>	<b><u>Median rents</u></b>	<b><u>Gap</u></b>
<b><u>One Bedroom</u></b>	<b><u>£656.50</u></b>	<b><u>£950</u></b>	<b><u>£293.50</u></b>
<b><u>Two Bedrooms</u></b>	<b><u>£840.32</u></b>	<b><u>£1275</u></b>	<b><u>£434.68</u></b>
<b><u>Three Bedrooms</u></b>	<b><u>£1061.19</u></b>	<b><u>£1525</u></b>	<b><u>£463.81</u></b>
<b><u>Four Bedrooms</u></b>	<b><u>£1449.19</u></b>	<b><u>£1650</u></b>	<b><u>£200.81</u></b>

Note; LHA maximum rates (April 2016 to April 2017)

4.6. The Table demonstrates the “affordability gap” for those on benefits is large and increasing as the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate has been fixed for the next three years. We expect the gap to widen during the life of this strategy. The property types in highest demand, namely 2 bedroom and 3 bedroom properties have the largest current “affordability and this continues to widen.

4.7. Other national factors in regard to welfare reform are beginning to impact on Slough :

- The reduction in the Overall Benefit Cap which started in late 2016;
- The further roll-out of Universal Credit to families and vulnerable groups and the associated risks of failure to claim, non-payment, rent arrears and debt.

4.8. The Overall Benefit Cap, which restricts the total amount of benefit which can be received and therefore the financial help available to pay rent. The Council is already seeing the impacts of this policy in homeless presentations as it makes it more difficult for family households to sustain private rented tenancies.

4.9. One symptom of these restrictions is a further increase in overcrowding. Slough already has the eleventh highest incidence of overcrowding of all local authorities in England. Many residents are renewing and recycling their private sector tenancies on short term six month agreements. As a result, many are becoming increasingly vulnerable to homelessness as private renting is the least secure form of accommodation.

***The Increase in Homelessness and its Impact***

4.10. The combined effect of these factors has inevitably been a large increase in homelessness. Some of this hidden - for example the large number of residents who are withstanding very overcrowded conditions in the private rented sector. At the same time, these combined pressures have also manifested as stark upturns in applications and pressures on the local authority;

- In 2015/16 there were a total of 2,373 approaches to the Housing Service, of which 1,410 were on an emergency basis;
- The number of homeless households accepted as homeless in Slough increased from 74 in 2013/14 to 241 in 2015/6, an increase of 225%;
- As a consequence, the number of households placed in temporary accommodation also increased rapidly from 156 on 31 March 2015 to 225 a year later. The numbers continued to rise in 2016 and had topped 300 by September 2016.

4.11. Previously, some of these households had to be accommodated in Bed & Breakfast (B&B) hotels, a problem also facing most neighbouring councils, and particularly those in London. This Council has however, begun to “buck the trend” by succeeding in reducing the number of households in B&B, from 46 in September 2015 to 21 a year later. We had eliminated the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families by January 2017 and have stabilized the numbers in temporary accommodation at 316 as at March 2017.

4.12. Many of these pressures are also being experienced by neighbouring areas, though the increase in Slough has been higher than the norm. However, one additional factor specific to Slough has exacerbated these pressures. That is the increasing tendency for households to move outwards from London into Slough and in many cases for homeless households to be placed in Slough by other councils. In the last 3 years, a total of 450 notifications have been made to the Council by authorities of households they have moved into the Borough. These have been made by 28 different councils, including 11 London Boroughs. It is held by officers that this is a considerable underestimate and that the total number of placements is likely to be over 1000 new households placed in the last three years.

4.13. There is one more factor which serves to increase the difficulty for local households in the market. Competition from London Boroughs both makes it more difficult for Slough households to find accommodation in the market and more difficult for the Council to find housing for its homeless families.

4.14. The movement of households from London, many of them placed by London Boroughs, has also brought particular difficulties for local health, care and education services. Many of the households being placed in Slough are not being provided with sufficient support to allow them to settle properly to access local services, such as GPs, dentists or schools. The fact that in many cases the Council and other local agencies are not notified of the placement makes matters worse.

4.15. The links between having a good, secure home and the overall quality of life are well-established. Equally, the relationship between homelessness and other forms of disadvantage are well known. Homeless people are more likely to have health problems, relating to both physical and mental health. Children within homeless families risk having their educational prospects severely damaged. Employment prospects are affected by not having a permanent place to stay. These risks are amplified when families are forced to spend some time in unsuitable forms of temporary accommodation and overcrowded conditions in the private rented sector. These linkages are highlighted in Slough’s Wellbeing Strategy.

4.16. Whilst the Council's primary concern is improving the position for homeless families in the Borough to improve the life chances of the families concerned, there is also a pressing financial reason to do so. Temporary accommodation, particularly Bed & Breakfast accommodation is expensive for the council tax payer as well as largely unsuitable for the families concerned. It is therefore vital to protect the financial resources available for other critical services, such as Adult Social Care and Slough Children’s Service’s Trust, through minimising homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation.



### ***Homelessness Pressure likely to Grow***

4.17. There are a number of reasons to believe that homelessness will continue to grow. The threat for Slough is that the high levels of homelessness and usage of temporary accommodation seen in neighbouring London Boroughs will spread outwards to this Borough.

4.18. The concern is that a number of factors will combine to increase the levels of homelessness;

- Continued population growth leading to overcrowding and further increases in house prices and rents;
- The 4 years freeze in welfare benefits, including Local Housing Allowance, announced by the Chancellor in the Budget for 2015 and the implementation of the Benefit Cap and roll out of Universal Credit;
- Continued placement into Slough by London and surrounding Boroughs;
- It is becoming ever more difficult for households on benefits, or low or modest incomes to find and sustain tenancies in Slough's private rented sector.

### ***New Preventing Homelessness Legislation***

4.19. New legislation in the form of the Homeless Reduction Bill 2016/17 is set to place new duties on all local authorities to prevent homelessness at much earlier stages, with a focus on homeless advice and early intervention to prevent evictions.

4.20. This legislation will place an additional burden on already stretched homelessness services. The ethos of the legislation is to widen the responsibility for preventing homelessness beyond simply Housing services and this will mean delivering a better, joined-up holistic approach with homeless reduction being a shared priority across the Health, Housing and Wellbeing sectors. This includes addressing the needs of vulnerable homeless households in partnership with Adult Social Care and Slough Children's Service's Trust whilst intervening in the private rented sector to prevent evictions.

### ***Our Local Response to Homelessness***

4.21. Our intention to reduce homelessness, eliminate the use of unsuitable forms of temporary accommodation starting with B&B's and tackle living on the streets (rough sleeping). We also believe the most effective way to deal with homelessness is to stop it happening in the first place. Our focus and "acid test" will be on preventing homelessness for local households now and in the future. Through early intervention and prevention and proactive creative solutions we expect to manage and reduce the levels of homelessness and rough sleeping in Slough from our existing levels and therefore reduce the financial, social and economic costs of homelessness over the next five years for the residents of Slough.

### ***New Homelessness Prevention Strategy***

4.22. The Council has committed to developing a new Homelessness Prevention Strategy which will be delivered by September 2017. We have therefore invited our partner agencies in the statutory and voluntary sectors to join us in developing and delivering this and to change and improve the way we collectively work together to prevent homelessness.

4.23. We will fully involve our partners at the Slough Homelessness Forum and the strategy will be scoped to address the following key priorities:

- Deliver effective early intervention and prevention with a focus on education, employment, health and wellbeing;
- Prevent homelessness through delivery of rapid and effective assessment;
- Use only the most appropriate temporary accommodation to prevent further social and economic deterioration;
- Manage demand by ensuring that we address over - expectation and make the best use of our social housing stock;
- Increase access to and the supply of affordable accommodation to prevent homelessness;
- Prevent homelessness by supporting single homeless people and reduce rough sleeping by 50%.

#### ***Working with Private Landlords***

4.24. We understand that the private rented sector in Slough will continue to be the main housing option for many residents, but that it is very often problems arising with private sector tenancies which are the immediate trigger for homelessness. We therefore intend to develop a new strategic and positive working relationship with private sector landlords to improve affordability and prevent homelessness approaches to the council. We believe our current number of homeless approaches can be stabilised if we can successfully work with private landlords to meet the local needs of residents. We aim to allocate our resources to preventative approaches rather than providing unwanted Bed & Breakfast or Temporary Accommodation for homeless households. We have eliminated the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for families with children and aim to restrict B&B to emergency use only going forward.

#### ***Subsidiary Housing Company***

4.25. In addition to developing a fresh partnership with private landlords, we intend to intervene directly in the market to provide a greater supply of affordable accommodation for homeless families or as a preventative alternative to homelessness. Our Subsidiary Housing Company James Elliman Homes will acquire existing housing for use for households threatened with homelessness. The new company will act as an exemplar private landlord and help promote good standards in the private rented sector. Alongside the new Subsidiary Company, the Council will put in place improved management arrangements to bring together landlords and tenants to make the most effective use of the accommodation available. We hope to increase the quality and choice of accommodation available to homeless and potentially homeless households through both the delivery of new housing supply detailed in this strategy alongside other specific market interventions that will be detailed in our new strategy.

#### ***Support for Households in Temporary Accommodation***

4.26. We also understand the need for additional support for some of the homeless individuals and families who approach us and those who are temporarily housed or placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation. A key need is to enable households to develop the relevant skills for independent living or to take advantage of work opportunities to be able to sustain their tenancies longer term. At a management level we are looking to increase debt/money management advice and at closer working and mediation with landlords to prevent evictions.

#### ***Placements in Slough by other Local Authorities***

4.27. We have also recognised the vulnerability of households placed in Slough by other authorities and the urgent need to address their access to local services. We will work with our local partners, particularly in the Health sector to better co-ordinate

the sharing of information about these individual and families and to insist upon better data sharing and cooperation by the "exporting" authorities.

### ***Review of Allocations Policy***

4.28. Although many homeless households will continue to be accommodated in the private sector, it is a key aim of this Strategy to increase the supply of permanent affordable housing. We intend to undertake a review of the Housing Allocation Policy, which governs which categories of household are allocated social housing. Amongst other matters this review will look at the priority which should be given to homeless households.

### ***Single Homelessness and Rough Sleeping***

4.29. Slough is fortunate in having an existing network of voluntary agencies and support and advice services offering services to single homeless people and rough sleepers. In some cases their clients include those who do not come within the statutory obligations of the local authority to accommodate homeless people. Often, however, joint working between the voluntary sector and the Council can bring the support which allows vulnerable client to access services.

4.30. Whilst data is traditionally difficult to compile for rough sleeps, the general view of our voluntary sector is that Rough Sleeping (living on the streets) in Slough is on the rise. Estimates vary between 30 and 60 people, with a significant proportion being of Polish origin. The current official Rough Sleepers count for Slough is 25 and is undertaken every year on a Berkshire wide basis. This is the highest it has been over a number of years, but in the main these totals has remained relatively static. We also know the scale of rough sleeping is greater than that captured and are aware of 39 individuals in total who sleep rough from time to time. The statistics vary because as for other homeless households most people squat, 'sofa surf', stay with family and friends or anywhere else they can find temporary shelter for as long as possible.

4.31. The voluntary and statutory agencies working in this field already meet regularly at the Slough Homelessness Forum. A number of specific initiatives are coordinated through is group, including a Winter Nightshelter and the London and Slough Soup Run.

4.32. In developing the new Homeless Prevention Strategy, we will be carrying out a sector wide review to consider how we can help better coordinate services for Rough Sleepers and achieve longer term solutions including jointly commissioning new services for the most vulnerable single homeless people. We are also carrying out an early review of arrangements for rough sleepers during periods of cold weather.

4.33. The Council is also working in wider partnerships and has recently commissioned work through Homeless Link to deliver the Making Every Adult Matter" (MEAM) approach across our strengthening homeless prevention partnerships. This offers an exciting opportunity for information sharing and development of joint solutions between Health, Adult Social Care, Slough Children's Services Trust and Housing to work in new strategic partnerships to support new service delivery models.

### **Action Plan**

- Develop and adopt a Preventing Homelessness strategy in collaboration with clients, landlords, the voluntary sector and other partner agencies.
- Develop new partnerships with private and third sector landlords to maximise

opportunities for tenancies for homeless families and individuals.

- James Elliman Homes will acquire homes to alleviate the pressures on temporary accommodation and Bed & Breakfast provision.
- Ensure the use of Bed & Breakfast for families with children is eliminated going forward.
- Review the Council's Allocation Scheme to re-evaluate the priority which homeless people receive under the scheme.
- Work with the Health sector and other agencies to monitor and address the health and care needs of vulnerable homeless people placed in Slough by other Local Authorities and require those authorities to review their placement and notification policies.
- Undertake an early review of arrangements for rough sleepers during periods of cold weather and find longer term solutions.
- Roll out the MEAM approach and develop new partnerships that makes homelessness everyone's business in Slough.

## Theme 5 ; Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable Groups

Ensuring that specialist accommodation is available for vulnerable people and those with special housing needs, for example, older people, people with disabilities and young people including care leavers.

### Evidence Base - Key Points

- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) estimates that that the number of people over the age of 65 in Slough will increase by 40% in the next 10 years. The SHMA estimates that between 2013 and 2036 the number of people aged over 85 will increase by 120%.
- The JSNA also estimates that in 2012, 9,322 residents between the ages of 16 and 65 had a physical disability.
- The SHMA reports that the number of people with long-term health problems or a disability will increase by over 50% by 2036.
- The SHMA projects that between 2013 and 2036 there is a net additional requirement of 957 units of older persons accommodation, (including specialist housing), or 42 per annum, predominantly market housing.
- This strategy is strongly linked to the joint Corporate Parenting Strategy of the Council and Slough Children's Services Trust (The Trust).
- As at February 2017, there were 179 care leavers receiving a service from Slough and 55% live within the borough. The Council and the Trust aim to rapidly increase opportunities for our care leavers to live in Slough if they wish to and it is safe for them to do so.
- The key recommendations of the Children's Trust action plan are to review the range and quality of accommodation for looked after children and care leavers, including staying put arrangements.

### Objectives

5.1. Our objectives in relation to people with special housing needs and vulnerabilities are to ensure that;

- People with long term conditions are supported by suitable housing which is safe, warm and resource efficient allowing access to appropriate prevention services including adaptations to stay well and maintain their independence;
- People with mental health, learning or physical vulnerabilities, whether in childhood, adulthood, or in older age have choice of access to suitable or specialist accommodation, maintain their independence and report a better quality of life;
- Young people and children leaving care have available to them a range of accommodation which is suitable to their needs;
- The best use is made of existing housing resources, for example the existing stock of social housing.

### Background

5.2. The Borough is fortunate in having two up to date assessments of requirements in this area – the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the SHMA. The JSNA estimates that that the number of people over the age of 65 in Slough will increase by 40% in the next 10 years. The SHMA estimates that between 2013 and 2036 the number of people aged over 85 will increase by 120%.

5.3. We understand that older people are disproportionately likely to own their homes outright or to live in social housing. There are also significant degrees of under-occupancy – that is, people occupying homes where they have at least 2 more rooms than they would normally require. Again, the SHMA suggests this is disproportionately the case for people owning their homes outright or living in social housing (the numbers of such households are 2,533 and 336 respectively.)

5.4. On disability, the JSNA estimates that in 2012, 9,322 residents between the ages of 16 and 65 had a physical disability. Looking forward, the SHMA projects that the number of people with long-term health problems or a disability will increase by over 50% by 2036. Again, people with a disability are more likely to be outright owners or to live in social housing. These projections are highly significant in designing homes and services in the future.

5.5. In estimating the need for additional specialist accommodation the SHMA concentrates on the needs of older people with dementia or mobility problems. The table below, drawn from the SHMA, compares the estimated need for older person's accommodation (including specialist housing), with the existing supply of sheltered and extra care housing. It concludes that an additional 987 units are required in the period up to 2036, or 42 per annum. Although 200 of these are in the affordable sector, the majority of the requirement is for market accommodation.

<b>Need for Units of Older Person's Accommodation 2013 – 2036 (SHMA, 2016)</b>			
	<b>Market</b>	<b>Affordable</b>	<b>Total</b>
Overall Need	817	725	1,542
Existing Supply	60	525	585
Net Need	757	200	957

5.6. This analysis points to a number of long-term strategic issues in relation to housing for older people;

- How to deliver additional accommodation at a scale to meet projected demand over the next 20 years. This strategy already recognises the need for additional extra care housing but overall requirements stretch considerably beyond this;
- The need to find market options, particularly for older owner-occupiers who would wish to move from their existing accommodation;
- How to address the scale of under-occupation, in both the under-occupied and social sectors. This could involve providing better alternative housing options for people to move to and assistance in doing so. Reducing under-occupation would also help to release valuable housing resources across the private and social sectors.

5.7. These questions sit alongside those already being addressed by Adult Social Care and Health services in seeking to allow older people to continue to live independently. This will be one of the major Housing issues for Slough over the next 20 years. It is therefore proposed that the agencies concerned come together to develop a long-term term strategy for older person's housing in the Borough. This would include looking at the suitability and future use of the Council's existing stock of sheltered accommodation through an options appraisal process.

5.8. The private sector, both for owner occupation and the private rented sector is the most important source of housing for all our residents including those who may need

more specialist accommodation now and in the future. This is unlikely to change and the private sector is set to increase proportionately given our current and projected housing market conditions. Hence our urgent need to not only ensure the private rented sector provides sufficient good quality housing, but to develop and increase the social housing and specialist housing options provided by the Council, its subsidiary companies, its regeneration partner (SUR) and our local housing associations where the private sector is unable to do so. This focus on better partnership working and new ways of working is necessary to achieve our objective of ensuring all our residents have access to quality homes by leveraging in the alternative investment opportunities as a driver for new specialist developments.

### ***The Need for Specialist Accommodation***

5.9. There are already a range of accommodation and housing options for people who require specialist accommodation or who are vulnerable. This includes sheltered accommodation and a range of supported housing. However the available evidence suggests that more will be required over the life of this Strategy and beyond. This is closely linked to increasing life expectancy and the projections that there will be more older people in the future, living longer, but with increasing long term health conditions and levels of disability. This in turn means we will have to increasingly consider “age friendly” design and consider meeting “Lifetime Homes” standards on new all developments. In the longer term this will mean increasing the number of properties suitable for wheelchair users or other people with disabilities through adaptation in both the private and social housing sectors.

### ***Housing and Health***

5.10. Adequate and appropriate housing is widely acknowledged to be a crucial underpinning of health and wellbeing. In general, poor housing and home conditions can be associated with both physical and mental effects on residents’ health. It is associated with asthma, skin allergies and respiratory diseases and is linked to physical accidents and injuries. Poor housing can also lead to depression, isolation, anxiety or aggression. Noise related stress from poor sound insulation is associated with lack of sleep, mental stress and depression.

### ***Housing Conditions***

5.11. All of our partners agree that housing is a wider determinant of health. We have undertaken a Stock Modelling project (BRE) to identify private sector homes where the worst conditions are found and we will continue to use this data to focus resources on achieving the greatest health outcomes e.g. relieving excessively cold homes, fuel poverty, falls amongst the elderly, dampness, overcrowding etc. We will then quantify the estimated costs and benefits to Public Health of these housing interventions by way of a Health Impact Assessment. By targeting future resources to preventing poor health impacts greater savings in health care and adult social care costs can be accrued. This is also known as the Health Dividend.

### ***Joint Working between Housing, Public Health and Adult Social Care***

5.12. Through this Strategy we are committed to a closer alignment of services provided by Housing, Public Health and Adult Social Care, aimed at early intervention and promotion to improve the quality of life; promoting independence and choice; reducing health inequalities by focusing on groups most affected by poor housing; and integrating services where this is appropriate.

5.13. For example, the Public Health Outcomes Framework “Healthy Lives, healthy people: Improving outcomes and supporting transparency” (2013) sets out desired

outcomes for public health and how they will be measured. Many of the measures have links to housing, some of the more relevant being:

- Falls and injuries in over 65's
- Fuel Poverty
- Excess Winter Deaths

5.14. The provision of good quality housing also has a critical role to play in preventing hospital admissions for vulnerable groups in the first place, and in avoiding delays in hospital discharges as part of the wider health and social care economy. These are critical priorities for Slough that help deliver the new Five Year Plan; Outcome 2 "Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs". As a practical example, we are jointly reviewing the functions and effectiveness of our Home Improvement Agency with Adult Social Care. This service carries out adaptations to the homes of vulnerable residents in both the private and social housing sectors. The aim is develop the service as a joint vehicle to deliver the above objectives and to prevent the unnecessary use of residential care and faster hospital discharges for older and vulnerable residents. There are a number of examples of how to do this nationally and we will be seeking the right service balance for Slough in the context of delivering new preventative services.

5.15. In addition to the strategic requirement for the alignment of work between Housing, Health and Adult Social Care, there are a number of more specific initiatives to be pursued during the life of this Strategy;

- There are 2 Extra Care Schemes already in Slough for residents over the age of 55 who have some care and support needs. However, more provision is required and the Housing and Adult Social Care services are working together to develop up to 3 additional extra care schemes on a mixed tenure basis including flats for sale. Extra Care Schemes will help residents to continue to live in self-contained accommodation which allows them to maintain their independence, dignity and personal choice. We will also look at other options for providing accommodation with care;
- Exploring further options for supporting people to live in their own homes, if appropriate with equipment and adaptations, potentially with a revised plan for the use of Disabled Facilities Grant;
- Slough already has a considerable resource for people with a disability in its stock of social housing which has already been adapted or is capable of being adapted. However, the monitoring of adaptations which have been carried out and the matching of vacancies to the requirements of individual residents needs to be improved;
- Within the direct new build programme on council land, the Council has made provision for new units for people with learning difficulties;
- Promoting measures to prevent illness such as improving energy efficiency and installing aids and adaptations to reduce the likelihood of accidents in the home. This will be pursued alongside the greater use of digital technology to enhance the delivery of person-centred care in the home;
- Ensuring timely housing advice is provided to all people with long-term mental health issues on admission to hospital and working towards a consistent approach to the assessment of priority for re-housing;
- A review of Housing Related Support services in the borough, which provide a range of supported accommodation to groups such as young homeless people or those with mental health problems;



- As noted above the development of a long-term strategy for older person's housing in the Borough;
- Supporting the needs of family carers in order to support their role as carers.

***Joint Working with Children's Service and Slough Children's Services Trust – Care Leavers***

5.16. It is a major priority of this Housing Strategy to enable children leaving care to access a range of suitable accommodation. The Housing service will work closely with the Children's Trust and Adult Social Care to help deliver effective pathways to support vulnerable children to address both specific housing and care needs.

5.17. Joint protocols are already in place between the homeless team and the Children's Trust to ensure that Looked After Children (LACs) do not fall between gaps in services and care leavers receive an additional preference on the Housing Register. Most receive an offer of council or housing association accommodation as soon as they are legally able to sign a tenancy agreement at 18 years of age. However, we understand that taking on the full responsibilities of a secure tenancy may not be the best outcome for many care leavers and some may prefer shared accommodation with a degree of on-going support. The lack of this type of accommodation and other housing options has been raised by young people in Ofsted's Report (2016).

5.18. The Council has therefore committed to developing this housing option through James Elliman Homes by the end of 2017. Initially this will be on a small scale through acquiring one or two shared three bedroomed properties in an agreed suitable location. We intend to see how this works in practice before putting such arrangements in place for a larger number of care leavers who may need different housing solutions.

5.19. There are a number of issues to be taken forward in the joint work between the services;

- Working with the Trust and the young people themselves to understand in detail the range and types of accommodation that care leavers would prefer;
- Developing new models of accommodation and support, including shared accommodation, using the vehicle of the Council's new subsidiary housing company James Elliman Homes (see below);
- As part of the review of Housing Related Support services reviewing the current range of supported accommodation available to care leavers as outlined;
- Ensuring the existing protocols and pathway into social housing is working effectively.
- We have recently reviewed the scheme of allocation for this group and have concluded that no change is required for care leavers as an additional priority is already given and our Equality Impact Assessment has demonstrated that this group has not been disadvantaged by the scheme. The key is to ensure all care leavers who want social housing are assisted to make an application in good time before leaving care, if so, then the evidence is the majority of care leavers have been accommodated and avoided homelessness to date.

***Wider Review of the Scheme of Allocation***

5.20. The Council will be reviewing its Scheme of Allocation, which governs the flow of residents in social housing in the Borough and the priority to be given to different groups. This review will include in particular the priority afforded to vulnerable people

including those with a disability or mental illness who are likely to be unable to work in the long term. For example, there is growing evidence that if a significant number of people with learning disabilities had greater access to social housing they could be better supported by Adult Social Care in their local community.

### ***Subsidiary Housing Company***

5.22. The Council has set up 2 wholly-owned subsidiary housing companies to acquire existing or newly-built properties. One of these companies James Elliman Homes will target its activity at securing accommodation for specific groups within the community, primarily households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The intention is also to use this vehicle to look to secure various accommodation tailored to the needs of particular groups and which may not be available through existing mainstream housing provision including social housing.

5.23. This will entail joint working between Housing, Adult Social Care and Slough Children's Services Trust to identify the models of provision required and the support necessary to the occupiers and to build a sustainable business plan for each housing option. The potential for each model will need to be explored as the new company grows, but the intention is to start with the outlined pilot scheme for care leavers and modelling and if possible implementing new forms of accommodation for care leavers and other priority special needs groups.

### ***Staff Trained to Safeguard Vulnerable People***

5.24. All front line Housing staff are trained in safeguarding protocols for children and adults. The Council is working with partner agencies to identify specific roles that housing staff can play in safeguarding in the borough.

### **Action Plan**

- Build on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on health and disability housing needs and undertake further detailed work with partners and stakeholders to examine what housing options are required to best meet current and future demand and changing needs.
- Through our new Subsidiary Housing Company, develop new delivery partnerships with Slough Children's Services Trust, Health and Adult Social Care to maximise opportunities for specialist and alternative accommodation within Slough and more cost effective wherever possible.
- In collaboration with the Trust, ensure there is an adequate supply of accommodation for care leavers and a clear housing pathway.
- Undertake a review of Housing- Related Support services in the borough with Adult Social Care as commissioners, to agree the best use of resources to meet joint strategic objectives.
- Undertake a review of the Home Improvement Agency services with Adult Social Care as commissioners, to agree the best service model and structure going forward to meet joint prevention objectives.
- Deliver up to 3 new mixed use extra care schemes in the borough during the life of this strategy where there is established local need.
- Develop an Older Persons Housing Strategy for Slough.
- Within the review of the Scheme of Allocation, ensure full account is taken of the needs of vulnerable people and those with a disability who are not working.
- Improve the recording and matching of adapted properties to ensure the best use of existing council stock.
- Improve partnership working, particularly with Adult Services, Public Health

and Slough CCG, develop services to allow elderly and disabled residents to live independently in their home and reduce the impact of poor housing on the health of residents to meet the wider priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **Implementation of the Strategy**

### **Implementation and monitoring**

The high level outcomes of the Housing Strategy support the strategic objectives of the Council as outlined in the 5 Year Plan under Outcome 4 as well as our partnership priorities as set out in the Slough Wellbeing Strategy.

The Housing Strategy will be monitored by members through reports to Cabinet and progress scrutinised by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Action Plans and outcomes will be monitored through existing mechanisms such as the Tenants Panel, the Homelessness Forum and the HRA Board. The Council will consider whether to hold an annual conference to assess progress against the Strategy following the successful event held in January 2017.

## **Links with other Strategies**

### **The Council's Five Year Plan**

We are specifically aiming to deliver Outcome 4 of the Council's overarching Five Year Plan 2017 -2021: "Our residents will have access to good quality homes"

However, there are strong links with all the other outcomes to achieve our vision of "growing a place of opportunity and ambition - under our banner of "putting people first";

Outcome 1: Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.

Outcome 2: Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs.

Outcome 3: Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.

Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow business and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents.

### **Slough's Wellbeing Strategy**

The council intends to take the unique opportunity that housing offers to engage, change and improve the way housing works within the delivery of better health outcomes for the borough in partnership with Public Health. The Slough Wellbeing Board recognized the importance of housing as one of its priorities in its refresh of the Slough Wellbeing Strategy for 2016-2020.

Through links to the Wellbeing Board and other mechanisms we intend to create more inclusive processes to engage health and social care professions alongside residents in delivering better housing, health, education, and work outcomes for homeless and vulnerable people with housing needs.

### **Links with other relevant strategies and plans**

- **Draft Local Plan 2016-2036**
- **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy-2016- 2020.**
- **Learning Disability Plan 2016-2019**
- **Community Safety plans**
- **Children and Young People's Plan-2015-2016**
- **Centre of Slough Strategy-2015 onwards**
- **Economic Development Plan for Growth 2014-2018**
- **Asset Management Plan-2014-2017**
- **Get Active Leisure Strategy**
- **Climate Change Strategy -2011-2014**

<b>Action Plan</b>				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>RAG</b>
<b>Theme 1: New Housing Supply</b>				
Seek to enable the provision of 927 new units of housing per year for Slough in line with the SHMA.	HoHS PIng	Continuous Monitoring		
The Council will directly deliver or facilitate a programme 200 units per year of new housing over the life of this Strategy and beyond, including affordable housing.	HoHS	March 2021		
Maximize the provision of affordable housing on Council-owned land through infill development and estate renewal, including the net gain of 1,000 units on HRA land over the period 2016 to 2031.	HoHS HoNS	Continuous Monitoring		
Prioritise available funds and council assets to provide for the delivery of affordable housing schemes in partnership with SUR and Housing Associations.	HoHS HoAM	Continuous Monitoring		
Develop a Revised Affordable Housing policy for the Borough.	HoHS PIng			
Work with private and public sector partners to acquire and assemble sites to facilitate the delivery of new housing.	HoAM	Continuous Monitoring		
Improve partnership arrangements with housing associations to facilitate the delivery of new affordable homes	HoHS	Oct 2017		
Extend our programme of Council mortgage lending through our existing LAPP scheme.	ADFA	Mar 2018		
Produce a plan to improve housing opportunities for key workers.	HoHS	July 2017		
Provide new homes for particular groups within the community where required, for example those needing extra care or care leavers.	HoHS	Continuous Monitoring		
Use our Subsidiary Housing Companies to assist in providing homes for vulnerable groups within the community.	HoHS	May 2017 Continuous Monitoring		
Pro-actively use powers to increase the supply of homes by bringing long-term empty homes back into use.	HoNS			
<b>Theme 2: Private Sector Housing</b>				
Create two wholly-owned Subsidiary Housing Companies to act as exemplar private landlords in the borough and to assist homeless households and others on low or modest incomes to access	HoAM	Jan 2017		

affordable private sector homes.				
Undertake a feasibility study for introducing a borough-wide Landlord Registration Scheme. This is to protect good landlords and drive our rogue or criminal landlords from Slough.	HoNS	Oct 2017		
Following the announcement of the expansion of mandatory HMO licensing we will implement the scheme once the commencement date has been announced.	HoNS	Oct 2017		
Undertake rigorous enforcement and prosecution against rogue landlords who have a history of breaking the law.	HoNS	Continuous Monitoring		
Support responsible landlords and work with them to become professional and grow their business.	HoNS	Continuous Monitoring		
Use the new RMI contract to provide support and services to private landlords.	HoNS	Dec 2017		
Use all available powers to bring empty properties back into use. Work with our partner agencies to tackle the problem of illegally-occupied outbuildings.	HoNS	Continuous Monitoring		
Work with utility companies and other agencies to insulate homes and improve the energy ratings of older buildings.	HoNS	Aug 2017		
Through partnership working, particularly with Adult Services, Public Health and the CCG, develop services to allow elderly and disabled residents to live independently in their home and reduce the impact of poor housing on the health of borough residents.	HoNS HoHS	Continuous Monitoring		
Build a well-resourced Private Sector Housing Service to support good landlords and carry out the Council's statutory responsibilities towards tenants and landlords.	HoNS	Apr 2017		
<b>Theme 3: Council Homes</b>				
Publish a baseline 30 year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account in the Autumn of 2016.	HoNS	Oct 2016		
Undertake a comprehensive survey of the condition of the Council's housing stock, for completion by January 2017.	HoNS	Jan 2017		
In the light of the results of the condition survey and the implementation of the provisions of the Housing and Planning Act, produce an updated HRA Business Plan in March 2017.	HoNS	Mar 2017		
In partnership with residents,	HoNS	Dec 2017		

undertake a formal asset management review and option appraisal of the Council's housing stock for completion by December 2017.				
Complete the existing programme of 190 new homes on Housing-owned land and seek to continue the programme beyond 2020.	HoHS	Mar 2020		
Adopt the following priorities for improving the services to residents; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awarding a new Repairs, Maintenance and Investment contract for council homes to improve the quality and responsiveness of repair for residents and to act as a catalyst for the development of local and in-house capacity to provide maintenance services</li> <li>• Engaging and enabling residents so as to create a culture of accountability and responsibility and to broaden opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to be involved in the development and monitoring of services ;</li> <li>• Increasing resident satisfaction through greater responsiveness to customers and in particular through the greater use of digital technology.</li> </ul>	HoNS	Dec 2017  Dec 2017  Continuous Monitoring		
Develop a new Tenancy Strategy for council tenancies in the light of the Housing and Planning Act.	HoNS	Sept 2017		
Undertake a formal review of the scheme for the Allocation of social housing in Slough.	HoHS	May 2017		
Develop proposals for the more effective use of council homes by increasing the number of tenants choosing to downsize when their family circumstances change.	HoHS HoNS	Mar 2018		
<b>Theme 4: Homelessness and Housing Need</b>				
Develop and adopt a Preventing Homelessness strategy in collaboration with clients, landlords, the voluntary sector and other partner agencies.	HoHS	Sep 2017		
Develop new partnerships with private and third sector landlords to maximise opportunities for tenancies for homeless families and individuals.	HoHS	Continuous Monitoring		
Establish a Subsidiary Housing	HoAM	Jan 2017		



Company to acquire homes to alleviate the pressures on temporary accommodation and Bed & Breakfast provision.				
End the use of Bed & Breakfast for families with children.	HoHS	Mar 2017 Continuous Monitoring		
Review the Council's Allocation Scheme to re-evaluate the priority which homeless people receive under the scheme.	HoHS	May 2017		
Work with the Health sector and other agencies to monitor and address the health and care needs of vulnerable homeless people placed in Slough by other Local Authorities and require those authorities to review their placement and notification policies.	HoHS	Continuous Monitoring		
Produce service proposals for multi-agency working for rough sleepers during periods of cold weather.	HoHS	Aug 2017		
Roll out the MEAM approach and develop new partnerships that makes homelessness everyone's business in Slough.	HoHS	Mar 2018		
<b>Theme 5: Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable People</b>				
Build on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on health and disability housing needs and produce service proposals with partners and stakeholders to examine what housing options are required to best meet current and future demand and changing needs.	HoHS	Oct 2017		
Through our new Subsidiary Housing Company, develop new partnerships with the Children's Trust, Health and Adult Social Care to maximise opportunities for specialist and alternative accommodation to be delivered locally and more cost effectively.	HoHS	Continuous Monitoring		
In collaboration with the Children's Trust, ensure there is an adequate supply of accommodation for care leavers.	HoHS	Continuous Monitoring		
Undertake a review of Housing-Related Support services in the borough.	ASC	Dec 2017		
Undertake a review of the Home Improvement Agency	HoHS ASC	Mar 2018		
Deliver up to 3 new mixed use extra care schemes in the borough during the life of this strategy where there is established local need.	HoHS HoAM ASC	Mar 2021		
Develop an Older Persons Housing	HoHS	Apr 2019		

Strategy for Slough.	ASC			
Within the review of the Scheme of Allocation, ensure full account is taken of the needs of people with a disability.	HoHS	May 2017		
Improve the recording and matching of adapted properties to ensure the best use of existing council stock.	HoNS	Apr 2018		
Improve partnership between Housing, Adult Services, Public Health and Slough CCG to allow more elderly and disabled residents to live independently at home.	HoHS ASC	Continuous Monitoring		

<b>Key</b>	
HoHS	Head of Housing Services
HoNS	Head of Neighbourhood Services
HoAM	Head of Asset Management
ASC	Adult Social Care
ADFA	Assistant Director, Finance and Audit
Plng	Planning Officers

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Directorate:</b> Regeneration, Housing and Resources	
<b>Service:</b> Housing	
<b>Name of Officer/s completing assessment:</b> S Abyan , C Ford	
<b>Date of Assessment:</b> December 2016	
<b>Name of service/function or policy being assessed:</b>	
<p>1. <b>What are the aims, objectives, outcomes, purpose of the policy, service change, function that you are assessing?</b></p> <p>The provision of suitable housing for local residents is essential for improving equality in Slough. It affects all groups of people but has a significant impact on our most vulnerable residents. The impact of poor housing can be devastating, and the lack of appropriate and affordable housing not only impacts upon current residents but also on those who might wish to live and work in Slough in the future. For example, lack of affordable and quality housing deters key public sector workers – such as teachers and health care professionals who are essential for the running of public services, often to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups- from moving into the area.</p> <p>The situation in Slough reflects a crisis in housing nationally: lack of supply to meet increasing demand and rising property and rental prices which mean that a significant proportion of households in Slough, or looking to live in Slough, simply cannot afford market prices and rent. Substantially more homes are required and many of them they need to be “affordable”. Therefore some intervention is required.</p> <p>The refreshed Housing Strategy sets out this proposed intervention. It is a statutory document which councils produce to set out their vision and priorities for housing in the Borough. The strategy takes into account the Council’s Five Year Plan (2016-21) and its housing priorities including the growth agenda and the drive to improve quality across all tenures and sectors. It contains an analysis of the nationally and locally changing operating environment, including the changing customer needs and expectations, new legislation and the reduction in resources. Based on the issues and challenges identified and the resources available to the Council it then sets out the key priorities and the direction of travel for the next five years.</p> <p>The council is realistic about how far it can influence private sector market conditions. However, we <b>can</b> intervene to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- .ensure the c. 7000 homes that the council provides are the best possible quality and go to those residents most in need of them</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improve standards in the private rented sector (where over 28% of Slough residents live, higher than the national average of 17%)</li> <li>- have early prevention strategies to reduce homelessness ( on the increase),</li> <li>- Increase wherever possible the amount of homes built and available</li> <li>- ensure that the most vulnerable have appropriate adaptive housing that meets their needs</li> </ul> <p>The strategy therefore has the following 5 areas of focus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>New housing supply</b></li> <li>2. <b>Private sector housing</b></li> <li>3. <b>Council homes</b></li> <li>4. <b>Homelessness and housing need</b></li> <li>5. <b>Special housing needs and vulnerable groups</b></li> </ol>
2.	<p><b>Who implements or delivers the policy, service or function? State if this is undertaken by more than one team, service, and department including any external partners.</b></p> <p>This strategy will be delivered by the Housing Services and Neighbourhood Services teams in line with the accompanying action plan. However, some aspects of this strategy will be delivered in partnership with a number of other Council teams and external partners.</p>
3.	<p><b>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example who are the external/internal customers, communities, partners, stakeholders, the workforce etc. Please consider all of the Protected Characteristics listed (more information is available in the background information). Bear in mind that people affected by the proposals may well have more than one protected characteristic.</b></p> <p><b>Age:</b> Yes  <b>Disability:</b> Yes  <b>Gender Reassignment:</b> Yes  <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership:</b> Yes</p>

**Pregnancy and maternity:** Yes

**Race:** Yes

**Religion and Belief:** Yes

**Sex:** Yes

**Sexual orientation:** Yes

**Other:**

The Housing Strategy will impact all equality groups as demonstrated above. However, those who have **low incomes**, or rely on **benefits** are most impacted by the current and projected shortage of affordable housing. The current Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) report indicates that 1/5 of all households in the SHMA area had an income of **less than £20,000** with a following 1/3 of households earning between 20-40K per annum.

In Slough (mid 2014) the medium household income was £28, 816 and the mean income was £37,952.

The SHMA identifies the **minimum** affordable purchase level household income to be £50,000

For the minimum level rents in the following sectors, households would need the following minimum incomes:

Private rental sector : £ 23, 100

Affordable rent (subsidised to 80 % of market value) £18,500

Social Rent £15,000

Analysis of demographic and housing data indicates that living on low incomes or benefits disproportionately affects some ethnic groups, older people, young people leaving care, single parents ( the majority of whom are women) , and those with a disability.

Please see section 6 for a full break down of available data sets. Although not all data sets are complete, the council collects monitoring information on Tenants, Leaseholders, Applicants and Temporary Accommodation Tenants.

The council is in the process of updating its information on Private Rented Homes.

4.

**What are any likely positive impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? You may wish to refer to the Equalities Duties detailed in the background information.**

The council recognises that a large proportion of residents either privately rent (28%) or own/mortgage (52%) their home. Rising house prices increase pressure on the rental market, where there is insufficient supply of suitable properties to meet demand. Therefore the main focus of the strategy has to be on substantially increasing the number of affordable homes – to support those people who cannot afford market rents or prices. The strategy offers several interventionist approaches to increase the delivery of new homes to own and rent and increase this supply (by 200 per year), across a range of rents. It also offers a robust regulatory approach to ensure high standards amongst private sector landlords, where poor housing conditions are most commonly found.

The council's most valuable asset is its 7000 tenanted and leasehold homes. These are an essential resource to those households on low incomes and especially vital for vulnerable and disabled residents, who may not be able to work. The Strategy offers specific interventions to ensure that council homes are managed and maintained to a high standard. Unfortunately, demand far outstrips supply and the council will need to review its eligibility criteria for access to council homes to reflect those most in need ( it will look at increasing priority to those young people leaving care and those with disabilities – this will be subject to a separate EIA).

The specific equalities benefits of successfully implementing the Strategy are as follows:

**Age**

Young people make up a significantly larger proportion of Sloughs population when compared with other south east local authorities. Young people are being priced out of the Slough homeownership market, including a swing to 'generation rent' in line with countrywide trends. Consistent with the rising house prices and low wage, high employment levels this strategy should allow the Council to meet the growing demand for affordable homes for young people by facilitating the building of more affordable homes.

Nearly 40% of applications for social housing include children under the age of 15 years of age, reflecting the high need for families with dependent children and family homes.

Children under the age of 15 years make up c. 50% of households in Temporary Accommodation Tenants (consistent with the council's objectives to support families with young children). Therefore, by specifically tackling homelessness under Theme 4 this strategy should positively impact children and young people who have the most severe need for priority housing in a crisis. Another potential positive impact for young people in the borough comes from the strategy's proposals seeking to provide suitable and affordable priority social housing for those leaving care. (Themes 1 & 5).

The overall impact of The Housing Strategy on older people is expected to be positive as it seeks to address future challenges resulting from a growing older population in Slough. The SHIMA estimates that the number of people over 65 is projected to grow by 40% in the next 10 years and the Council is planning to provide new specialist and alternative accommodation to cater for this increasing demand (Theme 5). In order to tackle many of the medium and long term strategic issues facing older people in the borough this strategy will bring together the appropriate Council departments and agencies concerned to develop a long-term strategy which promotes and supports independent living. As older people are also disproportionately likely to own their homes outright or live in social housing this strategy will benefit older people through targeted support aimed at improving the standard of existing Council and privately owned properties (Theme 2 and 3).

#### **Disability**

The exact number of Slough's disabled population is unknown and is a gap in the Councils data. In 2011 around 18,787 (13%) adults in Slough had a limiting long term illness or disability according to the census, and was projected to rise by over 50% by 2036, therefore, requiring particular attention.

The Housing Strategy recognises the needs of people with disabilities and seeks to address these through a range of provisions. These include improving housing options for people with disabilities via the new build programme (Theme 1), working with Council teams and external partners to support disabled people to live independently in their own homes and reducing the impact of poor housing on their health (Theme 2). It also encourages other local authorities placing families in Slough to notify the Council of their specific support needs so that the appropriate local support services can be provided where necessary on arrival (Theme 2).

The strategy's proposals to improve the Council's approach to ensuring that it better understands the mobility needs of residents who require adapted properties should have a positive impact on the approximately 9,322 residents between the ages of 16 and 65 living in Slough with a physical disability. The strategy should also benefit people with disabilities by supporting adults living with learning difficulties and long term mental health issues and by addressing the growing levels of dementia suffered by older people in the Borough.

Disabled people are more likely to be over represented in social housing. Currently, 13% of tenants have declared at **least one** disability (although many have multiple disabilities). 6% of applicants for social housing have declared a disability – the revised allocation policy will consider how best to prioritise eligibility to reflect the increased need of disabled residents. 4% of that tenant in temporary accommodation had declared a disability.

**Race**

Slough is one of the most ethnically diverse local authority areas outside of London and in the United Kingdom. Appendix B shows the ethnicity statistics for Slough from the 2011 Census (it is very likely to have increased in diversity over the past 5 years).

Approximately 35 % of the population identify themselves as white British, with nearly 10% defining as “white other” (largely from Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe following EU enlargement). 40% of residents declared as Asian or Asian British and 9% declaring as Black or Black British.

There is a considerable margin of error in the ethnicity data sets for Tenants, Applicants and Temporary Accommodation Tenants, with up to 20% “unknown”.

However, it is clear that there is some overrepresentation from particular groups. At least 40% of council tenants are from BME backgrounds, with 6.5% declaring as “white other”, 21% as Asian and Asian British, and 9% as Black or Black other. After the White British cohort, the Pakistani cohort forms 15% of council tenants.

BME households are overrepresented among housing applicants and homeless households.

For applicants, 10.5 % are from “white other” background, 16% are from Black/Black British backgrounds and nearly 25% are from Pakistani backgrounds.

In Temporary Accommodation tenants, around 30% tenants are from Black/Black British backgrounds.

By building more truly affordable homes, tackling and preventing homelessness and improving the quality of existing housing this strategy should lead to a positive outcome for people from all ethnic groups, but especially those most impacted by low incomes. Slough has nearly 14,000 people in council housing and as such the strategy’s £100 million investment in improving the existing stock and also the realisation of the service improvements from the planned new repairs; maintenance and investment contract (Theme 3) should also impact them positively.

**Gender**

According to the 2015 mid-year estimates of the 2011 Census, from the 145,734 people in Slough the male/female gender split is approximately 50/50. This strategy is likely to have a net positive impact on both men and women in Slough due to the additional supply of



	<p>new affordable homes and the investment in existing stock. The proposal to review services for older people, improve and maintain the quality of council homes and to deliver high quality housing management services will also benefit women who are overrepresented among council tenants, across all groups and tend to outlive men.</p> <p>Gender Breakdown:</p> <p>Tenants: 54% women, 46% men;  Applicants: 53% women, 47% men;  Temporary Accommodation Tenants: 56% women, 44% men</p> <p>Slough has more lone parent households with dependent children than the national average. Approximately 92.5% of these lone parent households are female and lone parent households tend to experience greater levels of deprivation and economic and housing need than households made of couples. Furthermore, lone parent women are also over-represented in homeless acceptances and temporary accommodation in Slough. So by developing a diverse mix of affordable homes (Theme 1) and improving the current standard of both private and council housing (Themes 2 &amp; 3) this strategy should positively impact women heading up lone parent households. The focus on reducing and better managing homelessness in Slough could also positively benefit lone parent female households including the measures set out in Theme 4, such as developing a new preventing homelessness strategy.</p> <p><b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity / Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership / Religion &amp; Belief / Sexual Orientation / Gender Reassignment</b>  There is insufficient data to assess the impact of this strategy on these protected characteristics, however, there is no significant reason to believe that it will impact people based on any of these characteristics.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>What are the likely negative impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? If so then are any particular groups affected more than others and why?</b></p> <p>The Housing Strategy should have a net positive overall impact on the council's equality duties. However, there are some areas where due care needs to be taken in order to ensure that the strategy does not negatively impact any specific group more than others. It is also important to note that planned reductions in benefit caps, and other changes to government housing policy will affect household rent affordability in the future .At the time of writing this Strategy the Government is introducing a number of changes through the Housing and Planning Act and other legislation which will have a major impact on the future of council homes in the Borough. Chief amongst these are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Government has taken control of council rents and these will fall by 1% in each of the 4 years from 2016/17. While this</li> </ul>

	<p>benefits existing tenants it will have a major impact on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), including money available for investment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> From April 2017 the Council will be forced to sell some of its higher - value homes as they become empty and pass some of the proceeds to the Government;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Government is changing the rules on new council tenancies and the granting of fixed-term as opposed to lifetime tenancies. This will not affect the position of existing tenancies.</li> </ul> <p>These changes are being introduced at the same time as further measures to reform the benefit system, particularly the reduction in the Overall Benefit Cap and the further rollout of Universal Credit, both of which could significantly affect the finances of individual tenants and the HRA itself.</p> <p><b>Age</b> An area of concern which may have a negative impact on people either directly or indirectly as a result of their age is the insufficient Council data analysing young people's housing need and affordability requirements. Therefore, in order to ensure that the proposed introduction of a wider range of affordable rents does not discriminate against young people by restricting their access to social housing, further work is required to understand what affordable really means for young people in the Borough.</p> <p><b>Disability</b> The Housing Strategy will in the main benefit people with disabilities in Slough, however, when implementing the strategy due regard must be taken to ensure that it is inclusive and does not discriminate against people with disabilities. For example, the Council must ensure that the new homes being built are as accessible as possible in order to cater for the growing number of residents with physical disabilities in the borough.</p> <p><b>Race</b> There are a higher proportion of BME applicants on the housing register in need of larger homes; therefore, when deciding the makeup of new housing supply the Council will need to make sure that it does not discriminate against any particular group. As such the Council will carefully consider how far a cultural or community need can be accommodated, within the constraints of supply, to reach a proportionate and pragmatic outcome for the applicant in need, balanced against practical considerations such as cost and availability of resources. Similarly, any review of eligibility of criteria for allocation will need to consider the impact on ethnic groups.</p> <p><b>Gender</b></p>
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	<p>Women in Slough are paid less than men and are more likely to have low incomes and find themselves as lone parents.,When implementing this strategy the Council must take into account affordability when setting the rent levels for new affordable housing so as to make sure women have equal access.</p> <p><b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity / Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership / Religion &amp; Belief / Sexual Orientation / Gender Reassignment</b></p> <p>There is insufficient data to assess the impact of this strategy on these protected characteristics; however, there is no significant reason to believe that it will negatively impact people based on any of these characteristics.</p>
6.	<p><b>Have the impacts indentified in (4) and (5) above been assessed using up to date and reliable evidence and data? Please state evidence sources and conclusions drawn (e.g. survey results, customer complaints, monitoring data etc).</b></p> <p>Yes. The following internal and external evidence and data sets have been used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile of Council residents</li> <li>• Profile of homeless households who the Council has a duty to rehouse (past 12 months)</li> <li>• Profile of applicants of the housing register (housing waiting list)</li> <li>• The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)</li> <li>•</li> <li>• The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)</li> <li>• The Slough Story</li> <li>• ONS data</li> <li>• 2011 Census</li> <li>• Public Health England's Slough Profile</li> <li>• Joseph Roundtree Foundation - Monitoring poverty and social exclusion 2016 (MPSE)</li> </ul> <p>There is insufficient equalities data on Leaseholders and this has not been included.</p> <p>There is insufficient data across all tenants with regard to sexual orientation, religion, and marital status and this has been disregarded.</p> <p>Sufficient data sets exist for age, gender, ethnicity and disability status although there are gaps due to “unknown” statuses.</p>

7.	<p><b>Have you engaged or consulted with any identified groups or individuals if necessary and what were the results e.g. have the staff forums/unions/ community groups been involved?</b></p> <p>The Council intends to consult with a number of relevant groups at a borough wide conference in early 2017. Additionally, it will follow the required statutory consultation process in order to get the views of a variety of different groups.</p>
8.	<p><b>Have you considered the impact the policy might have on local community relations?</b></p> <p><b>Housing is a major issue for local people. In particular, demand for social housing far outstrips supply and any perception of unfair or discriminatory allocations and priorities will impact negatively on community relations.</b></p> <p>The Council, and its partners, have limited resources and directing resources to address any one issue potentially diverts resources from other actions. The effect of this could result in community tension if some groups are perceived to be treated more favourably. However, the Housing Strategy mitigates this impact by contributing to advancing equality of opportunity between different groups by promoting understanding through on-going engagement and involvement of residents, in particular through resident scrutiny and involvement of residents in helping to shape the service (Theme 4).</p> <p>Another area negatively impacting community relations is the higher rents and house prices in Slough over the last couple of years. Consequently, this strategy seeks to alleviate these community tensions by providing more needed affordable housing in Slough. Further work as captured in the action plan below will also need to be done in order to truly understand what affordable homes are required by the community.</p>
9.	<p><b>What plans do you have in place, or are developing, that will mitigate any likely identified negative impacts? For example what plans, if any, will be put in place to reduce the impact?</b></p> <p>Both the Allocations Policy and the Preventing Homelessness Strategy will have separate Equality Impact Assessments.</p>
10.	<p><b>What plans do you have in place to monitor the impact of the proposals once they have been implemented? (The full impact of the decision may only be known after the proposals have been implemented). Please see action plan below.</b></p> <p>The Housing Strategy will include a yearly review and an assessment of the impact of the proposals discussed in this document on the key groups identified, age, gender, disability and race. Performance targets will be set up, as will any monitoring against the above key Equalities groups in order to feed into the annual review of the action plan and subsequent strategies.</p>

What course of action does this EIA suggest you take? More than one of the following may apply	
<b>Outcome 1: No major change required.</b> The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken	x
<b>Outcome 2: Adjust the policy</b> to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers identified? (Complete action plan).	
<b>Outcome 3: Continue the policy</b> despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to ensure that the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact (see questions below). (Complete action plan).	
<b>Outcome 4: Stop and rethink</b> the policy when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (Complete action plan).	✓

### Action Plan and Timetable for Implementation

At this stage a timetabled Action Plan should be developed to address any concerns/issues related to equality in the existing or proposed policy/service or function. This plan will need to be integrated into the appropriate Service/Business Plan.

Action	Target Groups	Lead Responsibility	Outcomes/Success Criteria	Monitoring & Evaluation	Target Date	Progress to Date
An analysis of young people in Slough linked to affordability.	Young people & Low earners	HoHS		Via Housing Strategy Action Plan	June 2018	
A review how the Council collects housing equalities data.	All	HoHS		Via Housing Strategy Action Plan	June 2018	
Develop performance monitoring framework for the key equalities	Age, sex, disability and race	HoHS		Via Housing Strategy Action Plan	June 2018	

groups identified above.									
Preventing Homelessness Strategy + Equality Impact Assessment	All	HoHS			Via Housing Strategy Action Plan	Sept 2017			
Allocations Policy + Equality Impact Assessment	All				Via Housing Strategy Action Plan	May 2017			
<b>Name:</b> .....									
<b>Signed:</b> .....(Person completing the EIA)									
<b>Name:</b> .....									
<b>Signed:</b> .....( Policy Lead if not same as above)									
<b>Date:</b> .....									

**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Council

**DATE:** 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Shabana Kauser – Senior Democratic Services Officer  
**(For all Enquiries)** (01753) 787503

**WARDS:** All

**PART I**  
**FOR ENDORSEMENT**

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2016/17**

1. **Purpose of Report**

That Council receives details of the Annual Scrutiny report 2016/17.

2. **Recommendation**

That the Annual Scrutiny Report 2016/17 be endorsed.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, alongside the 3 Scrutiny Panels combine to meet the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.

3.2 The work of scrutiny also reflects the priorities of the Five Year Plan, as follows:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents.
- Our residents will have access to good quality homes.
- Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs.
- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives

3.3 Overview and Scrutiny is a process by which decision-makers are accountable to local people, via their elected representatives for improving outcomes relating to all priorities for the Borough and its residents. Scrutiny seeks to influence those who make decisions by considering the major issues affecting the Borough and making recommendations about how services can be improved.

#### 4. **Supporting Information**

- 4.1 Annual reports are an opportunity to review the scrutiny work programme for the past year and assess the impact of scrutiny has had on influencing policy and holding the Executive to account. Looking at an Annual Report can help us to understand the nature of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny and to assess its effectiveness. It also gives an opportunity to reflect on any lessons learned during the year to help guide future work.
- 4.2 The production of an Annual Report is a statutory requirement of the Constitution and in addition the Committee “must report annually to the full Council on future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.”
- 4.3 This Annual Scrutiny Report highlights some key achievements from the year where Scrutiny has made a difference.
- 4.4 There is scope to build on and develop different methods of scrutiny next year; particular attention needs to be given on evidencing how Scrutiny actually makes a difference and forward planning.
- 4.5 The Committee is due to consider the Annual Scrutiny report at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Any amendments to the recommendation will be reported to Council.

#### 5. **Conclusion**

- 5.1 The Local Authority, through its Overview and Scrutiny Function, has an influential, as well as statutory, role in scrutinising the activities and performance of the Cabinet and External Bodies. The Annual Scrutiny Report provides an opportunity to communicate the work the Committee and its Panels have undertaken, challenges faced and the improvements made as a result of scrutiny.

#### 6. **Appendices Attached**

A - Annual Scrutiny Report 2016/17

#### 7. **Background Papers**

None.



# Annual Scrutiny Report

## 2016/2017



## **Foreword**

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2016/2017 Annual Scrutiny Report. The report highlights the key areas of work that each Panel and the main committee have concentrated on during the past municipal year.

The main committee and each of the panels have had a busy year. This report highlights their key achievements. I hope it accurately reflects the level of detailed work undertaken by the panels and Committee.

In particular, the scrutiny committees have undertaken vital work on the following crucial issues:-

- The excellent work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel on housing. 2016 – 17 has been a year in which the Council's Housing Service have undertaken a significant amount of work on areas such as the Housing Revenue Account, the allocations policy and resolving homelessness. Through a co-ordinated approach, these two committees have supported the service and provided informed comment on the impact of proposals, helping shape Council policy for the future.
- The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel has also assisted with the return of the Education Service to Slough Borough Council. Through detailed discussions with the new officers responsible for the service, the Panel have identified a number of crucial areas for actions (e.g. differences in outcomes for local children by ethnicity, the National Funding Formula). The Panel have also established a close working relationship with the Slough Children's Services Trust and the new Chair of the Slough Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- The Health Scrutiny Panel has assisted with the transformation programme for adult social care. This has involved shaping the offer for adults with learning disabilities, the programme of digital innovations for service users and the local account. The Panel have also considered these matters in the wider context of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan.
- The feedback provided by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has had a significant impact on the reporting of performance and financial management information. This has helped move reporting to a clearer and more consistent style, providing both members and the local community with a clearer picture of the Council's services.

I hope the report does justice to the quality of the work carried out by the panels this year and gives an insight into the diverse nature of the areas which have been scrutinised.

I would like to thank my own Vice Chair as well as the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all the panels for their support and leadership throughout the year. On behalf of all the Chairs and Vice Chairs I would also like to thank sincerely all members, officers and partners who have contributed to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny function over the past year.



**Councillor Mohammed Nazir  
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

## Introduction

In 2002, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister set out the role of Overview and Scrutiny in local authorities, its powers and work.

*“Overview and Scrutiny is potentially the most exciting and powerful element of the entire local government modernisation process. It places Members at the heart of the way in which Councils respond to the demands of modernisation. In addition, Overview and Scrutiny is the mechanism by which Councils can achieve community leadership, good governance and by which Councillors can become powerful and influential politicians.”*

In order to do this, Scrutiny Committees have three key roles:

- Holding the Cabinet to account
- Policy development and review
- External scrutiny

Through requesting information and questioning decision-makers an Overview Scrutiny Committee can review the quality of local services, hold decision-makers to account (whether the Cabinet or other statutory bodies such as NHS Trusts), and put forward ideas for developing and improving services.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny has set out the four principles for effective scrutiny as:

- critical friendship to decision-makers
- engaging the public, enabling the voice of the public and communities to be heard in the process
- owning the process with non-Executive Members driving the scrutiny process
- making an impact through driving forward improvements in public services

To achieve the desired quality of effective scrutiny, an Overview and Scrutiny function must:

- be independent
- be robust, rigorous and challenging
- fully engage all non-Executive Members
- come from a positive culture that supports and promotes the process
- involve local citizens and service users
- ensure that its purpose is clear and widely understood
- demonstrate the value added
- be creative in its ways of monitoring service performance
- have dedicated resources
- bring the conclusions of its Reviews to the attention of Full Council
- have a comprehensive Member Development programme

The questions an Overview and Scrutiny Function must ask itself in terms of its own effectiveness are:

- Is it effectively holding decision-makers to account?
- Is it helping to improve services?
- Is it building links between the Council, its partners and the community?
- Is it helping to improve the quality of life for local people?
- Is it adding value?

The Annual Report looks to assess the effectiveness of the work done by the Overview and Scrutiny Function at Slough Borough Council in the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

### **Overview and Scrutiny at Slough Borough Council**

The Overview and Scrutiny Function at Slough Borough Council is made up of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and three standing Panels: Health Scrutiny Panel, Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel, and Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel.

The Panels enable greater focus on specific subject matter, while the overarching Overview and Scrutiny Committee focuses on cross-cutting issues, corporate, financial and performance management of the Council. The Committee and Panels look to work closely together, using joint meetings where appropriate, to develop their work programmes and effectively scrutinise the work of the Council and its partners.

Members on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and three Panels receive research and administrative support from a dedicated Scrutiny Officer; with Democratic Services also providing committee administration to the main Committee and Health Scrutiny Panel.

### **Getting Involved**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and all three Panels meet in public, and welcome members of the public who wish to observe proceedings.

The agendas and related papers are published on the Slough Borough Council website five working days in advance of any meeting and are available to download for free.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### **Membership:**

Councillor Nazir (Chair)  
Councillor Bedi  
Councillor Parmar  
Councillor A Sandhu  
Councillor Usmani

Councillor Strutton (Vice Chair)  
Councillor N Holledge  
Councillor Sadiq  
Councillor R Sandhu

Constitutionally, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will undertake the following:

- review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Executive, Committees and Council Officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets, data quality and/or particular service areas;
- question Members of the Executive, Committees and Directors about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- make recommendations to the Executive and/or appropriate Committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Committee and local people about their activities and performance; and
- question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

In order to undertake this work, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has appointed three Standing Panels to cover specific remits of works:

- Health Scrutiny Panel – undertaking the Council’s statutory responsibility to scrutinise provision of healthcare in the local area, as well as the Cabinet portfolio for Health & Social Care.
- Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Panel – scrutinising the Cabinet portfolio for Education & Children’s Services.
- Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel – scrutinising the Cabinet portfolios for Housing & Urban Renewal, Environment & Leisure and Transport & Highways.

This delegation of work allows the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take an overarching view of the work of the council and its partners, as well as specifically focusing on the Cabinet portfolios of Finance & Strategy, Digital Transformation & Customer Care and Regulation & Consumer Protection.

## **Specific focuses of work**

### **Budget Pressures**

As the committee with the widest strategic overview of the Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been monitoring the budget closely. This has taken the format of both the work on the budget for all areas (conducted every February) and specific investigations into areas such as adult social care, housing and the new Environmental Services Company.

The Committee have also played a key role in the reshaping of the quarterly performance and finance monitoring reports. Previously, these reported on 91 key performance indicators and offered a range of reporting styles for the different projects sitting under the overall headings. On the basis of the feedback by the Committee, the reports now focus on a far smaller number of prioritised KPIs (17) and also has made reporting more uniform. This has helped streamline the process and also provide both members and the public with a more meaningful overview of the Council's performance.

In terms of the budget, Cabinet has asked for the Committee's recommendation regarding fees for the burial and crematorium services to be investigated further. The Committee has also provided advice on the establishment of the new Environmental Services Company and the recent announcements regarding Slough's Housing Strategy. The call-in regarding the proposed rents for Slough's houses also had a direct impact on the final policy, with the Council opting to offer two rates; one reflects traditional fees, whilst the other allows Slough Borough Council increased income where tenants can afford it.

### **Leisure Services**

The issue which provided the most public interest in the Committee's work took place back in July 2016. This related to the proposals for a temporary ice rink, and allowed a range of community representatives (e.g. Slough Community Leisure, Special People on Ice, the Slough Jets Ice Hockey Club) to contribute to the debate. With the Committee's support, the meeting was able to recommend to Cabinet that any final proposals needed to ensure that any temporary solution should be able to accommodate the needs of all current users.

### **Slough Town Centre**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has taken an interest in the ability of the town centre to attract visitors from outside Slough in recent years. This has taken the form of regular examinations of the plans of Slough Urban Renewal (especially keynote projects such as The Curve), the impact of littering and street lighting on perception of the town (taken in September 2016) and a Task & Finish Group on parking in the town centre. In March 2017, the Committee discussed plans to regenerate the area, especially in light of the recent announcement by the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority). This discussion led to the Committee asking Cabinet to investigate the potential of creating a Business Improvement District. This initiative, if implemented, would ask businesses to contribute to a localised project, targeting any specific issues which were viewed as pivotal for Slough.

### **Corporate Strategy – The Five Year Plan**

The Committee has also ensured that the new priorities of the Cabinet, as set out in the new Five Year Plan, will be monitored effectively and regularly. The outcomes have been assigned across the scrutiny bodies as follows:

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives – to be scrutinised by the Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Panel.
- Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs – to be scrutinised by the Health Scrutiny Panel.
- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit – to be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Our residents will have access to good quality homes – to be scrutinised by the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel.
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents – to be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Each of these will be scrutinised once every 6 months, ensuring that the overall performance of the Council is thoroughly interrogated in the future on a regular basis.

**Note:** The full work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2016/17 municipal year is attached as Appendix A.

## **Health Scrutiny Panel**

### **Membership:**

Councillor Pantelic (Chair)

Councillor Chaudhry

Councillor Chohan

Councillor Mann

Councillor Smith

Colin Pill (Healthwatch Slough)

Councillor Strutton (Vice Chair)

Councillor Cheema

Councillor M Holledge

Councillor Qaseem

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee appoints the Health Scrutiny Panel to undertake its constitutional role looking at the specific Cabinet Portfolio for Health and Wellbeing. In addition, the Health Scrutiny Panel also undertakes the statutory Council responsibility to scrutinise the provision for healthcare in the local area.

### **Specific focuses of work**

#### **Adult Social Care**

The Health Scrutiny Panel has had a key role in the transformation of Adult Social Care. The service has moved from one where the local authority dictated the provision on offer to one in which users have greater influence on how they access care. The Transformation Programme is moving future provision to one where those requiring care are offered personalised budgets and a variety of options as to how that budget is employed.

The Panel has been broadly supportive of these aims, but has also sought to reflect concerns. These have included matters such as ensuring those with physical or mental barriers to receiving and processing information are offered support in making informed choices, ensuring that individualised care does not lead to loneliness or social isolation and ensuring that families, carers and providers have the appropriate means of communicating effectively to secure the best outcomes. As the Transformation Programme gathers momentum, the Panel will be taking considerable and regular interest in its proposals and outcomes.

#### **Services for users with learning disabilities**

A major element in the required rearrangement of Slough's offer to residents is the move from residential care to supported living accommodation. Given the increased autonomy involved in this, the Panel have been keen to ensure that the required safeguards are in place to protect those involved in this adjustment.

The particular issue of Elliman Road centre has been monitored by the Panel. Issues of significant importance to members have included staffing issues, the range and quality of community based provision and the retention of friendship groups which had been created by the centre. As a result of this, the Panel secured an undertaking that the impact on friendship groups would be monitored and appropriate actions taken, and also that the staff affected by the changes would be consulted to prepare them for the new service.

These matters are to be taken forward in the new Municipal Year; the Panel's first meeting of 2017 – 18 will feature a detailed report on the impact of the changes. This will include feedback from service users and their families, and also detailed tracking information on the impact of the changes to service users.



### Joint Wellbeing Strategy

The Joint Wellbeing Strategy has been subject to significant change; in particular, the governance arrangements and partnership work have been appraised.

The Panel have stressed the importance of ensuring that housing is a central element in any refreshed strategy. Members have expressed an interest in monitoring the suitability of new housing developments for disabled or vulnerable tenants. The Panel also clarified its desire for any applications for Disabled Facilities Grants to be assessed promptly and for the decisions made to be based on sound priorities. These points have been fed back into the refresh and informed the final launch of the strategy in late 2016.

### Frimley Park NHS Foundation Trust and the Sustainability and Transformation Plan

Whilst the acquisition of Heatherwood and Wexham Park have been downgraded as priorities (given the excellent progress made in the initial stages of the arrangement), the Panel remains keenly aware of the need for scrutiny on the matter.

The Foundation Trust addressed the Panel in October 2016, reporting on the CQC report which had moved Wexham Park from 'Inadequate' to 'Good'. Whilst this progress was warmly welcomed, the Panel remain conscious of several issues in need of resolution. Nursing vacancies still required filling (although the number had declined), and the Panel stressed the need to continue with proactive and innovative solutions to this matter. The possible implications of proposed building works at the hospital, and their compliance with land ownership questions, was also explored. In terms of logistics, the Chief Executive of the Trust pledged to increase on-site parking in response to the Panel's requests. The Panel is also keen to stress the importance of access to the site via the bus service; this is a matter which will continue to be monitored by the Panel given the amendments made by First Bus to service provision.

The future of the NHS in the area will also be subject to the changes proposed by the Sustainability and Transformation Plan. As with many similar STPs across the country, the Plan will be based on a move to a 'hub based' approach; this will increase the effective size of NHS Trusts, and is scheduled to be enacted in 2019. Given the importance of this issue, the Panel will be seeking to have an impact on the STP proposals. Consideration may also be required as to how a scrutiny body can be established which reflects the geography of the 'Frimley Footprint'. A members' briefing and initial agenda items have alerted the Panel to this matter.

**Note:** The full work programme for the Health Scrutiny Panel for the 2016/17 municipal year is attached as Appendix B.

## **Neighbourhoods' and Community Services Scrutiny Panel**

### **Membership:**

Councillor Plenty (Chair)  
Councillor Davis  
Councillor Rana  
Councillor Swindlehurst

Councillor Anderson  
Councillor N Holledge  
Councillor Rasib  
Councillor Wright

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee appoints the Neighbourhoods' and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (NCS Scrutiny Panel) to undertake its constitutional role looking at the specific Cabinet Portfolios for neighbourhoods and renewal, community and leisure, and environment and open spaces.

### **Specific focuses of work**

#### **Housing**

The Panel has seen a significant rise in the amount of work it has done on housing in 2016 – 17 compared to previous years. It has worked to streamline the reporting on KPIs, ensuring that members receive a selected range of the most relevant statistics showing the service's functioning. In this regard, the Panel made the following recommendations at its meeting in July 2016:

1. That SBC officers undertake work on forming a Panel including Councillors and residents, dedicated to evaluating the performance of the Housing Service.
2. That Councillors be nominated by the Panel to meet with the Residents' Panel.
3. That future reports on performance include refinements based on the Panel's requests (e.g. benchmarking data).

Having undertaken this work, since the autumn the Panel have been receiving this focused information; the Working Group alluded to in recommendation 1 above have proved invaluable in this matter.

Whilst the Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook the review of the overall strategy, the Panel have also provided insight into specific areas of the service. The Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements (RMI) contract is of critical importance to residents, and the Panel have provided oversight of improved contractual arrangements for tenants as the handover approaches. The Panel has also clarified the obligations and responsibilities of tenants and the Council with regard to garages, and has taken a keen interest in resident engagement. On this matter, the Panel have recommended that a Consultative Commissioning Group be established; this body is now engaged in giving local residents a real voice in the future of the service.

#### **Transport – Roads**

The road network in Slough has seen a number of major alterations in 2016 – 17 which have been of interest to the Panel and local residents. In particular, the experimental scheme in Langley have been examined by the Panel.

Whilst aware of the rationale behind the scheme, the Panel have worked hard to mitigate the impact on the road network. By working their way through the technicalities involved in the scheme, and reflecting the voices of those from the local population impacted by the changes, the Panel have sought to add a constructive viewpoint and clarify the best options for the future.

Through this discussion, the Panel recommended the termination of the experimental scheme to Cabinet in February 2017 on the grounds that it had gathered the relevant information. The Panel will also be receiving information on the long term future of the road network in the area once uncertainties regarding the infrastructure projects causing the alterations (e.g. HS2) have been clarified.

#### Transport – Public

The matter which has generated the most debate on public transport has been that of Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) for bus users. Members have expressed concern at the low levels of detection, leading to RTPI display boards often displaying generic timetable information rather than specific information on the punctuality of buses.

Having explored the IT, compatibility and management structure issues with a direct impact on this, the Panel have ensured that future arrangements avoid similarly diffuse arrangements for overall responsibility.

They have also received information on the new specification. This has allayed concerns over the issues raised above being repeated, although the Panel may return to the matter once it is in operation.

#### Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017

The Panel undertook its statutory responsibility to hold a Crime and Disorder Committee. The main debate of the evening concerned the Safer Slough Partnership, Thames Valley Police and the Council's motion of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016, which read:

*“This Council resolves to work with Thames Valley Police through the Safer Slough Partnership to prioritise its response to counter the increase in serious sex crimes around the town and to reduce the fear of sexual assault across the Borough.”*

The Panel ascertained progress made on the matter, with the Safer Slough Partnership having identified Salt Hill Park as a key area for any work on public safety. Through actions such as cutting bushes which were limiting visibility, increased lighting and alerting local emergency services to activity in the area, there had been an increased profile in preventing such crimes. A Parks & Open Spaces Task & Finish Group (established by the Safer Slough Partnership) had also been established to investigate public safety and the prevention of sexual assault in public areas.

However, the Panel requested that the Safer Slough Partnership also establish a separate priority dedicated solely to sexual violence. This will be considered by the Partnership, who have also subsequently discussed the matter with Councillors.

Other matters discussed by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel included:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Modern slavery
- Organised crime
- Traffic policing
- Balance of Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers

**Note:** The full work programme for the Neighbourhoods' and Community Services Scrutiny Panel for the 2016/17 municipal year is attached as Appendix C.

## **Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel**

### **Membership:**

Councillor Brooker (Chair)	Councillor Chahal (Vice Chair)
Councillor Anderson	Councillor Chohan
Councillor N Holledge	Councillor Pantelic
Councillor Qaseem	Councillor Sadiq
Jo Rockall (Secondary Teacher Representative)	
Maggie Stacey (Head Teacher Representative)	
Hamzah Ahmed (Slough Youth Parliament)	

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee appoints the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel (ECS Scrutiny Panel) to undertake its constitutional role looking at the specific Cabinet Portfolios for education and children, and opportunities and skills.

### **Specific focuses of work**

#### **Slough Children's Services Trust**

Since its formation in October 2015, the Trust has been keen to engage with members and gain their input and support. As well as the Joint Delivery Plan (discussed below), the Trust has undertaken a variety of initiatives to improve provision. The Panel have been supportive of this aim, and have offered challenge on a variety of matters such as working culture, use of agency staff and governance.

The meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2016 was dedicated to the first year of the Trust. The Panel took special interest in pursuing progress made on the Virtual School for Looked After Children, the need for innovation in the service (e.g. the Mockingbird Family model for foster care) and the new standards by which existing staff were being appraised. The Panel have also been very interested in ensuring that governance arrangements provide a clear and logical process to establish the precise responsibilities of the Trust, the Council, partner organisations and members. The Panel also recommended that the Trust revisit the files of potential foster carers; the Panel felt that many may have lapsed as they were discouraged by the previous regime.

#### **Return of educational services to Slough Borough Council**

Another vital alteration to services in Slough has been the completion of the contract with Cambridge Education and the return of responsibilities to the Council. Given the relatively late nature of this decision and the compressed timeframe it created, the Panel has sought confirmation that all aspects of the transfer were satisfactory and that its future operation is sound. The Panel supported the services' exemption from some aspects of the recruitment freeze for Council staff and the successful transfer of other staff from Cambridge Education. It has also sought to clarify how the Council and Trust interact (e.g. the responsibility for performance managing the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board) how the service would be incorporated into bodies such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

#### **SLSCB**

Given the negative findings of the 2016 Ofsted report, the Panel has asked the new Chair of the Board for clarification on the improvement process. The Panel discussed the 6 themes identified by the Chair, and sought clarification as to why the sub group on education was not performing as well as others which had been established and how this would be rectified. Whilst broadly receptive to the innovations introduced by the new Chair of the Board, the Panel also expressed concern that the relationship between the Board and the Council was still less clear than had been hoped. The Panel will return to how the Chair's performance is managed in 2017 – 18.

### Corporate Parenting Strategy

Given the major gaps in corporate parenting highlighted by Ofsted's 2016 report, the Panel has played a crucial role in overseeing and monitoring the creation of an effective strategy. The Panel stressed the need for the prioritisation of female genital mutilation as an issue for detection, the voices of young people and children in care to be reflected in the design of services and the effective functioning of the Virtual School.

The Panel have also requested that they be kept informed on the outcomes for Looked After Children, particularly those offered work experience.

### Underachievement in white British children

The pattern of white British children underachieving at GCSE level has been emerging as a national issue in education. Examination results for 2016 confirmed that this was reflected in Slough, and members have expressed an interest in reviewing this matter further. To this end, an item on a costed plan for schools has been requested for the autumn of 2017 whilst a research paper outlining a) the national debate on causes for the trend and b) local initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for white British children has also been circulated to assist discussions.

### National Funding Formula

On 31<sup>st</sup> January, Council referred the matter of the National Funding Formula to the Panel for further discussion. The Panel received information outlining the impact of the proposals on local schools, which are likely to be mostly to the detriment of schools. Given the potential impact of this on provision (e.g. reduced syllabuses, increased class sizes, 4 day school week for Key Stage 3 classes) the Panel were strongly minded to voice their concerns over the move.

The Panel's points will be included in the consultation process to Government, whilst the progress of the matter will be taken by the Panel in late 2017.

**Note:** The full work programme for the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel for the 2016/17 municipal year is attached as Appendix D.

## **Looking Forward**

Whilst the absence of elections guarantees greater stability in terms of the elected members at Slough Borough Council, the 2017 – 18 Municipal Year offers its own challenges. With the previous year having seen the change in the leadership of the authority, the coming year will provide a real chance for the new administration to clarify their long term objectives. As a result, scrutiny will be performing a vital role in offering policy advice and ensuring that Cabinet receives practical ideas for the future of service provision.

With the current climate of austerity now well established across local authorities, Councillors have become well accustomed to operating within constraints. However, the financial year 2018 – 19 promises to be one of particular hardship, and preparations for the required changes will be a central element of our work. In terms of specific areas, adult social care has become an area in need of transformative change; members are well apprised of this and have placed the matter at the centre of their plans. The fact that the Council resumed direct control of local authority maintained schools, alongside the pressures of the proposed National Funding Formula will require in depth consideration. The issue of underachievement amongst white British students is an issue in Slough (as it is on a national basis) and may well need specific investigation. Meanwhile, there are indications (through the proposals for the Environmental Service) that the new administration will be looking to provide more services directly; this will also be of interest to scrutiny in 2017 – 18.

As is ever the case, members are reminded that scrutiny need not be confined to the meetings of Committees. Task & Finish Groups offer one very real and often effective means of policy review. By conducting an investigation into a specific area, and using methods that are not constrained by the procedures of committee meetings (e.g. site visits, bespoke research, questionnaires for service users) a sense of the realities for service provision can be gained. It also allows for members to make a number of highly specific recommendations, based on input from a wide range of individuals or external organisations that may rarely attend our committees. In addition, the ongoing work of a committee can be conducted outside of meetings; whether that is requests for information, online conversations on questions that have arisen or arranging meetings with key stakeholders.

Members are also reminded that the Scrutiny Officer will be receptive to any fresh ideas, skills or ideas which enhance the process of effective scrutiny. Whether the members for 2017 – 18 are long established or participating in these bodies for the first time, all can contribute fully to the process. Members are also reminded that, from May onwards, there will be a series of training events (including scrutiny on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017) which will build on existing skills and also help develop new approaches, ensuring the Scrutiny Function delivers defined results and adds value to the work of the council.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

Meeting Date
<b>14 June 2016</b>
<b>Administrative Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Panels</li> <li>• Work programme (supported by training event prior to meeting)</li> </ul>
<b>14 July 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure Capital Programme – Slough Ice Arena and temporary ice rink</li> <li>• Burnham Station – experimental road scheme</li> <li>• Thames Valley Transactional Service – Annual Report</li> </ul>
<b>15 September 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q1 Performance and Finance Report</li> <li>• Electoral cycle</li> <li>• Procurement of Environmental Services</li> <li>• Littering, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Date</b>
<b>17 November 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call in: Housing Revenue Business Account</li><li>• Q2 Performance and Finance Report</li><li>• Adult Social Care Transformation</li><li>• Housing – future scrutiny approach</li><li>• Local Plan</li></ul>
<b>20 December 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Five Year Plan – scrutiny approach</li><li>• Draft Housing Strategy</li><li>• Homelessness</li></ul>
<b>12 January 2017</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First Bus – changes to services</li><li>• Q2 – Performance and Projects report</li><li>• Financial report – month 7</li><li>• Housing Revenue Business Account</li><li>• Environmental Services – Local Authority Controlled Company</li><li>• Transport Strategy</li></ul>



<b>Meeting Date</b>
<b>2 February 2017</b>
<p><b>Scrutiny Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thames Valley Transactional Service – half year update</li> <li>• Budget Papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Revenue Budget 2017 – 18</li> <li>○ Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017 – 2021</li> <li>○ Treasury Management Strategy 2017 – 18</li> <li>○ Capital Strategy 2017 – 2023</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>9 March 2017</b>
<p><b>Scrutiny Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Centre management</li> <li>• Economic growth and impact on local residents</li> </ul>
<b>13 April 2017</b>
<p><b>Scrutiny Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police and Crime Commissioner</li> <li>• LGA Communications Peer Review</li> <li>• Q3 Performance and Financial Management</li> <li>• Review of public liability</li> </ul> <p><b>Information Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Petitions – annual review</li> </ul> <p><b>Endorsement Item</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny Annual Report</li> </ul>

**HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

Meeting Date
<b>30 June 2016</b>
<b>Administrative Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chair</li> <li>• Election of Vice Chair</li> </ul> <b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to health scrutiny</li> <li>• Slough's Learning Disability Plan</li> </ul>
<b>1 September 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frimley Sustainability and Transformation Plan</li> <li>• Better Care Fund</li> <li>• Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy 2016 – 2020</li> </ul>
<b>6 October 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparedness for Winter</li> <li>• Options for Modernisation of Community Nursing Services</li> <li>• Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust – update</li> <li>• Adult Social Care – local account</li> <li>• Slough Safeguarding Adults Partnership – Annual Report</li> </ul>

<b>Meeting Date</b>
<b>23 November 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frimley Sustainability and Transformation Plan</li><li>• Reconfiguration of services for adults with learning disabilities</li><li>• Slough Central update</li></ul>
<b>19 January 2017</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Slough CCG – Operating Plan 2017 – 19</li><li>• Leisure Strategy - update</li><li>• Bus Services – Wexham Park</li></ul>
<b>27 March 2017</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Digital innovations</li><li>• Five Year Plan – outcome 2 (our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs)</li><li>• Slough Wellbeing Board – Annual Report</li><li>• Public transport services to healthcare facilities</li></ul>

**NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

<b>Meeting Date</b>
<b>19 June 2016</b>
<b>Administrative Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chair</li> <li>• Election of Vice Chair</li> </ul> <b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport – road management issues</li> <li>• Housing – performance management and reporting</li> <li>• Local authority housing – service charges</li> </ul>
<b>8 September 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real Time Passenger Information</li> <li>• Hollow Hill Lane – experimental scheme</li> <li>• Garage licence review</li> </ul>
<b>3 November 2016</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real Time Passenger Information</li> <li>• Housing Service – resident involvement</li> <li>• Garage repairs</li> <li>• Housing Revenue Account Business Plan</li> <li>• Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements Service – progress on new contract</li> </ul>

Meeting Date
<b>17 January 2017</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market Lane – long term alternatives for road network</li> <li>• Allotments</li> <li>• Housing – rents policy</li> <li>• Housing – Scrutiny Overview Indicators</li> <li>• Real Time Passenger Information</li> </ul>
<b>2 March 2017</b>
<b>CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PANEL</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thames Valley Police – overview</li> <li>• Safer Slough Partnership</li> <li>• Reference from Council, 26<sup>th</sup> July: sexual assaults</li> </ul>
<b>4 April 2017</b>
<b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Football pitch hire</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Housing Revenue Account – Business Plan</li> <li>• Development Initiative Slough Housing</li> </ul>

**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

Meeting Date
19 July 2016
<b>Administrative Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chair</li> <li>• Election of Vice Chair</li> </ul> <b>Scrutiny Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School places</li> <li>• Ofsted Delivery Plan</li> <li>• Section 11 safeguarding audits</li> </ul>
26 October 2016
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>JOINT MEETING WITH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b></p> <b>Single item meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slough Children's Services Trust – 1<sup>st</sup> year overview</li> </ul>

Meeting Date
<b>8 December 2016</b>
<p><b>Constitutional Item</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New co-opted member: Slough Youth Parliament</li> </ul> <p><b>Scrutiny Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slough Joint Delivery Plan – Slough Borough Council and Slough Children’s Services Trust arrangements</li> <li>• Community Learning &amp; Skills Service</li> <li>• Responsibilities for schools – Council’s role since end of Cambridge Education contract</li> <li>• Exam results 2016</li> </ul>
<b>9 February 2017</b>
<p><b>Scrutiny Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Parenting Strategy</li> <li>• Slough Youth Offending Team</li> <li>• Exam results – verified data and analysis by ethnicity</li> <li>• SEND results – KS2 and KS4</li> </ul>
<b>15 March 2017</b>
<p><b>Scrutiny Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slough Youth Parliament</li> <li>• Slough Local Safeguarding Children’s Board</li> <li>• Update on return of education services to Slough Borough Council</li> <li>• National Funding Formula – reference from Council, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017</li> </ul> <p><b>Information Item</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School admissions</li> </ul>

Meeting Date
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19 April 2017
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<b>Scrutiny Items</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ofsted: 2<sup>nd</sup> monitoring visit</li><li>• Ofsted inspections of schools (termly update)</li><li>• SEND and psychology service</li><li>• Fostering and Adoption</li><li>• Section 11 safeguarding audits</li><li>• Action Plan on exam results – verbal update</li></ul> |
|---|



**AGENDA ITEM 9**

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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