

Wolverhampton City Council

**OPEN EXECUTIVE
DECISION ITEM (AMBER)**CabinetDate **19 June 2013**

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Originating Service Group(s)	EDUCATION AND ENTERPRISE		
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Title	HOUSING STRATEGY 2013-2018	KEY DECISION:	YES
		IN FORWARD PLAN:	YES

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet formally adopts the Housing Strategy 2013-2018:

- a) as setting the strategic framework for housing from which all other housing strategy and policy should have regard and
- b) accepting the associated Housing Strategy Delivery Plan as setting the key actions for housing/housing services delivery subject to annual reviews and updates, which will be reported to Housing Executive Board.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to formally adopt the Housing Strategy 2013-2018 by outlining the requirement for a Housing Strategy, the process that has been involved in developing the strategy and to summarise the key priorities that will drive the housing agenda up to 2018.
- 1.2 Cabinet are also asked to endorse the associated Housing Strategy Delivery Plan, which sets out the key actions for housing/housing services delivery and will be subject to ongoing monitoring, annual reviews and updates and reported to the Housing Executive Board.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Local Government Act 2003, Part 7, section 87 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to produce a housing strategy although the form and content of the strategy is a matter for individual authorities. The Act requires the Housing Strategy to provide an “overarching framework against which the Authority considers and formulates other policies on more specific housing issues”.
- 2.2 The current Housing Strategy was produced in 2009 and covers the period 2009-2026. Following the restructuring of Housing Services, a fresh vision for improving the delivery of housing services, as set out in the “Improving the City Housing Offer’ paper presented to Cabinet on 11 April 2012, and a changing external environment, the Housing Strategy has been revised in order to become a dynamic and delivery focussed mechanism to drive forward housing provision in the City. The strategy is being brought more in line with the emerging priorities, including the National Housing Strategy and the City Strategy locally, and to focus the delivery against key objectives.
- 2.3 The Housing Strategy 2013-2018 identifies five overarching objectives to drive the strategic housing agenda in Wolverhampton over this period and brings together the work of a range of partners to achieve the City’s aims for housing in the associated Housing Strategy Delivery Plan. The Housing Strategy is cross tenure in its approach.
- 2.4 The Housing Strategy is closely linked to the delivery of the City Strategy, in particular the ‘Reinvigorating the City’ theme.
- 2.5 The Housing Strategy 2013-2018 replaces the one covering the period 2009-2026.

3. DEVELOPING THE HOUSING STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy is based on housing market intelligence, an assessment of housing need, national and regional policy and guidance as well as feedback from stakeholders.
- 3.2 Work started to refresh the Housing Strategy 2009-2026 in 2010. This involved extensive consultation with stakeholders and residents. Following a restructure and refocus of Housing Services partly in response to Government introducing changes that alter the legislative, funding and policy landscape for housing, work on finalising this strategy was delayed.
- 3.3 Whilst many of the key issues and much of the feedback from the consultation have been captured in this iteration of the Housing Strategy, a smaller scale consultation process was undertaken to further consider the changes made and any new areas

introduced, such as council new build, this has been set out in the Equality Analysis (appendix 3).

- 3.4 This has resulted in a more focused Housing Strategy, centred around the key challenges to housing delivery and the strategies being put in place to address them, maximising the opportunities to improve the housing offer in the City.
- 3.5 The Housing Strategy was presented to Education & Enterprise management team on 4 March 2013, Strategic Executive Board on 7 March 2013 and Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel on 16 April 2013, who all endorsed the approach (subject to minor amendments). The draft strategy was approved by the Housing Executive Board on 16 April 2013 for adoption by Cabinet.

4. WOLVERHAMPTON HOUSING STRATEGY 2013-2015

- 4.1 Attached to this report as Appendix 1 is Wolverhampton's Housing Strategy 2013-2018. The focus of the strategy is deliberately broad and does not attempt to capture all of the activities that the Council and its partners are engaged in. It is underpinned by a more detailed delivery plan (attached as appendix 2) that will be reviewed and updated on annual basis to drive the delivery of housing and housing services, with section 5 of this report setting out the monitoring arrangements in more detail.
- 4.2 In summary the Housing Strategy determines five priorities for the delivery of housing and housing services.

1. Deliver high quality new housing stock

The delivery of high quality new housing stock is a key priority for the City which underpins the City's aims for 'Reinvigorating the City' as set out in the City Strategy. This will involve Housing Services and other Council departments working closely with Registered Providers (housing associations), private developers and investors to deliver new homes including Council and affordable housing to high quality and sustainable standards.

2. Improve the quality of existing housing

Existing homes account for 85% of the housing that will exist in Wolverhampton in 2018. Good quality housing supports good health, is part of what makes a place good to live in and makes it economically competitive. Well-targeted spending on existing housing can provide significant value for money, reducing the cost of health services, residential care, homelessness services, crime and tenancy failure and also tackles fuel poverty. Work will therefore be focused on completing the Decent Homes programme, supporting initiatives which improve the quality of properties in the private sector and dedicate resources to bringing empty properties back into use.

3. Provide support and appropriate housing options to vulnerable people

The Housing Strategy supports a number of specific strategies such as the Homelessness Strategy and the Older Peoples Strategy to support vulnerable residents to live as independently for as long a time as possible by providing housing that meets their needs in the social and private sector, through adaptations, technology, equipment and support. The development of new build specialist housing will be supported where this is required for our most vulnerable residents. Appropriate information and advice on the range of housing options and support available to enable more people to find housing that suits them will be offered as well as a coordinated partnership approach to the advice and support

on the impact of Welfare Reform. Social housing providers and their partners are encouraged to help tackle worklessness and develop the skills of tenants.

4. Good management of social housing

Over a quarter of households rent from a social landlord, of which 22 per cent rent from the Council. A key focus will be on making the best use of stock. Not only will this help to release larger homes for overcrowded families, it will also be a key response to Welfare Reform and the implications of Social Sector Size Criteria. The Council's housing management agents will continue to improve service delivery and satisfaction levels for tenants.

5. Improve standards in the private rented sector

Use of the private rented sector has more than doubled between the 2001 and 2011 Census and with constraints on mortgage lending and limited availability of social housing, this sector will continue to play a vital role within the City's housing market. Promoting good management of private rented housing is increasingly important. The strategy endorses the provision of support to landlords but also intervening using enforcement measures where this approach does not work and residents are left in sub-standard properties.

5. MONITORING OF THE STRATEGY

- 5.1 The "Improving the City Housing Offer" paper presented to Cabinet on 11 April 2012 set out the governance arrangements for the delivery of housing services. This structure will ensure the engagement of all key partners and relevant stakeholders at the appropriate level to ensure that the Housing Strategy is fit for purpose and is delivered in accordance with the Delivery Plan. A diagram of the governance structure is set out in section 5 of Appendix 1.
- 5.2 The Housing Executive Board will facilitate at a strategic level input from all relevant partners who are able to make decisions on behalf of their organisations and will feedback to the Local Strategic Partnership and the Reinvigorating the City Cluster group on the contribution the delivery of the Housing Strategy is making to the City Strategy.
- 5.3 Sitting under the Housing Executive Board is the Housing Operational Group. This group will be responsible for monitoring the delivery of the Housing Strategy and associated Delivery Plan. This will involve quarterly monitoring of progress with exemption reports presented to the Housing Operational Group so any risks or barriers can be identified early on and mitigated against. New or amended strategic priorities will also be identified and reported back through to the Housing Executive Board
- 5.4 The Housing Operational Group will be responsible for establishing and monitoring the work of Tasking Groups who will have a specific remit of making things happen at an operational level to support specific priority actions in the Delivery Plan.
- 5.5 Annual reviews of progress will be undertaken and fed up through to the Housing Executive Board. This will also provide the opportunity to bring the Delivery Plan up to date capturing new areas of work that support the delivery of the Housing Strategy priorities.
- 5.6 As housing delivery has continued whilst the Housing Strategy has been a work in progress a number of key achievements have already been realised. These include:

- The Housing Executive Board has been established to set the strategic framework for housing and oversee the development and delivery of the Housing Strategy.
- The first tender has been completed for the sale and development of City Council owned land at Thompson Avenue, Parkfields, which will also be the site for the first Council housing to be built for 30 years, via the Homes and Communities Agency Delivery Partner Panel.
- As at April 2013 based on estimates for quarters 3 and 4 total net market housing completions (estimated) for 2012-13 was 466 units and there were 82 (estimated) affordable new build completions during 2012/13.
- A new 15 year management agreement with Wolverhampton Homes has been developed and put in place.
- The final two years funding for Decent Homes has been secured from the Homes and Communities Agency with delivery on target as at year end 2012/13.
- As part of the West Midlands Making Best Use of Stock partnership (WMBUS) a region specific mutual exchange portal has been developed to assist households in Council and Registered Provider housing move to address issues of under occupation and overcrowding as well as to mitigate against Welfare Reform changes.
- The landlords steering group has been established and is in operation.
- 203 private sector empty properties were brought back into use in 2012/13.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has no direct financial implications. The delivery and monitoring of the Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan will be carried out by existing budgeted staff.
- 6.2 The Housing Strategy refers to matters which are already reflected in approved budgets, and where further detailed work is planned to deliver the housing priorities set out in the Strategy which may require additional resources, the financial implications of these will be evaluated and reported once plans have been developed.

[CF/28052013/V]

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Local Government Act 2003 requires local housing authorities to have in place a Housing Strategy for their locality. Meeting the Council's statutory housing obligations; statutory homelessness duty; provision of housing advice and landlord responsibilities are reflected in the priorities of the housing strategy, primarily priority 3, 'provide support and housing options to vulnerable people' and priority 4, 'good management of social housing'.

[FD/03062013/E]

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 An Equality Analysis has been developed in tandem with the Housing Strategy. The Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan are targeted at meeting the housing needs of the City's residents including the most vulnerable people in Wolverhampton and identifies potential adverse impacts on protected groups and sets out the actions that mitigates against these.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Housing Strategy 2013 to 2018 does not have any explicit environmental impacts in itself. Specific projects identified in the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan will have environmental impacts, for example the provision of additional housing to meet housing needs. The environmental impacts associated with specific projects and work programmes will be identified and addressed in the relevant project documentation and/or reports brought forward for approval.

10. SCHEDULE OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Report to Cabinet 'Improving the City Housing Offer', 11 April 2012

10.2 Report to Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel, 'Housing Strategy 2013-2018', 16 April 2013

10.3 Report to Equalities Advisory Group, 'Housing Strategy 2013-2018', 11 June 2013

Neighbourhoods, Homes & People

Wolverhampton Housing Strategy 2013-2018

Strategy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Wolverhampton's Housing Strategy 2013-2018. This Strategy will support Wolverhampton in achieving its long term ambitions for housing; improving the quality and supply of housing to support current and future residents who will have a fundamental role to play in developing Wolverhampton's identity and economic function as a key place on the regional, UK and international stage.

The Housing Strategy belongs to the residents of Wolverhampton and partners will continue to work with local communities to ensure it meets their needs, through sharing information on housing issues, regular communication and engagement. Prior to its adoption, the Strategy has been subject to extensive consultation with local communities.

The Housing Strategy is linked to the Local Investment Plan (LIP) and is supported by a Delivery Plan that identifies key targets and accountability for the delivery of high level actions. The Delivery Plan links to the Implementation Plan for the City Strategy.

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT FOR HOUSING

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England

The Government's Housing Strategy, 2011, has two main aims; to drive economies and jobs and to spread opportunity, particularly for homeownership. To achieve these aims, the strategy sets out areas for focus of housing activity:

- Quality homes, places and housing support
- Deliver new homes and support aspirations – for communities and individuals
- Support choice and quality for tenants – both private and social rented
- Tackle empty properties

Localism Act

The [Localism Act](#) sets out how the Government intends to devolve power from central Government to a local level to individuals, communities and councils. The Localism Agenda is reflected in Wolverhampton's Housing Strategy through its emphasis on the involvement of local people and support for communities through existing structures such as the Local Neighbourhood Partnerships and through the use of new ideas such as the development of local neighbourhood plans. As part of the Localism Act, Wolverhampton City Council is required to produce a Tenancy Strategy and a number of changes have been required to the Allocations Policy. The Act also provides Local Authorities with more flexibility around using the private rented sector for housing homeless households.

Welfare Reform Act

The [Welfare Reform Act](#) introduces a range of reforms to the benefits and tax credits system. The main housing elements of the Act include:

- a cap on household benefits including housing benefit,
- the introduction of Universal Credit which will streamline a number of benefits including housing benefit into one payment and make payments direct to individuals,
- limits on Housing Benefit (housing costs within Universal Credit) for those households deemed to have more bedrooms than they require so that they will lose a proportion of this benefit where they under-occupy social housing (14% where there is one extra bedroom at

an average loss £10.86 per week and 25% where there are two or more extra bedrooms at an average loss £20.14 per week).

- increasing the age threshold for the Local Housing Allowance 'shared room' rent figure from 25 to 35 years old
- provision for possible changes to the way that support for housing costs is calculated under Universal Credit so that the amount of housing costs could be set without reference to actual rents.

Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The [Green Deal](#) is a Government scheme that is designed to help homeowners and tenants to increase the energy efficiency of their homes. Households can make energy saving home improvements that may be partly or wholly funded over time through electricity bills. Repayments should be affordable as they should be no more than a typical household will save in energy costs.

[ECO](#) creates a legal obligation on the main energy suppliers to improve the energy efficiency of domestic households through the establishment of three distinct targets:

- Carbon Emission Reduction Obligation (CERO) – all tenure and focuses on solid wall insulation and hard-to-treat cavity wall insulation.
- Carbon Savings Community Obligation (CSCO) – all tenures and focuses on the provision of insulation measures and connections to district heating systems to domestic energy users that live within Lower Super Output Areas¹ that present in the top 15% of Multiple Deprivation Index².
- Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) – owner occupiers and private rented sector only and requires energy suppliers to provide measures which improve the ability of low income and vulnerable households to affordably heat their homes via the promotion of heat qualifying actions.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Self Financing

The Localism Act has allowed Councils to take [control of their housing rental income](#). This enables them to plan effectively for the long term management of housing assets and may present new opportunities for management and funding of local housing.

New Homes Bonus

The [New Homes Bonus](#) was introduced by the Government in April 2011. The bonus is designed to incentivise house building and ensure that local communities benefit from development in their area. For every new home that is built and occupied and each empty home brought back into use the government provides an un-ring-fenced grant each year for six years. Additional grant is available for new affordable homes.

Putting People First Agenda

[Putting People First](#) (PPF) agenda sets out the direction for adult social care. It is a shared commitment by the Government, local councils and service providers to ensuring that people who need care and support have choice, flexibility and control to live their lives the way they wish. It prioritises the development of policy and practice that which supports independent living, of which housing is one key element alongside access to work, education/training and leisure.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

¹ **Lower Super Output Areas** (LSOAs) are a sub-ward geography averaging approximately 1500 people.

² Index of Multiple Deprivation provides a relative measure of deprivation at small area level across England. Areas are ranked from least deprived to most deprived on seven different dimensions of deprivation which are combined to form a composite measure of multiple deprivation.

West Midlands Best Use of Stock (WMBUS)

In response to changes brought about by the Welfare Reform Act the [WMBUS partnership](#) brings together local authorities and registered providers from across the West Midlands to work together to develop joint approaches to making the best use of stock including:

- identifying tenants who will be affected by Welfare Reform
- working on shared lettings arrangements to enable under-occupiers to move to alternative accommodation
- dealing with tenancy fraud
- working better together with the private sector
- influencing new build development areas and types of accommodation
- sharing best practice and planning for the future.

Black Country Tenancy Strategy

Under the Localism Act, each council is required to produce a [Tenancy Strategy](#). The Black Country local authorities of Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell have developed a joint Tenancy Strategy which sets out a consistent and fair approach to the use of Fixed Term Tenancies and Affordable Rents in order to make the best use of stock across the region. All social housing providers operating across the Black Country area will be expected to give regard to the strategy's objectives and principles.

Each local authority currently has no plans to introduce the wide scale use of fixed term tenancies and where registered providers intend to use them they are encouraged to offer fixed term tenancies for a minimum of five years plus any introductory/ probationary or starter period. When setting Affordable Rents landlords are to take a responsible view when determining when and how Affordable Rents (new build and conversions) will be used in line with local incomes.

With some of the local Registered Providers opting to introduce fixed term tenancies as one approach to making the best use of their stock, the Black Country authorities will review the Tenancy Strategy on an annual basis and analyse monitoring information every 6 months to monitor the impact from an Equalities and Sustainability perspective.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Wolverhampton City Strategy 2011 - 26

The goal of the [City Strategy](#) is to achieve "Prosperity for all". There are three themes for action that are set out to achieve this goal:

- Encouraging enterprise and business
- Empowering people and communities
- Re-invigorating our city

Housing activity will support all three aims, but will contribute most significantly to "Re-invigorating our city". In particular housing will support the priority of "Developing diverse and welcoming neighbourhoods with good quality housing". A key indicator of the success of this City Strategy priority will be the "number of new affordable homes" added to the City's housing stock, (which includes conversions to affordable housing); this is also a measure in the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan.

Wolverhampton Local Investment Plan

The Wolverhampton Local Investment Plan (LIP) sets out the joint investment priorities of Wolverhampton City Council and the Homes and Communities Agency; it is intended to be dynamic in order to reflect changing housing markets and economic pressures.

Thematic Priorities:

- Delivering housing and supporting economic growth
- Existing homes
- Affordability and accessibility
- Vulnerable and minority groups
- Localism, regeneration and sustainability

Spatial Priority Areas:

- City Centre and Canalside development
- Bilston including Bilston Urban Village
- Heath Town
- Stafford Road Corridor
- Whitmore Reans
- Blakenhall and All Saints

Local Plan

The overall land use strategy for the City up to 2026 is the Black Country Core Strategy, which forms a key part of the [Local Plan](#) for the City. The Local Plan also includes the Area Action Plans for three spatial priority areas: Stafford Road; Bilston Corridor; and Wolverhampton City Centre and will incorporate the emerging Neighbourhood Plans for Tettenhall, Bilston and Heathfield Park.

Economic Growth Plan

Economic prosperity is a fundamental goal of the City Strategy because many of the City's ambitions depend on a strong economy. These aims will be detailed in the City's Economic Growth Strategy.

Housing has a key role to play in boosting the City's economic wellbeing. Good quality housing is important to attract businesses and attract and retain skilled employees within the City. New construction and improvements to properties can support local businesses through the supply chain and create jobs for local people. Housing providers can support local people to develop their skills through tenant participation and empowerment initiatives as well as by providing support in accessing jobs and training.

Housing Support and Social Inclusion Strategy

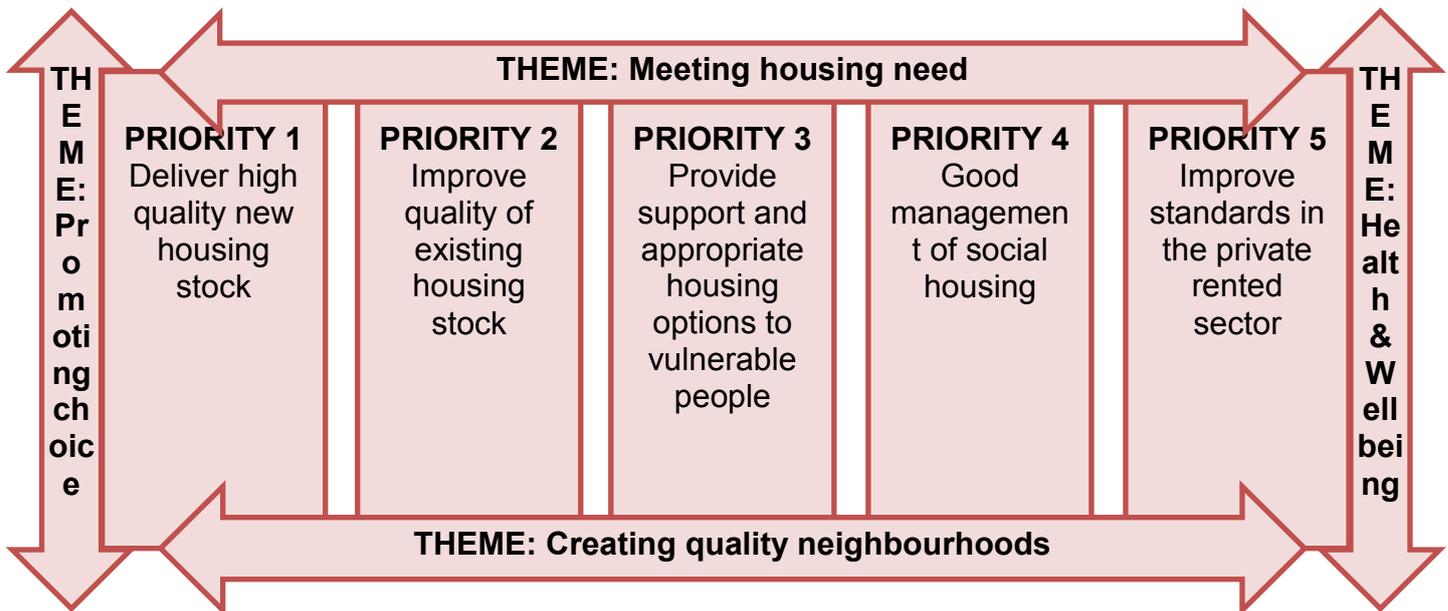
The [Housing Support and Social Inclusion Strategy](#) sets out how we can meet the needs of Wolverhampton residents in order to enable them to gain or maintain independence and social inclusion, specifically addressing the needs of the following client groups; Older People, Mental Health & Substance Misuse, Disability & Long Term Impairments, Young People, Homelessness & Settlement, Offenders and Violence & Abuse. To do this there is a focus on prevention, promoting choice and control for customers over services they receive, flexibility to move in and out of services as needs change, and that when customers do experience a crisis they receive a timely and effective service.

[Child Poverty Strategy](#)

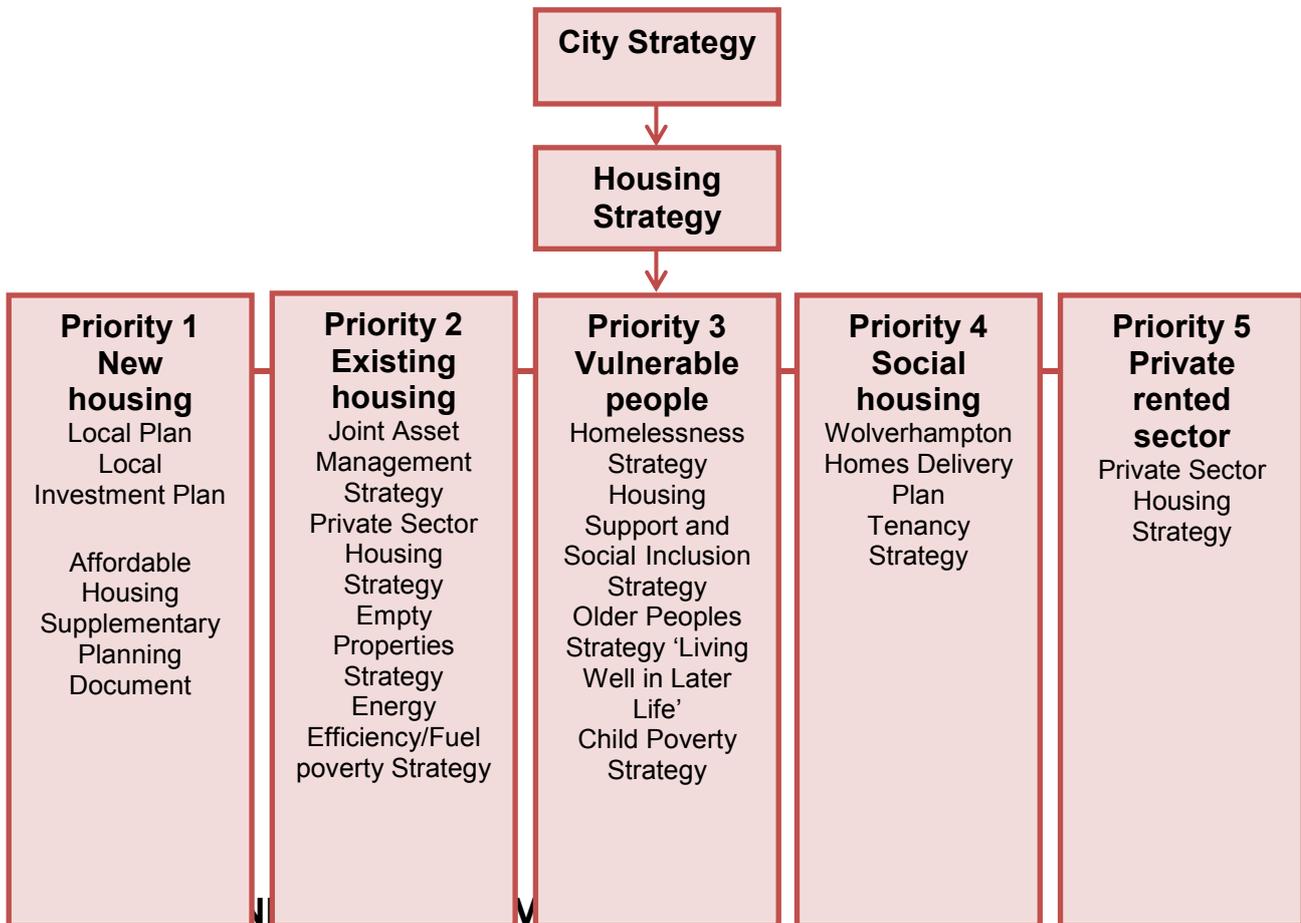
The City's current [Child Poverty Strategy](#) sets out the key building blocks to tackle both the causes and consequences of child poverty in the City, which includes good quality employment, a good start to life and learning, joined up and timely financial support service and good quality homes and neighbourhoods. Although this strategy is being renewed in 2013, Housing and neighbourhoods remains a key priority in addressing Child Poverty.

3. HOUSING PRIORITIES

We have identified five priorities for housing activity in Wolverhampton. There are also four cross cutting themes that will run through all strategic housing work in Wolverhampton.



There are a number of strategies in place that support the Housing Strategy in delivering the City's priorities for housing:



The Housing Strategy is informed by national and sub-regional priorities, local identified needs, demands and aspirations, and a broad understanding of housing market issues. The [Housing](#)

[Needs Study 2007](#), [C3 Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#), the [Wolverhampton Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#) and the [Private Sector Stock Condition Survey](#) are key sources of evidence.

How many homes do we need?

We anticipate growth of around 11% in the number of households between 2006 – 2026, driven by a significant increase in the number of people living alone and a 3% increase in population. The Black Country Core Strategy target for Wolverhampton is to build 13,400 new homes between 2006 and 2026 to accommodate these households. 2,129 additional homes were built during 2006-12 and there is a requirement to provide 760 additional homes every year up to 2018. The Wolverhampton [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#) (April 2013) identifies sufficient deliverable housing sites to provide 6,438 homes by 2018, 41% above target.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies a need for 621 extra general purpose affordable homes each year, and additional need for affordable specialist accommodation. However, it has never been possible to meet this level of need and the Core Strategy sets a target for the Black Country which equates to an average of 115 affordable homes³ per year for Wolverhampton. 124 affordable homes have been delivered on average each year since 2006. It is uncertain if Affordable Housing Programme grant will be available in future to subsidise affordable housing, therefore alternative methods of funding need to be explored if levels of provision are to be maintained.

Mix of housing to meet needs and support ambition

The Black Country Core Strategy aims to achieve 25% affordable housing on private housing sites. For affordable homes, the priority is to provide 2 and 4+ bedroom houses⁴, which are needed for downsizing and to assist over-crowded families. Smaller homes are also needed for older people and those with special needs and to provide a mix of home types on larger developments.

Market properties with 3+ bedrooms are required to provide a better mix of house sizes in some areas and to meet the aspirations of professionals with families⁵. One bedroom market flats will be limited to sites where there is no reasonable alternative or developments meeting a specialist need, as they are typically suited to a very limited proportion of the population.

Table 1 Home Type Targets

Affordable housing	1 bed flats	2 bed flats	2 bed bungalows or houses	3 bed houses	4 bed houses	
	<5%	<5%	>30%	35%	>20%	
Market housing	1 bed flats	2 bed flats	2 bed bungalows or houses	3 bed houses	4 bed houses	5 bed houses
	<1%	<5%	>24%	40%	20%	5%

³ Definition of affordable is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

⁴ SHMA 2008

⁵ This is in accordance with the Black Country Core Strategy target that 40% of new housing built in each authority area should be designed to accommodate 3 or more persons.

Wolverhampton is working in partnership with neighbouring local authorities to make planned provision for gypsy and traveller accommodation in accordance with need, as reflected in targets set out in the Black Country Core Strategy.

It is important to ensure that our understanding of housing needs is up to date. Housing market data for Wolverhampton is regularly collected and reviewed and all other possible sources of data will also be explored to develop our understanding of housing needs, in conjunction with on-going consultation to understand the views of local people. As part of this approach we will monitor and evaluate the impact of Welfare Reforms on the demand for housing by type and size to ensure we understand and can respond to the changing demands of the City's residents. For the most current analysis of housing needs and housing targets, please refer to the [Housing Strategy](#) website or contact the Housing Strategy and Development Team directly on housing.strategy@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

Priority 1: Deliver high quality new housing stock

The delivery of high quality new housing stock is a key priority for the City which underpins the City's aims for 'Reinvigorating the City' as set out in the City Strategy, "developing diverse and welcoming neighbourhoods with good quality housing (is a key priority for action) because housing choice needs to keep pace with rising aspirations if the city is to retain younger people and also address homelessness. Where we plan to build or make improvements, we should create neighbourhoods that are desirable, well integrated, environmentally friendly, safe and well managed. High quality sustainable housing design can also help mitigate the effects of climate change and support green lifestyles". Building new housing also helps to stimulate economic growth through the provision of local contracts and jobs as well as housing that attracts businesses and workers to the area.

What are the key challenges?

Wolverhampton has sufficient land available to meet its housing requirements up to 2018, however some of this land will be challenging or costly to develop.

The provision of a high quality housing offer, for both private and affordable housing, is vital to meeting needs of existing and potential residents in the city and in creating attractive neighbourhoods that will support Wolverhampton's ambitions for economic prosperity and growth.

To attract and retain new and existing households, the Wolverhampton housing offer needs to be diverse and offer a range of opportunities across all sectors including a range of affordable housing options and a good mix of quality new homes. Housing need by housing type is set out in Table 1.

A high standard of sustainable housing has been achieved in the City in recent years so it is imperative that high standards are pursued especially to meet the needs of an ageing population within the City now and in the future.

High quality neighbourhoods offer a range and mix of high quality housing, are well connected to transport, amenities and services and create a safe and attractive environment where people want to stay and contribute to its wellbeing, whether environmentally, socially and/or economically. Creating attractive neighbourhoods requires investment. As the economic downturn has reduced many sources of investment, new opportunities need to be sought.

How will we overcome these challenges?

We will engage with developers, house builders, Registered Providers and financial investors to facilitate the delivery of quality housing for market sale, affordable rent, shared equity and private rent.

We will use our resources innovatively to support the delivery of quality housing, including the use of council owned land and capital receipts, exploring new freedoms under the HRA self-financing regime and reinvestment of the New Homes Bonus.

We will actively engage with and support developers and Registered Providers to bring forward sites; small sites will be packaged into bundles and a responsive planning service will support the development of new homes.

Working in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) we will work closely with developers and Registered Providers to deliver new affordable homes and the Council will lead on the development of new Council housing. Work started in March 2013 to deliver new council housing as part of a mixed use development at Thompson Avenue in Parkfields.

We will make use of local neighbourhood plans which are a new way for communities to take ownership of their local area and make a real impact on the way that neighbourhood develops.

We will continue to consult with local communities when developing new housing to ensure we create quality neighbourhoods that are well designed and managed and support integrated communities, offering greater opportunities both for individuals and for wider economic prosperity.

We will take a pro-active approach to seeking out opportunities for investment for Wolverhampton including new and innovative ways of working, ensuring that partners work together to target investment into priority areas and exploring new forms of investment, such as encouraging institutional investors.

We will explore opportunities to locally set high quality standards for new homes that are delivered in Wolverhampton so that they are attractive and livable. This will improve Wolverhampton's housing offer and help mitigate the effects of climate change. We expect that developers will have due regard to national house building standards, including the Code for Sustainable homes, HCA design and quality standards, Secure by design and Lifetime Homes. Building affordable homes to Lifetime Homes Standard will also help to make new dwellings more accessible for people with support requirements. We will encourage Registered Providers and developers to future proof new housing sites for example by making sure they have access superfast broadband.

When developing new housing we will ensure, as far as possible that housing is in locations that are well connected to transport and local amenities. This will contribute to other actions identified in the remaining four housing priorities to create quality neighbourhoods:

- the role housing plays in the creation of local economic benefit through the provision of jobs and training opportunities,
- improving the condition of social and PRS properties,
- setting high quality and sustainability standards for new build which improves the environmental quality of neighbourhoods,
- improving Anti-Social Behavior processes to reduce the fear of crime,
- good quality housing management to ensure neighbourhoods are welcoming places,
- supporting the work of the Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to ensure residents have a voice in prioritising and shaping services in their area and

- on-going monitoring of the housing market, which enables early intervention before housing markets start to fail.

We will support the Homebuy Agent in schemes which assist residents in accessing market housing.

We will maximize opportunities for local businesses and people to benefit economically from housing initiatives for example through the use of Find it in Wolverhampton to support the local supply chain for our own contracts as well as encouraging our Registered Provider and Housing Developer partners to do the same.

Priority 2: Improve quality of existing housing stock

Existing homes are a huge resource - 85% of the housing that will exist in Wolverhampton in 2026 has already been built. Good quality housing supports good health and is also part of what makes a place good to live in and makes it economically competitive. Well-targeted spending on existing housing can provide significant value for money, reducing the cost of health services, tenancy failure, crime, residential care and homelessness services – and also reducing carbon emissions and tackling fuel poverty. It is essential that improvements to existing stock support regeneration programmes in spatial priority areas.

What are the key challenges?

Of the Council owned 21,200 homes managed by Wolverhampton Homes, and the 2,260 managed by Tenant Management Organisations, the Council will ensure they are well maintained and used effectively. The target percentage of properties that have not yet been made decent for 2012/13 is 18.2%, and the proposed target for 2013/14 is 10.4%.

There are around 1,800 private homes in Wolverhampton that have been empty for 6 months or longer. They are a wasted resource that could be used to accommodate those who are in housing need, with many falling into disrepair, blighting local neighbourhoods.

Existing homes account for 27% of all carbon emissions. Poor energy efficiency is also a cause of fuel poverty, which is a major issue for many Wolverhampton residents. In 2011, the Department for Energy and Climate Change estimated that 26% of households in the West Midlands were living in fuel poverty. A lack of efficient heating is the main factor causing non-decency in private homes.

A proportion of those in private sector housing do not have the sufficient resources to maintain and improve their properties, whether that is owner occupiers or landlords. In particular many older residents will be equity rich yet cash poor and will therefore not be able to access the funds required to repair their homes. Poor living conditions can be hazardous and can have a detrimental impact on people's health and well-being and there are increasingly limited resources available to assist such households.

A number of the Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNPs) have identified that reducing crime and antisocial behavior is a priority issue for residents in their area and a significant number have identified improving the local environment or focusing on specific environmental improvement projects as being important.

How will we overcome these challenges?

Work is in progress to achieve the Decent Homes standard in Wolverhampton by 2015, with the final instalments of funding secured from the Homes and Communities Agency. Wolverhampton Homes will continue to provide training and employment opportunities for local people through the Decent Homes Programme and subsequent maintenance and improvement programmes for example apprenticeships, work placements and job opportunities.

A dedicated team is in place using a range of powers and techniques to bring empty properties back into use with 347 properties brought back into use in 2011/12 and 203 properties in 2012/13. Every empty home brought back into use will generate funds through the New Homes Bonus in future years and these funds can be reinvested to tackle empty housing further. We will also work to develop and support bids for investment to the HCA's Empty Homes Programme to bring empty properties back in to use as affordable housing. This will include exploring the potential for using existing long term empty retail and other types of units on the periphery of the City centre for conversion to housing stock. This will also help to boost the vibrancy and economic wellbeing of the City Centre.

We will continue to work in partnership with landlords to raise standards through the promotion of landlords' accreditation and will work with the Landlord Forum to agree standards and management practices. We will also use the powers available to us to bring housing in the private sector up to a minimum statutory standard, prioritising assistance on necessity (Category 1 hazards within the Housing and Safety Rating System) and vulnerability of individual cases.

Increasing the energy efficiency of homes is a key way to mitigate the effects of climate change, reduce fuel poverty and improve health. Making sure people can afford to keep warm is a priority for Wolverhampton. We will work to maximise funding opportunities to reduce fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency. Residents across all tenures will be encouraged to take up the most appropriate funding measures to increase the energy efficiency of their properties.

We will provide targeted assistance to households suffering from or at risk of fuel poverty including a housing retrofit programme. This activity can be area-based to ensure coordination with other improvement and regeneration programmes and to target investment and activity at deprived areas.

Wolverhampton made good use of the Affordable Warmth programme with over 460 properties receiving private sector housing assistance for energy efficiency works during 2012 and 1,305 homes, both private and council, being improved through the Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) works where certain energy suppliers delivered energy saving measures to households to meet a carbon emissions reduction target. Programmes are tailored to different tenures and the differing ability of owners to pay. We will continue to support affordable warmth and energy efficiency works where possible. This will be by encouraging the uptake of Green Deal which helps people to pay for energy saving home improvements through savings on their energy bills and attracting Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding from the main energy suppliers, which funds insulation measures for solid walls and hard to treat cavity walls as well as targeting funding for insulation and affordable warmth at low income and vulnerable households.

We will explore how the local Green Economy can benefit so that the construction, manufacturing, transport, environmental goods and services and public services can benefit from this investment.

We will engage with Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to identify ways that housing activity can address local concerns about crime and antisocial behaviour and to identify ways that we can improve the quality of the local environment.

We will work with Wolverhampton Homes to review anti-social behavior processes, creating one integrated tenure neutral team for the city located within Wolverhampton Homes.

Priority 3: Provide support and housing options to vulnerable people

There is much work under way to better understand the housing and support needs of vulnerable people across the City and strategies in place to address them. The overarching aim is to support vulnerable residents to live as independently for as long a time as possible by providing housing that meets their needs through adaptations, technology, equipment and support. We will support the new build of specialist housing where this is required for our most vulnerable residents. Providing advice and support to residents as early as possible also acts to prevent people needing more expensive services in the longer term by preventing homelessness, the need to access more specialist housing or reaching crisis point for example in their physical or mental health and needing emergency services.

There are current strategies in place which detail the priorities for vulnerable people and include:

- [Homelessness Strategy 2011-2014](#)
- [Older Peoples Strategy](#)
- [Joint Dementia Strategy](#)
- [Housing Support and Social Inclusion Strategy](#)
- [Learning Disability Joint Commissioning Strategy](#)
- [Joint Commissioning Strategy for Services For People With Long Term Impairments \(Physical & Sensory\)](#)
- [Mental Health Commissioning Strategy](#)

What are the key challenges?

We must ensure there is accessible information delivered in a variety of ways on housing options and support available to residents which enable people to remain as independent as possible. This will include information on supported housing, outreach and advice services for those people that need it.

We must respond to the needs of an ageing population - there is an expected 27 per cent expected increase of older people by 2030 and a 76 per cent increase in those aged 85 plus, yet diminishing resources. Putting in support and assistance in the home such as floating support and adaptations can avoid deteriorating impacts on peoples' health, which can lead to those affected losing their independence and requiring intensive support. Furthermore older people are more likely to be able to make an important contribution to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area where they are supported to maintain their independence.

We must work to prevent and reduce levels of homelessness, which has recently begun to rise nationally but which has so far been contained locally through intervention and preventative services which must continue. Priority areas identified in the Homelessness Strategy include new migrant homelessness, households with complex needs, move on accommodation, an increase in usage of temporary accommodation and financial homelessness. The latter may increasingly become an issue within the City as a result of Welfare Reform changes. Many households within social housing in receipt of housing benefit will need to downsize to avoid being subject to a short fall in rent, however due to a lack of appropriately sized housing to meet the needs of all those affected, increases in housing related debt is to be expected, with the threat of homelessness likely to have an adverse impact on mental health and wellbeing.

As demand for housing related support increases in the future it will become increasingly challenging to meet demand within diminishing resources.

Where there is a need we will provide specialist accommodation: a need has been identified for more treatment-based and specialist hostel type accommodation in the City to support between 20 and 30 individuals at any one time and move on accommodation for those who have previously been homeless. Some temporary emergency accommodation provision still encompasses shared facilities and needs to be assessed for future use, whether that be replacement and re-provision or being utilised by client groups for whom it may be more appropriate for example single young people affected by the single room rate for housing benefit.

Families in poverty are more likely to suffer poor health and other poorer outcomes as adults. Children and young people growing up in poverty, in poor quality housing and or overcrowded conditions are half as likely to achieve well in school as their counterparts. This means that they are less-equipped to get the type of jobs which will help them out of poverty in the future.

With high levels of unemployment in the City peoples housing options are limited making the case much greater for quality advice, early intervention and prevention services.

How will we overcome these challenges?

We will provide appropriate information and advice on the range of housing options and support available to enable more people to find housing that suits them and help them to adapt to changes in their personal circumstances before they reach crisis point. This will include working with partners to offer advice on managing finances and housing related debt.

We will work with partners to offer coordinated advice and support with regards to the impact of Welfare Reform, in particular for those households adversely affected. We will support tenants in understanding the changes, managing their money and minimising rent arrears. We will work to make the best use of stock locally and via the WMBUS partnership, supporting housing moves for people where appropriate, dealing with the under-occupation and overcrowding issues and taking a firm line on tenancy fraud.

We will encourage private landlords to make good quality properties available through 'Homes in the City' and bring private sector empty properties back into use making more homes available for households in need. This will include suitable housing stock for when there is a need to discharge our duty to homeless people via private rented accommodation. We are developing our policy on how we can best work with landlords to do this. Where we do discharge our duty to homeless people in the private rented sector it will only be to properties owned by accredited landlords.

We are moving towards an approach that will give clients more choice in the services they receive, in line with the Government's latest agendas. Cross tenure floating support will become a key delivery model for older people and others requiring support to live independently when possible. We will utilise the Single Referral Forums to ensure people are getting the most appropriate services for their needs including the move into supported accommodation.

We will work to streamline the process for delivering disabled facility grants. This will help to meet needs by making the majority of grants for adaptation works quicker and simpler to complete. This process along with an expanded and embedded Telecare and equipment service will allow people to remain in their own homes for longer and give less obtrusive options to the high cost care services.

We will bid/support bids for funding to develop supported housing that meets the needs of vulnerable residents, in particular where we are having to place individuals out of the City due to lack of local provision. This will be supported by local intelligence and understanding on the key issues for individual groups. We will work with Registered Providers and private developers to build specialist accommodation for particular groups based on the outcomes of needs analysis.

We will explore opportunities within the private sector to increase the range of housing developments for older people in particular for those who will look to the market to meet their housing and support needs.

As outlined in Priority 2 Improve quality of existing housing stock, we will provide housing assistance to vulnerable households in the private sector to ensure they are living in property of a satisfactory quality and minimise the longer term adverse impacts on health and wellbeing. Furthermore there are specific energy efficiency measures targeted at vulnerable household including the Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation and Carbon Savings Community Obligation.

We will continue to update our local intelligence of the housing needs of residents so that services can be shaped to meet local demand, including making best use of local lettings plans. This will be key as we monitor the impact of Welfare Reform on residents.

Social housing providers and their partners will help to tackle worklessness and develop the skills of tenants, with the Council having to a role to play in coordinating information available to residents. They are key employers within the City who are able to provide local jobs, especially as working age workless people are heavily represented as residents of social homes. A key initiative is Wolverhampton Homes' Learning, Employment and Achievement Programme (LEAP) which aims to enhance the employment prospects of tenants and their immediate family members by providing work experience and training opportunities. We also support the Business Action on Homelessness (BAOH) programme which supports people affected by homelessness in gaining and sustaining employment, and actively campaigns for the removal of barriers to work.

Priority 4: Good management of social housing

Social housing plays a vital role in the City's housing market, often housing those households most in need, with over a quarter of households renting from a social landlord (Census 2011). Twenty two per cent rent from the Council and six per cent rent from 'other social landlords' which includes registered providers.

What are the key challenges?

There continues to be a high demand for Council housing. As at 1st April 2013 there were 12,558 customers registered with Homes in the City, with 6,203 have a housing need. With just over 1900 properties becoming available to let in 2012/13 a significant proportion of those on the housing register will need to explore other housing options to meet their housing needs, whether that be privately renting, accessing other forms of affordable housing or owner occupation.

Wolverhampton has higher levels of over-crowding compared to the regional and national picture, particularly among Black and Minority Ethnic households. There is some degree of mismatch as there are significant numbers of people living in social homes that are under-occupying; many of these are older people whose families have grown up and who may want a smaller home.

With the introduction of the Social Sector Size Criteria as part of the Welfare Reform, it is estimated that around 2,780 working age tenants are under-occupying Council housing by 1 bedroom (with an expected average Housing Benefit loss of £10.86 per week) and around 770 working age tenants are under-occupying by two or more bedrooms (with an expected average Housing Benefit loss of £20.14 per week), which is likely to result in demand for smaller housing that could outstrip supply.

Welfare Reform and Universal Credit direct payment to tenants means Wolverhampton Homes and the Tenant Management Organisations need to collect a further £2.275 million in rent annually directly from tenants due to the Social Sector Size Criteria and a further £325,000 in rent annually direct from tenants due to the benefits cap. Furthermore once universal credit has been introduced for all working age tenants by 2017, the combined effect of Welfare Reform will require Wolverhampton Homes to physically collect an additional £30million.

The reduction in benefits increases the risk of tenants falling into arrears. Where this leads to eviction this will drive households into the private rented sector and because of the low incomes of such households this is likely to be at the cheaper, poorer quality end of the market.

How will we overcome these challenges?

Work will be done to release larger homes for overcrowded families for example, by encouraging people who are under-occupying to down-size through assistance with moving. This will also identify reasons for under occupation and assist in developing incentives and support that would encourage people to consider downsizing. Some households that are currently under-occupying may want to downsize because of the impact of Welfare Reform. We will support these households by offering early advice and where appropriate practical support in moving. We will also encourage the development of larger homes.

We will keep the Allocations Policy and related policies under review to assist in meeting our statutory obligations, making the best use of stock and assisting those tenants adversely affected by Welfare Reforms to minimise the risk of arrears and eviction. We will provide a housing options service that can provide advice and signposting on a range of housing options, which in turn will alleviate pressure on the demand for Council housing.

We will work with regional partners through the WMBUS partnership to identify innovative ways of making the best use of stock for example facilitating housing mobility, raising awareness on the impact of Welfare Reform, proactively facilitating mutual exchanges and bringing housing back into use that is currently being exploited through tenancy fraud.

Assisting people to move will be only one part of the approach to helping tenants in dealing with Welfare Reforms. Assistance is being offered to tenants with budgeting as well as work on financial inclusion. We will work with social housing providers and other partners to build capacity within local people through tenant involvement and empowerment and by providing support and assistance in accessing employment and training opportunities. By encouraging the use of local supply chains when developing and improving housing this will help to create local jobs. We will facilitate the sharing of good practice between partners.

There are many households on the housing register for social housing who could be assisted by providing alternative housing opportunities. We will offer housing advice to residents regardless of tenure and we will continue to work with private landlords to increase the options

open to those on the housing register by increasing the number of accredited landlords that advertise through Homes in the City, extending the private sector leasing scheme and exploring the feasibility of a social letting agency.

We will monitor housing needs data to identify the housing types needed in particular by those on the housing register and use this information to influence any new build of social housing.

We will work with all our housing management agents so that management agreements are up to date and fit for purpose with a focus on improving service delivery, achieving value for money and tenant satisfaction. We will support them in reviewing and refining their housing management practices in response to challenges posed by Welfare reform by providing a forum to share best practice.

As part of on-going continuous improvement we will work with our managing agents to reduce the time and cost of getting homes ready to re-let.

We will work in partnership with locally operating registered providers to encourage good management of properties and estates as well as work in partnership on the range of services and housing options they can provide.

We will ensure our managing agents are compliant with the Equality Act and we will monitor the Equalities impact of the work they do.

Priority 5: Improve standards in the private rented sector

The private rented sector (PRS) plays an important role in meeting high levels of housing need. This will increase as more homes are rented out or repossessed because of housing market conditions. The Census 2011 shows that the percentage of residents who privately rent has doubled since 2001 from 6.6 per cent to 13 per cent. As households find it difficult to access owner occupation due to the need for larger deposits PRS demand continues to grow and is already likely to exceed Census figures. Increasing the supply of good quality and well managed property within this sector will become increasingly important to meeting housing need.

What are the key challenges?

With much of the growth within the PRS having been driven by individual landlords with small portfolios the quality of housing and its management can be quite varied with some being below acceptable standards. As there is a large number of landlords, to ensure we have the widest impact both a preventative and a targeted approach is required.

The PRS plays an important role in housing the City's residents including vulnerable and homeless people. The City's Child Poverty Strategy identifies a high correlation between child poverty and concentrations of private rented property.

There is a need to respond to the findings of the Montague Review and explore institutional investment in PRS new build to increase supply and raise the quality and management standards of properties within the sector.

There are a number of Houses in Multiple Occupations within the City with concentrations in certain areas.

How we will overcome these

We will work with our partners using a complementary range of private housing interventions to address the quality and management of the PRS.

We will use revenue funds where available on proactive work such as increasing enforcement, accreditation and licensing programmes in the private rented sector. We will use capital investment where available through repayable grants and loans to enable owners where required to bring their homes up to the minimum statutory standard when no other option is available. We will have a targeted approach so that those properties in the worst condition and those that house vulnerable people are prioritised.

Landlords will be encouraged to work more closely with the Council through a Private Landlords Forum that will facilitate joint working and improve communication, through which we will develop a joint work plan to improve quality and management across the sector. This will also help to tackle Child Poverty.

We will roll out a scheme of landlord and property accreditation to raise standards. This will align with work we are undertaking around increasing housing options to those on the housing register and the feasibility work on developing a social lettings agency.

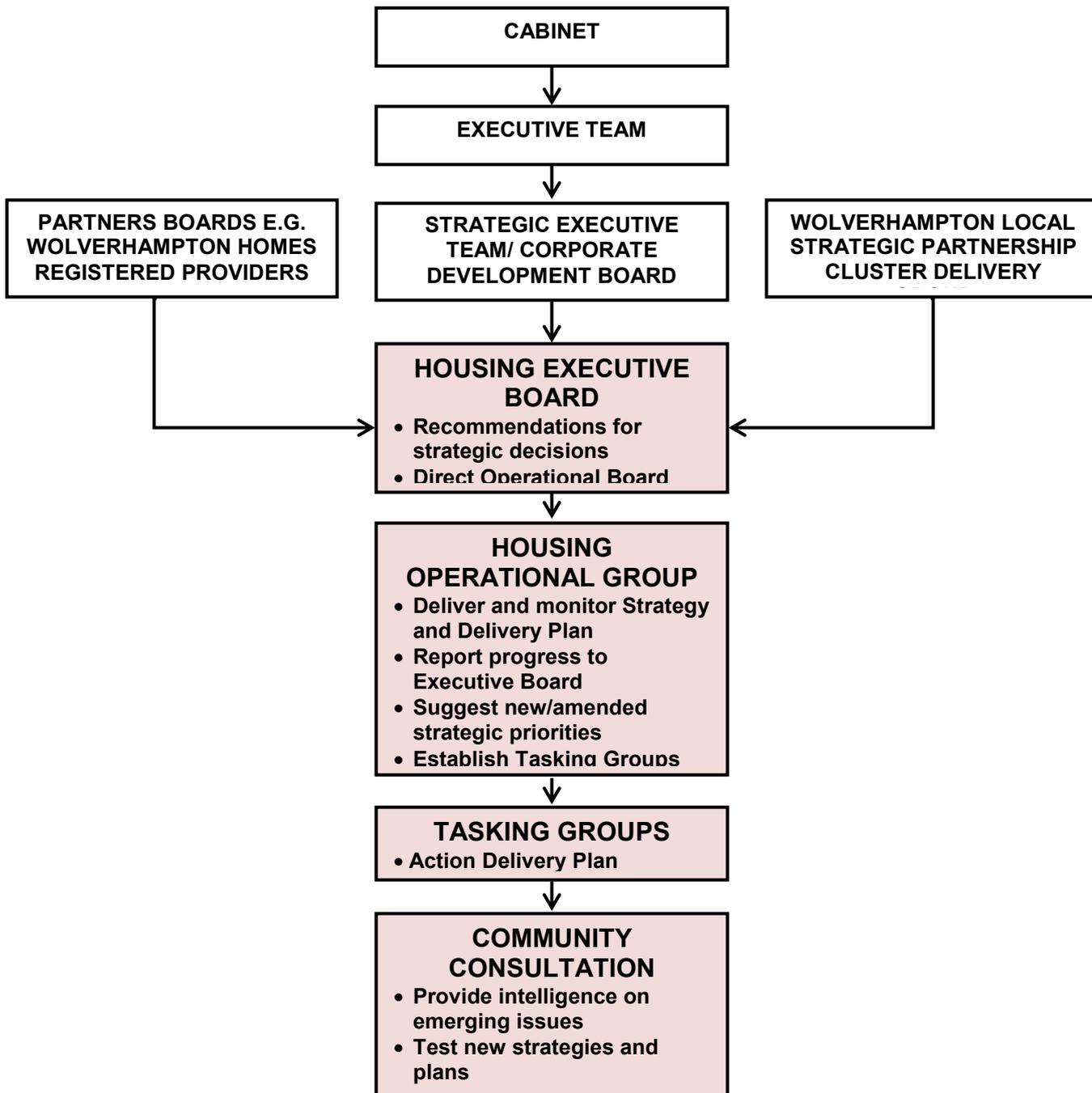
Where landlords are not willing to cooperate and conditions remain substandard we will use our full range of enforcement powers. If necessary we will explore the options of private sector licensing schemes and management orders in neighbourhoods with concentrated areas of neglect.

We will closely monitor the spread of HMOs to avoid high concentrations in any one particular area and will maintain our existing licensing regime to ensure compliance and protect the safety of tenants and the quality of neighbourhoods. We will also look at the feasibility of additional licensing of HMOs City-wide or in priority neighbourhoods where necessary.

5. HOW THE STRATEGY WILL BE DELIVERED AND MONITORED

A Delivery Plan has been developed which sets out all the key actions the Council and our partners will undertake to address the challenges identified throughout this strategy. This Delivery Plan will be closely monitored by the housing governance structure set out below by engaging partners and stakeholders to ensure we achieve our priorities for housing.

Governance



Day to day responsibilities for managing delivery

Day to day management of delivery and performance will be undertaken by the Council, which will provide regular reports to the Housing Operational Board. Tasking groups, including wider interests such as businesses, education and skills, will take responsibility for the delivery of key actions. These tasking groups may become active at different times over the lifetime of the Strategy and can be dissolved or new groups created in order to progress the Delivery Plan. The following tasking groups will be formed to begin taking work forward on the Delivery Plan:

- Involving Communities
- Creating Opportunities
- Private Rented Sector
- Green Deal
- Housing Development
- Supporting Residents

Residents can offer a great deal of expertise in their local area and on local housing need. This will be fully explored to ensure that communities have the opportunity to shape the housing offer so that housing and housing related support meets the needs of local people and local communities. We will endeavour to involve local people in consultation and planning on an on-going basis to ensure that needs and aspirations are understood and met.

Wolverhampton's Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNP's) have been involved in the development of this strategy and we will seek to build upon this relationship. LNP's will be involved in the development of strategies, policies, plans and programmes.

Social housing providers will be responsible for holding a continuing conversation with residents about aspects of delivery of their service. Where possible this will proactively involve the LNP structures as a means to reach a wider audience than the tenant base.

Partnership arrangements

The Housing Executive Board will review the way that the Council and partners work together with a view to establishing closer working partnerships. The aim will be to create the conditions in which partners will benefit by aligning their activities to the Housing Strategy priorities and actions.

In order to deliver the Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan, the Housing Operational Board will include a wider range of partners including our housing management agents, registered providers, voluntary sector, private developers and financial sector.

Supporting delivery of the City Strategy

Performance of the Housing Strategy on indicators that support the City Strategy will be reported by the Executive Board to the relevant Delivery Cluster Meeting.

Housing issues form an important part of the Re-Invigorating the City Delivery Cluster and as a result there will be a housing sub group for this cluster. This sub group will be made up of those who have responsibility for delivering housing related actions in the City Strategy, which will include members of the Strategic Housing Operational Board.

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Appendix 2: Housing Strategy Delivery Plan

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
PRIORITY 1: DELIVER HIGH QUALITY NEW HOUSING STOCK								
Develop new council housing	Use of Council resources	Define the Housing Investment Fund	HS&D	WH, RPs, HCA	2013/15	HRA, Council land, new homes bonus	Funding identified for investment in new homes	Re-invigorating the City
		Identification and development of Council owned sites for new housing development	HS&D	WH, RPs and private developers as partners	2013/17	HRA and private.	No. Affordable Houses built.	
	Use of public private partnership	Develop a framework for procuring institutional investment	HS&D	Finance, Procurement, Legal, RPs, Private developers	2013/15	Private	Private funders procured and ready to invest in the City's housing	
	Pursue investment partner status with the HCA	Submit bids to appropriate HCA funding programmes including CaSSH & Empty Homes	HS&D	HCA, RPs	2013/14	HRA/AHP	Achieve Investment Partner status	
	Purchase of open market housing for affordable housing	Identify opportunities	HS&D		Annual	HRA	Conversions to affordable housing	
		Tap Works	HS&D					
		RTB buy back – evaluate pilot	HS&D	WH	Sept 13	HRA £1m WH efficiencies	No. houses purchased & brought into Council ownership	
Develop Affordable Homes	Maximise opportunities to work with RPs	Deliver affordable housing	RPs	HS&D	Annual	Council Land RP funds HCA grant	No. affordable houses built by RPs	Re-invigorating the City
	Secure Affordable Homes via Section 106	Ensure 25% of units on sites are affordable housing	HS&D Planning	Private developers RPs	Annual	Internal resources	No. affordable houses built through S106	
Stimulate/ Support housing growth	Flexible approach to viability and planning applications	Unblock stalled housing sites	Planning	HS&D Private developers	Annual	Internal resources	No. units delivered on sites that were stalled	Re-invigorating the City
		Support bids to						

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
		Government funds e.g. Get Britain Building and First Buy						
	Housing to support the economic growth of the City - regeneration sites/zones	Encourage developments in AAP priority areas	Planning	HS&D Private developers	Annual	Council land	No. units of all tenures built	
	Neighbourhood planning	Support neighbourhood planning activities in Heathfield & Tettenhall	Planning	HS&D WH	Annual		Neighbourhood plans complete	
	Institutional investment	Explore opportunities for institutional investment in the PRS	HS&D		2013/14	Internal resources	Options for institutional investment identified	
Regeneration activity	All Saints	All Saints Regeneration Steering Group to identify further opportunities for investment	All Saints Regeneration steering Group	HS&D Keepmoat Tesco	2013/14	Internal resources	Options for investment identified	Re-invigorating the City
	Blakenhall Gardens redevelopment	New residential offer	HS&D	Keep Moat	June 2013		Residential development completed	
		New retail offer	HS&D	Keep Moat	June 2013		Retail offer completed	
	Heathtown	Implement outcomes of masterplanning and options appraisal	HS&D	TBC	2013-2021	HCP, HRA, Council land	No. units of all tenures built	
	Bilston Urban Village	Implement housing elements of the Bilston Urban Village masterplan	HS&D	Commercial Development HCA	2016/17	HCA Council Land, HRA		
Develop sustainable new housing	To ensure all new homes are built to a minimum standard	Ensure all affordable housing meets Code for Sustainable Homes 3 and encourage level 4	HS&D	Planning RPs Private developers	Annual	Internal resources	% of new housing meets the standard	Re-invigorating the City

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
		Life time homes & HCA Design & Quality standards	HS&D	Planning RPs Private developers	Annual	Internal resources	% of new housing meets the standard	
		Define a Wolverhampton standard for new homes	HS&D	Planning	2013/14	Internal resources	Standard for housing agreed by Housing Executive Board	
Meet the housing needs of residents	Develop housing needs intelligence	Explore the potential to conduct a housing needs assessment/ strategic housing assessment	HS&D	HEB	2013/14	Internal resources	Briefing paper produced	Re-invigorating the City
		Produce housing market briefings	HS&D		6 monthly	Internal resources	Housing market briefings circulated to partnership	
		Identify the housing needs and demands of various groups: - newly emerging households - retention of graduates - Young people - Older people - Mental health - Physical disabilities - Sensory disabilities - Ex-service personnel	HS&D	Communities Adults & Commissioning	Annual	Internal resources	Briefing paper produced	
		Identify potential (bring forward) additional permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers	Planning Policy	HS&D	2018	Internal resources	x pitches identified/delivered	
Housing products	Diversify number of housing products available to increase options for residents to	Encourage RPs and developers to utilise different models e.g. shared ownership	HS&D	RPs Private developers	Annual	Internal resources HCA	X number of properties low cost home ownership	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
	enter the housing market	and shared equity						
Local people and businesses benefit economically from house building	Maximise the use of local businesses as part of the procurement process	Advertise all Council led contracts on 'Find it in Wolverhampton' and encourage its use by developers	Economic Partnership s & Investment (EPI)	Developers RPs WH	Annual	Internal resources	% Council led contracts on 'Find it in Wolverhampton'	Encouraging Enterprise and Business
	Utilise house building activity to create employment, apprenticeships and training opportunities	Encourage developers to use local suppliers and employees	EPI and Schools Skills & Learning team	Developers RPs WH	Annual	Internal resources S106 HRA	x number of jobs/apprenticeships &/or training opportunities created	
PRIORITY 2: IMPROVE QUALITY OF EXISTING HOUSING								
Increasing the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes standard	Complete Decent Homes Programme on Council owned housing	Procure contractors	HS&D	WH	May 2013	HRA	Contractors in place	Re-invigorating the City
		Complete Decent Homes Programme	WH	HS&D	March 2015	Decent Homes Backlog Funding via HCA	No. properties having received decent homes works	
	PODs	Identify solution and complete works	HS&D	WH	2017	HRA	No. improved homes	
	Improve decency in the private sector	Housing Assistance Programmes	PSH		Annual	Internal resources Housing Capital Programme Green Deal and ECO	No. properties made decent through: – advice and assistance – repayable small works grants – renewal programmes – energy efficiency measures	
		Housing inspection and enforcement programmes	PSH		Annual	Internal resources	No of properties inspected No of properties made decent through advice and assistance No of properties made decent following formal action	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
Increasing the number of homes meeting the minimum Statutory Standard for Housing	Private sector housing improvement	Housing Assistance Programmes	PSH		Annual	Internal resources Housing Capital Programme Green Deal and ECO	No. properties improved to the minimum statutory standard for housing	Re-invigorating the City
		Housing inspection and enforcement programmes	PSH	West Mids Fire Service	Annual	Internal resources	No. properties improved to the minimum statutory standard for housing	
		HMO licensing and inspection programme	PSH		Annual	Internal resources	No. of properties improved to comply with licensing conditions	
	Houses in multiple occupation	HMOs free from Category 1/2 hazards	PSH	West Mids Fire Service	Annual	Internal resources	No of inspections undertaken and works complied with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> informal action formal action 	
Assist owner occupiers who are vulnerable or financially disadvantaged to improve their living conditions	Private Sector Housing Strategy	Adoption of the PS strategy at Cabinet	PSH		2013 – for a five year strategy outlook	Internal resources	To provide a framework for developing the private sector to ensure that owner occupied property meets decent homes standards, all stock is fuel efficient and sustainable, and that the private rented sector is fit for purpose and a sector of choice	Re-invigorating the City
		Monitor delivery of the strategy	PSH		On-going	Internal Resources	Monitoring in line with new Housing Strategy (by Housing Operational Group)	
	Assist vulnerable	Offer advice and	PSH	WH	Annual	(£1m)	No of vulnerable	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
	occupants in the private sector to consider their housing options and offer support in making life changing decisions	assistance		Age UK WCC Older Persons Commissioning		Housing Capital Programme Green Deal and ECO	occupants offered advice and assistance	
		Handypersons services	PSH	WH Age UK WCC Older Persons Commissioning	Annual		No of vulnerable occupants assisted with Handypersons services	
		Meet needs through re-housing or receiving floating support	PSH	WH Age UK WCC Older Persons Commissioning	Annual		No of persons assisted to be re-housed (or receiving floating support)	
		Heating and insulation measures	PSH	WH Age UK WCC Older Persons Commissioning	Annual		No of vulnerable occupants receiving heating and insulation measures	
		Financial assistance for repairs	PSH	WH Age UK WCC Older Persons Commissioning	Annual		No of vulnerable occupants given financial assistance for repairs	
	Facilitate ongoing investment in the housing stock through enabling owners to access funding opportunities		PSH	WH as a potential vehicle for improvements	Annual		No of repayable grants No of heating and insulation measures No of properties assisted through external partner schemes No of properties assisted through renewal programmes	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
							No of empty home loans delivered (?)	
Improve the Energy Efficiency of homes and reduce fuel poverty	Provide targeted assistance to households suffering from, or at risk of fuel poverty and address energy efficiency performance	Implement Green Deal Private Housing	PSH HS&D	To be identified	Annual	Green Deal ECO Housing Capital Programme	No of properties: receiving advice and guidance having Green Deal assessment receiving energy saving measures having Green Deal implemented taken out of fuel poverty	Re-invigorating the City
		Implement Green Deal Social housing	WH	Wates Bullocks	Annual	HCP Green Deal HRA CSCO CERO	No of properties receiving energy saving measures No of properties taken out of fuel poverty	
		Affordable Warmth Programme	PSH	DGS (interim)	Annual	HCP HHCRO	No of enquiries received No of enquiries processed for measures	
		Warm Homes Healthy people funds	PSH	BCHA Age UK CAB WH The Hub	2013	Warm Homes Healthy people funds	No of surveys requested/referrals made No of properties surveyed No of measures provided	
		Collective fuel switching programme	Delivery				tba	
Increase the number of empty homes brought back into use	Bring long term private empty properties back into use	Direct contact and persuasion with owners	PSH		Annual	Internal resources	No. of empty properties brought back into use Long term empty properties rate	Re-invigorating the City
		Legal actions including CPOs, Enforced sale, EDMOs						

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
		Raise awareness across directorates via Empty Property Working Group	PSH		Quarterly	Internal resources	Empty Properties Working Group Meetings held/ Stakeholders in attendance	
		Empty property loans	PSH	WH as a potential vehicle for improvements	Annual	HCA and Housing Capital programme	No of enquiries received No of properties inspected No of loans issued	
		Private sector leasing	WH PSH		Annual	Private finance investment	No of enquiries received No of properties accepted onto scheme	
		Programme to bring publically owned/managed housing back into use	HS&D		Annual	HRA	No of properties brought back into use	
		Work with Wolverhampton Homes to bring empty homes back into use and assist in developing opportunities	WH	HS&D	Annual	HRA	No of properties brought back into use	
		Work with other partners to secure funding to bring empty homes back into use (e.g. HCA empty properties funds)	HS&D	Heantun	Annual	HCA/RP own resources	Funding secured	
		Use of New Homes Bonus				New Homes Bonus		
Improve the quality of neighbourhoods	Crime and anti-social behaviour	Awareness about leaving property empty	PSH	New ASB team		Internal resources	Included in a marketing strategy	Re-invigorating the City Empowering

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes	
		Promotion of the success of the Selective Licensing scheme in All Saints	PSH			Internal resources	Included in a marketing strategy	People and Communities	
	Community Involvement	Utilise Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to understand local needs	HS&D	LNPs	2013/14	Internal resources	Briefing note produced		
	Park Village	Develop the 5 year medium term plan, looking at housing market interventions and commissioning solutions in line with resident requirements	PSH			Internal resources	5 year plan produced		
	Accredited landlords		Increase the number of accredited landlords	PSH		Annual	Internal resources		No of newly accredited landlords
			Offer CPD sessions for accredited landlords	PSH		Annual	Homestamp Partnership		No. Landlords attending CPD sessions
			Agree a "minimum property standard" for W-ton PRS	PSH		Annual	Internal resources		Improved quality of PRS
			Agree a "minimum management standard" for W-ton PRS	PSH		Annual	Internal resources		Improved quality of PRS
			Develop a "recognised landlord list"	PSH		Annual	Internal resources		Improved quality of PRS
			Develop a "recognised letting agent" list	PSH		Annual	Internal resources		Improved quality of PRS
			Continue to promote MLAS and Homestamp partnerships	PSH	MLAS Homestamp	Annual	Homestamp Partnership		Increased take up of MLAS

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
Promote employment	Offer employment and training opportunities via major programmes	Decent Homes	WH	HS&D Economic Development	Annual	Decent Homes	x number of jobs/apprenticeships &/or training opportunities created	Encouraging Enterprise and Business
		Energy Efficiency/ Fuel Poverty	PSH	Economic Development	Annual	Green Deal and ECO	x number of jobs/apprenticeships &/or training opportunities created	
		LEAP	WH		Annual	HRA (Wolverhampton Homes reserves?)	x number of jobs/apprenticeships &/or training opportunities created	
PRIORITY 3: PROVIDE SUPPORT AND HOUSING OPTIONS TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE								
Ensure residents can access a range of housing options	Homes in the City	Complete website enhancements	HS&D				Improved website	Empowering People and Communities
	Continue/develop rent deposit scheme		Housing Options	PSH Private Landlords	Annual	Transitional funding and homeless prevention fund	No. of households assisted to access private renting	
	Wolverhampton Homes' to promote and utilise the private rented housing sector	Private Sector Leasing Scheme	WH/PSH		Annual	Self funding via private sector income	No of enquiries received No of tenancies sourced No of properties on PSL scheme	
		Feasibility of development of Social Lettings Agency	WH/PSH		2013/14	WH trading operations	Decision made	
Provide coordinated advice to residents on housing options and support	Welfare reform	Offer support and advice to all households adversely affected by Welfare Reform	Housing Options	WH, TMOs, RPs, CAB	Annual	Internal resources	No. households assisted	Empowering People and Communities
		Monitor impact of Welfare Reforms to	WH	HS&D, Housing	2013/14	Internal resources	Improved support service	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes	
		develop support and advice		Options					
		Share best practice with RPs through WHOC	Communities – Housing Options	WH RPs	2013/14	Internal resources	Improved support service		
Support people to remain in their own homes	Disabled facilities grants	Streamline the process for delivering disabled facility grants	Communities - Adults		2013/14	Housing Capital Programme	No. DFGs completed	Empowering People and Communities	
	Floating support		Communities – Housing Options	RSL's Voluntary sector providers	Annual		Number of people supported annually		
	Telecare	Carelink and Telecare being brought together	Communiities - Telecare			2013/14			Streamlined process and services merged Increased take up of Telecare and Carelink demonstrated by number of installations.
		Develop a marketing a communications strategy to target professionals and community groups	Communities - Telecare			2013/14			Number of installations. Telecare embedded into Social Care mainstream process through training of all Social Care (adults) staff
Support older people to access housing options and live independently	Provision of Specialist Affordable Housing With Care And Support	Dementia Care	HS&D	Communities Commissioning Team		HCA/DoH fund		Empowering People and Communities	
	Housing needs analysis of older people	Undertake demand analysis for very sheltered housing	Communities - Commissioning Team	HS&D	Q2 2013/14	Internal resources	Establish the requirement for VSH and if so potential sites available		
	Increase the use of		Communiti		2013/14		Number of		

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
	assistive technology in the home		es Commissioning and Telecare Teams				installations	
	Support development of bungalows where appropriate		HS&D					
		Develop engagement between Housing Services and Communities	HS&D	Communities Adults & Commissioning HEB	2013/14	Internal resources	Established processes for identifying housing needs and development	
Work to prevent Homelessness and support people into settled accommodation when it occurs	Shared tenancies	Investigate legal and policy implications	WH		2013/14			Empowering People and Communities
	Increasing the role of the private sector		Housing Options	PSH	2013/14		Number of good quality landlords effectively engaged in providing suitable accommodation	
	Develop smaller units Move on accommodation		HS&D A&C					
Financial inclusion	Better Off in Wolverhampton (WH Delivery Plan)	Implement	CAB	WH				Encouraging Enterprise and Business
Supporting vulnerable clients in the PRS	Offering advice and assistance to private sector tenants		PSH	CAB Housing Options	Annual			Re-invigorating the City Empowering People and Communities
	Offering advice and assistance in relation to landlord harassment and retaliatory evictions		PSH		Annual			
	Support for landlord accreditation and improvement in management standards		PSH		Annual			
PRIORITY 4: GOOD MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL HOUSING								
Make best use of existing stock	Addressing under-occupation and overcrowding	Housing options – utilise the PRS	WH	Housing Options	Annual	WMBUS	No. of households from housing register new PRS tenancies	Re-invigorating the City
		Assisting to downsize	WH	HS&D	Annual	WMBUS	No. households supported to	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
							downsize	
		West Midlands Best Use of stock (WMBUS)	HS&D WH		2013/14	Internal resources Grant funding where available		
		Remodelling of property – investigate feasibility of increasing/decreasing bedrooms in hard to let stock	Property Services	WH	Ongoing	HRA	Complete feasibility study	
	Allocations Policy	Review to ensure it is fit for purpose	HS&D	WH, TMO	Ongoing	Internal resources	Fit for purpose Allocations Policy	
	Choice Based Lettings	Review to ensure it is fit for purpose	HS&D	WH	Ongoing	Internal resources		
	Social lettings agency	Investigate the feasibility	WH					
Provide excellent housing management services for WCC (<i>social housing</i>) tenants	Deliver new Management Agreement with WH	Establish MA working group	HS&D	WH, Legal Finance	Jan 13	Internal resources	New management agreement in place	Re-invigorating the City
		Tender for specialist support to develop MA	HS&D	WH, Legal Finance, Procurement	Feb 13			
		Report to full Council	HS&D	WH, Legal Finance, Procurement	March 13	Internal resources		
		Sign new MA	HS&D	WH, Legal Finance, Procurement	April 13	Internal resources		
	Refresh Management Agreements with TMOs where appropriate	Preliminary work to establish which need/will be updated	HS&D	TMOs	2013/14	Internal resources	New management agreements in place	
	5 yearly continuation survey of tenants under TMO management	Bushbury Hill EMB	Bushbury Hill EMB	HS&D	2013	HRA	Completed survey and action the majority vote	
		Dovecotes TMO	Dovecotes TMO	HS&D	Aug 2015	HRA		
		NPV TMC	NPV TMC	HS&D	Feb 2015	HRA		
		Springfield Horseshoe HMC	SP HMC	HS&D	April 2015	HRA		

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
	Asset Management Strategy	Joint Asset Management Plan finalised	WH	HS&D	April 13		Performance management indicators	
		Monitoring of RTB	HS&D WH		Annual	Internal resources	No. properties sold	
	Managing Agent meeting	Resume quarterly meetings	HS&D	WH, TMOs	2013/14	Internal resources	Quartely meetings	
	Monitor service delivery of housing managing agents in accordance with delivery plans and Management Agreements	Performance monitoring of KPIs	HS&D WH	WH, TMOs	Quarterly reports to Performance Panel		Quarterly performance reports to Performance Panel	
		Agree Annual Delivery Plans	HS&D	WH	Annual	Internal resources	Approved delivered plan at Cabinet	
	Monitor implementation of the Tenancy Strategy	Monitor the number and types of fixed term tenancies	HS&D	RPs, WH, Black Country LAs	6 monthly		Fixed term tenancies are being used in accordance with the strategy	
		Monitor affordable rent levels to ensure affordable						
		Monitor equalities information to ensure no adverse impacts arise						
	Monitoring of RTB			HS&D	Finance	Internal	Existing Resources	
PRIORITY 5: IMPROVE STANDARDS IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR								
Improve the management of private rented housing	Work with the landlord's forum and steering group	Develop a joint work plan to promote and enhance PRS	PSH	Landlord Forum & Steering Group	2013/14	Internal resources	SMART workplan in place and delivery monitored	Re-invigorating the City Encouraging Enterprise and Business
	Develop landlord and property accreditation	Expand membership of landlord accreditation	PSH	MLAS	Annual	Internal resources	No. accredited landlords No. properties with accredited landlords No. accredited properties	
	Address substandard housing where necessary via legislative powers		PSH			Internal resources	No of instances where advice and assistance offered	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
							and accepted by landlord No of instances where letters sent and works completed No of instances where formal notices have been required No of prosecution actions started and then resolved No of prosecution actions taken	
	Licensing scheme if deemed necessary	Monitor priority neighbourhoods	PSH		Annual	Internal resources plus licence fees if schemes approved for operation		
	Restricting the numbers of new Houses in Multiple Occupation through planning controls	On-going consideration	PSH		Annual	Internal resources		
	Monitor the potential growth and impact of HMO's	On-going consideration	PSH	HS&D	Annual			
	Private Rented Sector housing standards response service	On-going	PSH			Internal resources	No. requests for service responded by letter No requests for service resulting in visit No of requests for service resulting in formal action	
	Maintaining existing licensing regime of HMOs		PSH	West Mids Fire Service		Internal resources plus any	No of inspections No of actions taken No of prosecutions	

Aim	Activity	Action	Lead	Delivery Partners	Timescale	Resources	Outputs/ Measure	City Strategy Outcomes
						additional Licence fees		
ENSURING DELIVERY								
Ensure the City has a fit for purpose Housing Strategy which shapes delivery of housing options and services	Implement governance arrangements	Housing Executive Board	HS&D		Quarterly	Internal resources	Housing Strategy Delivery Plan delivered	Re-invigorating the City Empowering People and Communities Encouraging Enterprise and Business
		Housing Operational Group	HS&D		Quarterly	Internal resources		
		Task and Finish Groups	HS&D		Ongoing	Internal resources		
		Annual review of partnership working (LIP)	Housing Executive Board	HS&D	Annual	Internal resources		
	Monitor delivery of the Housing Strategy	Quarterly monitoring of progress	HS&D		Quarterly	Internal resources		
		Reports to Housing Operational Group	HS&D	HOG	Quarterly	Internal resources		
		Monthly performance progress reports to Cabinet Member	HS&D		Monthly	Internal resources		
	Refresh Housing Strategy Delivery Plan	Update Housing Strategy Delivery Plan for new, amended and completed actions	HS&D		Annual	Internal resources		
		Update annual targets within the Housing Strategy	HS&D		Annual	Internal resources		
		Review of LIP investment priorities (LIP)	HEB	HS&D	Annual	Internal resources		

HS&D – Housing Strategy and Development
 PSH – Private Sector Housing
 WH – Wolverhampton Homes
 RPs – Registered Providers
 TMO – Tenant Management Organisation
 HEB – Housing Executive Board

Appendix 3 – Housing Strategy 2013-2018 Equality Analysis

Recording Equality Analysis of Policies, Services and Functions

1. Directorate and Service Group	Regeneration, Education and Enterprise
2. Name of policy, project service/function, contract or strategy being analysed	Housing Strategy 2013-2018
3. Name(s) and contact details of officer(s) completing the assessment	Rowan Jones Mila Simpson mila.simpson@wolverhampton.gov.uk
4. Date	20 May 2013
5. People involved in the analysis	Rowan Jones, Mila Simpson and Kenny Aitchison
6. Brief description of policy being analysed	A new Housing Strategy for Wolverhampton has been developed which sets out Wolverhampton's housing priorities that will be a focus for delivery during the period 2013 to 2018. The Housing Strategy has been developed based on housing market intelligence, an assessment of housing need, national/regional policy and guidance as well as feedback from stakeholders. The Housing Strategy is cross tenure and will sit below the City Strategy. It will bring together the work of a range of partners to achieve the City's aims for housing.
7. Is this a new policy or a review of an existing one?	Work started to refresh the Housing Strategy 2009-2026 in 2010. This involved extensive consultation with stakeholders and residents. Following a restructure and refocus of Housing Services partly in response to Government introducing some changes that alter the legislative, funding and policy landscape for housing, this work was delayed but has now being picked up to renew the strategy and bring it up to date.
8. Data & Engagement – what information did you gather and use?	<p>Existing data</p> <p>In order to determine the potential impact of this policy on specific groups, the following sources of data and information were considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ C3 Housing Market and Needs Assessment ○ Wolverhampton Housing Needs Study 2007 ○ Homelessness Strategy ○ Supporting People Strategy ○ Black Country Telford Housing Market Renewal Area – phase one: A final report to Wolverhampton City Council on behalf of the HMRS Partnership ○ Black Country and Telford & Wrekin: Housing Market Renewal Prospectus, Evolve Partnership ○ Internet based research into the housing needs of protected characteristic group, particularly those who's needs were less well understood at a local level <p>Additional information</p> <p>Having looked at existing data, it was felt that it was also important to consider the potential impact on housing partners and service users, so the following additional information was gathered by gaining the views of colleagues working in particular housing related fields across Wolverhampton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wolverhampton Housing Executive Board - LSP staff - Wolverhampton Homes - Preferred partner registered providers - Housing Related Support Team (formerly Supporting People)

- Housing Options Team
- Private Sector Housing Team
- Housing Strategy Development Team
- Older People Service

Use of monitoring data, relevant to equalities

Housing market data is collected for both private and social housing across the city on a bi-annual basis. This data is summarised in a housing market briefing which also considers key background data, including worklessness and employment, basic health trends, profile of people accessing housing advice and trends in people using the Choice Based Lettings scheme.

Wolverhampton Homes collect a significant amount of equalities information from customers and this is used by Wolverhampton Homes in identifying equalities issues and future service planning. Census 2011 data has also been analysed to provide contextual data around the demographic makeup of the City's residents.

Consultation

The the following consultation was carried out on the first draft of the Housing Strategy:

Partners had several months to comment, and a special mini-conference was held. The feedback from that event and from other conversations with partners has been incorporated within the strategy and delivery plan.

Public consultation included a wide range of groups being contacted and asked to be involved in the consultation process. The following took part:

- Local Neighbourhood Partnership members from four LNP areas.
- Wolverhampton University Students Union Executive Committee
- Wolverhampton College Students Union Executive Committee
- Over 50's Forum
- Very Sheltered Housing tenants
- Wolverhampton Homes tenants
- Supporting People experts by experience panel
- Neighbourhood Managers from all LNP areas

The current iteration of the Housing Strategy is largely based on the version that has been consulted on. As advised by the Housing Executive Board, a smaller scale consultation process has been undertaken to account for changes made and any new areas. On this basis comments have been sought from:

- Housing Services
- Housing Options
- Commissioning
- Planning
- Economic Development
- Wolverhampton Homes
- Tenant Management Organisations
- Local registered providers
- Wolverhampton & Walsall Fire Safety Centre
- National Landlords Association
- Wolverhampton Federation of Tenants Association
- The Haven
- Refugee and Migrant Centre
- All Cultures One Voice
- Private developers

	<p>For both rounds of consultation other groups were asked to be involved in consultation but were not able to participate. Reports detailing how the feedback was handled were produced for consultation purposes and to report back to the board.</p>
<p>9. Findings – Did you discover any adverse or positive impact on any of the following 9 equality strands?</p>	<p>NB: Remember that not all policies will be relevant to all of the protected groups.</p>
<p>Age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an expected 27 per cent expected increase of older people by 2030 and a 76 per cent increase in those aged 85 plus, yet diminishing resources. The strategy supports older households to remain independent through the provision of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a range of housing options, – advice and support, – adaptations, assistive technology and equipment, – new homes built to lifetime home standards • There is a risk of treating “Older People” as one distinct group and failing to adequately recognise the many different needs, aspirations and circumstances of the individuals that make up this group. Older people have therefore been considered in general housing needs as well as vulnerable people priorities and actions. • Older people who are owner occupiers are often equity rich and cash poor, and can therefore have difficulty with repairs and ensuring their homes are energy efficient, with consequent impacts on health and wellbeing. The strategy supports the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) which tasks energy providers with providing measures to improve the ability of low income and vulnerable households to affordably heat their homes, as will be set out more specifically in the Affordable Warmth Strategy which is in development. • For older people across all tenures who are willing to move, potentially freeing up larger properties the strategy supports the development of two bedroom properties including bungalows. The strategy also supports the provision of assistance to those willing to downsize within the social housing sector. It is lack of support which is often cited as a key barrier to moving. This can alleviate other pressures as a smaller home is easier to keep warm and cheaper and more manageable to run. The strategy also supports exploring opportunities within the private sector to increase the range of housing developments for older people for those who will look to the market to meet their housing and support needs. • In turn supporting making best use of stock to free up under-occupied homes for overcrowded families helps alleviate the detrimental impacts on health and educational achievement on young people associated with overcrowding. • Homelessness has a particular detrimental impact on children in terms of stability of school and impacts on health. The Housing Strategy supports the Homelessness Strategy, which identifies new migrant homelessness as a key issue and has set the following priority actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Need better understanding and knowledge of the housing needs of new migrants.

- Need more information for new migrants on housing pathways.
- Need a developed protocol for working with migrants who may have limited housing pathways.
- Child Poverty is most often caused when parents don't have access to employment or training. The strategy supports linking housing activity such as new build and improvement programmes to training and employment opportunities for local people. This will have positive impacts for people of working age and their families that benefit from this, due to high unemployment levels in the City – as at Apr 2013 7.8% of working age people were claiming Job Seekers Allowance compared to 3.7% for England. This rises to 14.8% for youth employment (18-24 year olds, Feb 2013). The strategy also supports the work of our partners such as Wolverhampton Homes and their LEAP programme as well as the work undertaken by registered providers to promote employability.
- Actions to encourage young people to live in Wolverhampton were well supported in the consultation. It was identified that there is further work required around identifying the range of needs to be met and understanding the accommodation preferences of younger professional people. This has been built into the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan.
- Research into the mortgage market showed difficulties for first time buyers in finding a suitable amount of money for a deposit. The strategy and delivery plan supports the use of a diverse range of housing products such as shared equity and shared ownership, which will assist some younger people in accessing home ownership.
- The Housing Strategy Delivery Plan commits to developing the evidence base on the housing needs of young people, older people, emerging households and the retention of graduates. This will help influence future policy and practice on the delivery of housing and housing services within the City.

Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% of the City’s residents have a long term health problem or disability, slightly higher than that of England at 17% (Census 2011) and 23% of Council tenants have a disability. The strategy supports households with a disabled member to remain independent through the provision of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a range of housing options, – advice and support, – adaptations, assistive technology and equipment, – quality design of new homes • Improved access to housing advice will help to empower disabled people to access housing related support and meet their housing needs. • Consultation on the planning and development of housing should address unforeseen issues relating to the design and impact on disabled people. • Ensuring that the staff providing information and housing advice are fully trained in equalities issues and are able to provide information or signpost appropriately will make advice services more accessible and appropriate. • The provision of housing to meet needs and the use of building regulations to ensure that new housing is suitable, such as Building for Life, should increase the opportunities for people with a disability to find a home that is suitable for their needs. • Work to streamline the process for delivering disabled facility grants will help to meet needs by making the majority of grants for adaptation works quicker and simpler to complete. • The Housing Strategy Delivery Plan commits to developing the evidence base on the housing needs of those residents with mental health needs, physical disabilities and sensory disabilities. This will help influence future policy and practice on the delivery of housing and housing services within the City.
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58% of applications for housing via Homes in the City are headed by female households and 59% of Council tenancies are held by women. There is a higher proportion of households headed by women that are lone parents. The strategy supports an increase in affordable housing that will help to meet demand. • Women are more likely than men to require housing assistance to escape domestic violence. Colleagues from the Haven identified the need for an increase in social housing to support this. The strategy sets out the intentions for the Council to build new Council housing as well as working with registered providers to maximise affordable housing overall. • Consultation with refugee and migrant frontline workers identified an issue of single males at higher risk of becoming homeless having received their status to remain.

Gender Reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People within this characteristic group may benefit from improved access to housing advice, which is supported in the strategy, particularly if they are experiencing specific problems such as discrimination in accessing housing or being targeted for anti-social behaviour or hate crime. The strategy commits the partnership to engage with Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to identify ways that housing activity can address local concerns about crime and antisocial behaviour. • The Equalities Act 2010 sets out that a person with this protected characteristic need not be under medical supervision in order to qualify for protection under equalities law. Protection can also apply to a person who is perceived to have undergone gender re-assignment. • The strategy commits to ensuring our managing agents are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and we will monitor the Equalities impact of the work they do for example by ensuring that the staff providing information and housing advice are fully trained in equalities issues and are able to provide information or signpost appropriately. • Evidence from research suggests that very few people will volunteer information about this aspect of their lives and therefore monitoring will be difficult and may lead to significant under-representation of this group. • Based on Wolverhampton Homes Equalities data available there is 1 transgender Council tenant living in a Wolverhampton Homes managed property. Due to the lack of data available, it is difficult to assess the potential for adverse impacts to arise for this group. However, on consideration of the national level data that is available, it does not appear that this strategy holds any potentially adverse impacts for this group.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to housing advice may benefit this group as people have the opportunity to be better aware of their rights as individuals and a couple on housing issues such as tenancy, domestic violence and intestacy laws. • Ensure that the staff providing information and housing advice are fully trained in equalities issues and are able to provide information or signpost appropriately.
Pregnancy & Maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not considered that these protected characteristics will be particularly affected by the outcomes of this strategy. This decision has been reached on the basis that there is an emphasis on ensuring access to all in reaching services such as housing advice and the allocations policy for access to social housing, which may have implications for this group, is set out in a separate document to this housing strategy.

Race

- There is a larger propensity within some BME communities to have larger household sizes and BME households are more likely to be overcrowded. The BME Housing Strategy Research 2007 identified Bangladeshi and Black African households in particular (this will be reviewed when Census 2011 data is available). The strategy has set new build targets which encourages the provision of 4 bed plus houses in the private and social sector, the location of which will be influenced by local intelligence and demand information. The strategy also supports making best use of stock which will help to release larger homes for overcrowded households.
- There are a relatively high proportion of Black residents accessing Homeless Services; 14% of all those making homeless applications were Black Caribbean, Black African or Black Other (2011/12) compared to 7% of the population (Census 2011). The Housing Strategy supports the Homelessness Strategy in its prevention measures.
- There are a higher proportion of unemployed people amongst those from the mixed/multiple ethnic group (18%) and Black/African/Caribbean/Black British (12%) compared to the City (7%) (Economic Activity aged 16 plus, Census 2011). The Housing Strategy supports the maximisation of local economic benefit created by housing investment for example through the creation of local jobs, training and use of local supply chains.
- Refugees and new migrants are more likely to be housed within the private rented sector. Consultation with frontline workers highlights issues of poor housing quality and management standards. The strategy has a priority focused specifically on raising standards within the PRS, with enforcement and licensing powers to be exercised where necessary.
- Another key issue identified for refugees and new migrants is the increase in homelessness and rough sleeping, which can occur when refugees get status to remain as they are no longer entitled to remain within UK Border Agency accommodation and therefore need to be rehoused however may have low or lack of income; lack of capital for a deposit and/or few household possessions. The Housing Strategy supports the Homelessness Strategy, which identifies new migrant homelessness as a key issue and has set the following priority actions:
 - Need better understanding and knowledge of the housing needs of new migrants.
 - Need more information for new migrants on housing pathways.
 - Need a developed protocol for working with migrants who may have limited housing pathways.
- Wolverhampton is home to a settled Gypsy and Traveller community and must also provide permanent sites for the transient community. The Housing Strategy Delivery Plan commits to identifying and bringing forward potential additional permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, with work already underway.

Religion or Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where religion is closely aligned with ethnicity there may be some crossover of impact for example the requirement for larger houses due to larger household sizes and customs and practice. Having access to places of worship is also important and can be reflective of the surrounding communities. This will be considered in the development and location of new housing. • Overall the strategy is intended to improve housing outcomes for all communities regardless of faith.
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 1% of Council tenancies are held by gay males or lesbians however 22% of tenants have not disclosed their sexuality. • Improved access to housing advice may benefit LGB people, both in meeting general housing requirements and in dealing with more specific housing issues such as family breakdown and risk of homelessness, harassment and discrimination. • The strategy supports homelessness prevention and reduction. • The strategy commits the partnership to engage with Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to identify ways that housing activity can address local concerns about crime and antisocial behaviour. • The strategy commits to ensuring our managing agents are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and we will monitor the Equalities impact of the work they do for example by ensuring that the staff providing information and housing advice are fully trained in equalities issues and are able to provide information or signpost appropriately.
10. If you have discovered some inequalities/adverse impact what provision, criterion or practices may have caused this?	<p>Reasons for inequalities identified are set out in section 9.</p> <p>In addition to the above the need to ensure that equality issues are considered through the detailed implementation (i.e. planning and design) and procurement procedures has been identified.</p>
11. What are you going to do to reduce or eliminate the inequality/adverse impact?	<p>Mitigating actions are outlined in section 9. In addition to this, equality checks will be undertaken at the procurement stage of tendering the contract.</p>
12. How and when will you check whether the adverse impact has been eliminated or reduced?	<p>Regular monitoring of the Housing Strategy will be undertaken and reported to the Housing Executive Board. Equalities implications will be considered as part of this. Supplementary strategies and policies will be subject to equality analysis as too will any major project work resulting from the action plan. All of the Council's housing managing agents are subject to robust performance monitoring. Wolverhampton Homes collect a significant amount of equalities information from customers and this is used in identifying equalities issues and future service planning and the tenant management organisations are subject to an annual equalities framework assessment. Any issues will be picked up through these channels and mitigated against.</p>
13. Do the proposals foster good relations between the groups covered by the Equality Act 2010 (see guidance notes)	<p>The Housing Strategy aims to foster good relations particularly in providing affordable and accessible housing and housing services that meet the needs of all vulnerable groups of people covered in the Equality Act.</p>
14. Do the proposals advance equal opportunities. If yes how do they do this?	<p>The delivery of affordable and accessible housing and housing services will help advance equal opportunities by addressing and providing for the needs of people living in different community areas across the City.</p>

15. How will you check that the proposals will advance equal opportunities and foster good relations between protected groups? (see guidance notes)	By regular monitoring of the Housing Strategy and further equality analysis on supplementary strategies and policies. Any adverse impacts identified will be reported to the Housing Executive Board with a mitigation action plan.
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Signed
Service Manager
Date

Signed
Director
Date