

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)
TASK AND FINISH GROUP SCOPING DOCUMENT**

Task and Finish Group Title:	Accelerating the delivery of Affordable Housing across Huntingdonshire communities primarily through Rural Exception Site mechanisms
Membership of Working Group:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr S Corney • Cllr D Dew • Cllr J Morris • Cllr S Wakeford • Cllr Mrs A Diaz (C&P Member) • Cllr Mrs S Smith (C&P Member)
Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore methods that maximise the effectiveness of the Council's approach to achieving additional affordable housing provision beyond allocated sites. • To advise on a strategic programme and range of mechanisms to promote and secure rural exception sites (RES) appropriate to settlement scale and need across the District. • To explore how RES sites can best be promoted locally, including the role of Ward Members and Parish /Town Councils
Key Officer Contacts: <i>(Lead and support)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead – Andy Moffat, Head of Development • Support – Adam Green, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)
Scoping form completed by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Doug Dew, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) • Councillor Jon Neish, Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) • Nigel McCurdy, Director – Delivery • Adam Green, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)
Scrutiny requested by:	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth)
Criteria for inclusion in work programme:	
Customer Feedback:	N/A
Council Priority:	The Council has pledged in the Corporate Plan 2018-2022, under the Place section to ' improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need '. In addition, a specific performance indicator commits the Council to measure the number of new affordable homes delivered.

<p>Importance to local people:</p>	<p>A range of housing types and tenures that are affordable is a key contributor to the creation of sustainable places, economic success and personal well-being. The East of England is a high growth area with pressurised housing stock and by meeting targets that improve the supply of affordable housing provision, the wider housing needs of Huntingdonshire will be better met, minimising the need for outward migration to lower value areas in order to achieve home ownership.</p> <p>The Council's rural exceptions housing policy also allows for proportional market housing alongside affordable, which helps meet the financial viability of schemes whilst also importantly, can facilitate sustainability of rural communities by allowing for downsizing for older residents who wish to remain in their locality and consequent reuse of larger family housing.</p>
<p>Value for Money Concerns:</p>	<p>A balanced housing market can have direct contribution to improved health and well-being for Huntingdonshire residents that could reduce demand on the health services in future years and also the period people can remain economically active. Availability of appropriate housing can also help attract and retain a more diverse workforce and thereby business investment and confidence in the area and increased localised spend.</p>
<p>Contributes to tackling inequalities:</p>	<p>With Huntingdonshire's average house price increased by 36% since April 2014, this has made it increasingly difficult for some residents to be able to afford a property within the District or have choice of location. Delivering on affordable housing targets will enable more residents to purchase or rent their own properties and will reduce the risk of residents becoming disadvantaged or homeless or being lost from the district to other locations.</p>
<p>Improving partnership working:</p>	<p>Members and officers will work collaboratively with partners to review opportunities and understand complementary work programmes, ambitions and initiatives.</p>
<p>Tackling underperformance in services:</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Cross-cutting issue:</p>	<p>The increased supply of affordable housing, particularly affordable rent, could help towards alleviation of homelessness problems within Huntingdonshire and contribute to attracting or retaining a more diverse workforce and skill-set .</p>

<p>Summary of overall anticipated benefits and intended outcomes:</p>	<p>Through the development of a strategic approach and range of delivery mechanisms, alongside ideas to engender greater local ambition and support for exception affordable housing, the Task and Finish Group will have a greater understanding of what methods could support and accelerate the additionality of supply and delivery of affordable housing provision within the district beyond just allocated Local Plan provisions.</p>
<p>Indicators of success:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of an effective and realistic strategic approach for Members and Officers to collaborate and promote in accelerating delivery of affordable housing. • Increase in number of RES sites completed and actively in the pipeline. • Greater clarity on how long (on average) a RES site should take to come to fruition from identification/concept to construction/occupancy • Range of settlement sizes and locations across the District that have affordable housing provision.
<p>Scope:</p>	
<p>In Scope: <i>(Define what the scope of the review will be)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a strategic approach to promote and accelerate RES across the district. • The number of and geographical spread of new affordable homes delivered by RES sites, taking into account proximity to employment and transport • Review the effectiveness of mechanisms to promote additionality of affordable housing (e.g. Community Land Trusts, Neighbourhood Plans etc) in delivering greater supply • Exploring what funding mechanisms are available that can leverage greater supply or acceleration of affordable housing on RES and allocated sites (e.g. Homes England /Combined Authority)
<p>Excluded from Scope: <i>(Define the exclusions from the scope of the review)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefining what affordable housing is. • Investigating previous decisions of the Development Management Committee / Panel. • Viability matters (although leverage funding can be explored) • Matters already tested through the Local Plan EIP

<p>Benefits:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy for the promotion of affordable housing options will accelerate and deliver a greater number of affordable units in Huntingdonshire. • Huntingdonshire’s residents will have access to a wider supply of size, tenure and locational choice of affordable housing including properties with affordable rent. In doing this the Council will also be fulfilling the pledge made within the Corporate Plan. • Improved placemaking through diversity of house types and tenures. • RES also allow potential opportunities for downsizing, allowing older residents to remain in their communities and support networks and families to grow in their home communities. • RES also allows the open market housing to be a balanced housing option.
<p>Council and Partner Involvement</p>	
<p>Who would need to be involved from the Council?</p>	<p>Head of Service and/or his nominated representative. Appropriate Members</p>
<p>Which of our partners, stakeholders and members of the community should we discuss this with?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Councils • Registered Providers • Landowner representatives • Local Developers • Combined Authority
<p>Review Resources</p>	
<p>Evidence:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics on the number of affordable housing delivered in Huntingdonshire. • Information on other methods (e.g. Neighbourhood Plans, Community Land Trusts, Rural Exception Sites). <i>Have they delivered affordable housing? If yes, then how much?</i>
<p>Witnesses:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio Holder • Head of Development (supported by Housing Manager & PSM (Growth) • Combined Authority (Roger Thompson)
<p>Site visits:</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will actively participate in any government funding opportunities to accelerate delivery of affordable housing. • The strategy will need to recognise the opportunity to work with partners, stakeholders and the community to

	maximise opportunities to increase the supply and delivery of affordable homes..
Expert Advice:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Development
Timescales:	
Anticipated Review Start Date:	February 2019
Anticipated Reporting Date:	<p>June 2019</p> <p>It is important that the work and conclusions of the T&F exercise do not conflict with the final stages towards adoption of the Council's Local Plan 2036 and existing evidence testing already concluded through that process.</p>
Frequency of Meetings:	<p>Each month with the recommended timetable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 19 O&S - Discuss and review scope • February / March 19 - Review initial evidence and Interview expert witnesses • April – formulation of draft strategic objectives • May 19 - Action any loose ends and discuss recommendations for final report • June 19 - Issue Final Report
Date to evaluate impact:	April 2020 – Review of recommendations