

Appendix A: Consideration of comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Comment from Committee	Reasons from the Committee	Executive Member/Officer Comment	Recommended Action
<p>Section 4.2 should more clearly demonstrate the council's commitment to best use of existing registered providers' accommodation for disabled people</p>	<p>A member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that registered providers do not appear to be as flexible as possible if their use of existing accommodation which could be particularly suited to disabled people</p>	<p>Registered providers need to balance the needs of a wide range of tenants, for example, while bungalows may be particularly suited to a younger disabled person, the registered provider will need to take account of the fact that if the bungalow is one of a series of adjacent properties reserved for those aged 55+ years, tenants would have moved in expecting their neighbours to be of a similar age.</p> <p>That said, officers have found registered providers are generally flexible about their allocations when seeking to assist a disabled person</p>	<p>In order to emphasis the council's approach when working with registered providers, add text to section 4.2 to read:</p> <p>'In addition, East Herts Council is committed to working with registered providers to encourage and enable them to make the best use of their existing stock so as to meet the needs of disabled people'</p>

Comment from Committee	Reasons from the Committee	Executive Member/Officer Comment	Recommended Action
<p>Section 4.4 states that, 'The council's District Plan requires the reduction of energy embodied in materials...'</p> <p>The word 'requires' should be amended to 'encourages' if this is in line with the planning policy stance</p>	<p>A member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee queried whether the council's existing planning policies in fact required this, as opposed to encourage this. Officers, on behalf of the Executive Member, undertook to confirm the position with the Planning team</p>	<p>This point was checked with Planning officers who confirmed that it is appropriate to state that, 'The council's District Plan <i>requires</i> the reduction of energy embodied in materials...' [emphasis added] albeit with the additional qualification that the strategy should make it clear that the requirement would apply 'where possible'</p>	<p>Amend text in section 4.4 to read:</p> <p>'The council's District Plan requires, where possible, the reduction of energy embodied in materials...'</p>
<p>Amend the wording in Section 4.4 that, 'Consideration of embodied carbon <i>is likely</i> to become increasingly important as society transitions to a low and indeed zero carbon society' [emphasis added] to read that it '<i>will</i> become' [emphasis added]</p>	<p>A member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee argued that consideration of embodied carbon will definitely become increasing important in the build industry</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Amend text in section 4.4 to read:</p> <p>'Consideration of embodied carbon will become increasingly important as society transitions to a low and indeed zero carbon society.'</p>

Comment from Committee	Reasons from the Committee	Executive Member/Officer Comment	Recommended Action
<p>Section 4.1 would benefit from committing the council to a review of viability assessment procedures and 'levelling the playing field' for smaller housing developers when competing with volume house builders</p>	<p>A member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered that viability assessment appears to afford developers to great a profit level and additionally the council could act to enable smaller housing builders to compete with volume house builders</p>	<p>Viability of planning applications is better considered in the council's planning policies rather than the Housing Strategy. Furthermore, viability assessments are subject to nationally recognised standards which the council's Planning team refers. Deviating from these standards could provide applicants with an argument to contesting the council's decisions.</p> <p>There are limited tools available to a district council to impact the relative success of smaller and larger developers when bidding for land</p>	<p>No amendments to the draft strategy are proposed</p>

Comment from Committee	Reasons from the Committee	Executive Member/Officer Comment	Recommended Action
<p>Resolution to recommend adding to the first strategic priority to read (additional proposed wording in italics here), 'Deliver more affordable homes <i>and more social rented homes</i>'</p>	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny approved this resolution as a means of emphasising of the council's commitment to social rented homes</p>	<p>The draft strategy makes it clear in a number of places that social rented housing is an important element of affordable housing.</p> <p>The first objective listed under this strategic priority states 'increase the supply of new homes offered with (a) social rents or (b) affordable rents at or very near to between 50% and 60% of market rents' which it is felt underlines the importance placed on the delivery of social rented housing during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy</p>	<p>No amendments to the draft strategy are proposed</p>

Comment from Committee	Reasons from the Committee	Executive Member/Officer Comment	Recommended Action
<p>Resolution to add a new objective under the strategic priority to 'deliver more affordable homes' to read, 'investigate all possible ways of financing the provision of homes for social rent'</p>	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny approved this resolution as a means of emphasising of the underline the fact the increasing the supply of social rent housing will require additional funding from a variety of sources which, the committee felt, the council to commit to investigating</p>	<p>The existing objective to 'increase the supply of new homes offered with (a) social rents or (b) affordable rents at or very near to between 50% and 60% of market rents' implies that funding sources will be fully investigated so as to achieved</p>	<p>No addition to the objectives, however, aAmend the text in section 4.1 to read (new text in italics):</p> <p>'...there is clearly a need to preserve if not increase the supply of properties with a social rent, <i>through whatever funding streams are available</i>, so as to enable a full range of housing options for those unable to buy or rent privately and not in a position to buy a shared ownership home'</p>