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Public Information

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| Venue: | Conference Chamber (West) (F1R09) West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 3YU | Tel: 01638 719000 Email: democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk Web: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk | | |
| Access to agenda and reports before the meeting: | Copies of the agenda and reports are open for public inspection at the following addresses: <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">District Offices College Heath Road Mildenhall Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP28 7EY</td> <td style="width: 50%;">West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 3YU</td> </tr> </table> | | District Offices College Heath Road Mildenhall Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP28 7EY | West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 3YU |
| District Offices College Heath Road Mildenhall Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP28 7EY | West Suffolk House Western Way Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP33 3YU | | | |
| Attendance at meetings: | Both Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. | | | |
| Public speaking: | There is no provision for members of the public to ask questions or make statements during the West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group meetings. | | | |
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Agenda

Procedural Matters

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Substitutes

3. Minutes

1 - 6

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2016 (copy attached).

Part 1 - Public

4. Suffolk Skills and Employment Programme - Update

7 - 12

(Judith Mobbs, Assistant Director Inclusion and Skills, Suffolk County Council, to be in attendance for this item)

To receive an update on the main developments within the Suffolk Skills and Employment Programme over recent months (report attached)

5. Housing White Paper: 'Fixing Our Broken Housing Market'

13 - 26

To receive a briefing paper following on from the publication of the Housing White Paper on 7 February 2017, which sets out a broad range of improvements that the Government plans to introduce to help reform the housing market and increase the supply of new homes (attached).

6. Suffolk Planning and Infrastructure Framework (SPIF) – Update

7. Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan – Update

8. Work Programme 2017/2018 – Update

9. Date of Next Meeting

To consider the proposal for an additional meeting of the Group to be held in March/April 2017 (date and venue to be confirmed).

West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group



Minutes of a meeting of the **West Suffolk Joint Growth Steering Group** held on **Tuesday 29 November 2016** at **10.00 am** in the **Council Chamber, District Offices**, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman David Bowman
Vice Chairman Alaric Pugh

Forest Heath District Council

St Edmundsbury Borough Council

Chris Barker
Ruth Bowman
Rona Burt
Reg Silvester

John Burns
Angela Rushen
David Roach
Peter Thompson

In attendance:

Paula Fox

33. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Palmer (FHDC) and Jim Thorndyke (SEBC).

34. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes present at the meeting.

35. **Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting held on 28 June 2016 were received and confirmed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment (as set out in ***bold/italics*** below):

"26. **Election of Vice Chairman for 2016/2017**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Alaric Pugh (SEBC) be elected as ***Vice*** Chairman for 2016/2017."

36. **West Suffolk Community Energy Plan (Presentation)**

(The Chairman agreed for this item to be brought forward on the agenda)

The Service Manager (Environmental Health) was in attendance to provide a presentation to the Steering Group on the West Suffolk Community Energy Plan and its role in driving growth. Circulated with the agenda papers was a copy of the West Suffolk Community Energy Plan, approved by both Councils in December 2014, which aimed for the wider community in West Suffolk to be able to make sustainable energy choices, reduce the impact of energy cost volatility and to move away from the use of fossil fuels.

The presentation covered the following main areas:

- The Government renewables policy where 15% of energy consumed in the UK should come from renewables by 2020 (sub-divided into 30%: electricity; 12%: heat; 10%: transport). The UK was three quarters of the way towards the 30% electricity target, which was expected to be exceeded by 2020, but was not halfway towards meeting the heat target and the proportion of renewable energy used in transport had actually reduced.
- The uncertainty around the outlook for winter 2016/2017 had increased. Existing power stations were closing/being mothballed, with future stations coming on-line. There was also a changing demand for the provision of power and where energy sources were being consumed.
- The restrictions within West Suffolk with the capacity provision of electricity and also with the gas provision to homes (40% of homes were off the gas main) and the impact which this was having on families having to use more expensive forms of heating.
- The improvements both Councils were undertaking in relation to investing/installing energy efficiency measures, renewable energy technologies and designing in local energy generation in their own property.
- Supporting businesses with advice from BEE Anglia to make informed investment decisions and helping access to financial support to make improvements. The Councils were also involved with the following energy initiatives:
 - 'Greener Business Grant' which allowed businesses to take forward simple measures to make energy improvements.
 - 'West Suffolk Solar for Business' which supported local businesses to provide them with solar energy. There were currently 16 properties within the Solar for Business portfolio, which provided the Councils' with a Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of an average of 11%.
 - 'Suffolk Carbon Charter' which helped businesses in West Suffolk to gain recognition for their environmental commitment.
- Supporting families and communities, through initiatives such as Suffolk Energy Action and Suffolk's Warm Homes, Healthy People.

- Future actions in the Community Energy Plan:
 - Continuation of improvement of energy efficiency in the Councils' existing estate.
 - Generation of energy in the Councils' new-build public estates (ie Mildenhall Hub, Western Way development, West Suffolk Operational Hub)
 - Development of smarter energy contracts and the use of the Councils' own electricity in its buildings.
 - Investment in other energy generation technologies for value returns.
 - Continuation to promote and invest in domestic and business energy efficiency.
 - Extension of the Councils' Renewable Energy for Business offer for power and heat.
 - Development of local energy tariffs for local residents and businesses.
 - Work with the energy industry and other suppliers to remove the constraints for growth.

Members then asked questions of the Officer in which responses were duly provided. The following questions asked had subsequent actions (as set out in **bold** below):

1. How developers could be encouraged to invest in the concept of provision of energy efficiency solutions within new housing developments (ie provision of roof solar panels). The Officer explained that the Councils had looked at this issue previously to see how it could be encouraged, however, some developers were not keen to invest in longer term concepts, aside from the house building itself. **It was agreed for Officers, in liaison with the appropriate Portfolio Holders, to engage with developers to understand the barriers to investing in the provision of energy efficiency within new developments. It was also agreed that consideration also needed to be given to the development of the Councils' future planning policies with regard to the energy efficiency requirements for homes/buildings.**
2. The amount of influence which the Councils' had with the energy suppliers and also how much the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were interested in relation to energy infrastructure, as this was as a potential constraint to growth. This was particularly pertinent to the Suffolk Planning and Infrastructure Framework (SPIF). The Officer explained that UK Power Networks had expressed an interest to becoming more involved with infrastructure discussions. There were, also however, concerns as to who would be responsible for the initial investment risk on infrastructure projects. **It was agreed for a discussion to be held with UK Power Networks to better understand their infrastructure constraints, both strategically and operationally.**
3. Provision of electric cars, as part of the business support package. The Officer explained that the supporting of electric vehicles for business, was not included with the West Suffolk Community Energy Plan, as this specifically concentrated on property and assets. Electric vehicles still remained quite costly to purchase and there currently remained

insufficient infrastructure in relation to being able to charge the vehicles. However, the Councils' had submitted a funding bid to DEFRA to look at the advocacy/support of commercial electric vehicles, linked to air quality. **It was agreed to continue to push for the use of commercial electric cars and the associated infrastructure.**

4. Reference was made to the difficulty of electricity storage, particularly in relation to the Forest Heath solar farm, where in the summer months, large quantities of electricity were being produced and where the demand on usage was probably at its lowest. The Officer explained that solar farms did have a profile of storage which fluctuated, particularly in the summer. However, there was also an increase in demand for cooling, which could also change the electricity generating profile. It was acknowledged that electricity storage was an issue and UK Power Networks were the first distribution operator in the UK to build and trial a large scale battery storage facility at Great Buzzard. Domestic battery storage was also becoming more available. The Councils' were also looking at battery storage as an opportunity to uplift the value from the solar farm and that this could be a potential future commercial opportunity. **It was agreed that the development of battery storage (both domestic and commercial) continued to be monitored.**

With there being no decision required, the Steering Group **noted** the presentation, along with those actions which had been identified in 1. to 4. above.

(Councillor Alaric Pugh joined the meeting at 10.05 am and Councillor Peter Thompson joined at 10.08 am, during the discussion of and prior to the voting on this item.)

37. **TechEast (Presentation)**

Neil Miles, Chairman of TechEast, was in attendance to provide an update on progress with the establishment of this organisation.

There was a thriving digital tech sector in the region which employed over 15,000 people. This was a high value sector which was fundamental to everyone's lives and businesses in terms of technology. TechEast's main purpose was to provide a network to drive and promote the digital tech sector across the region. TechEast was a not-for profit organisation, working across both Norfolk and Suffolk, building activities and relationships and would be generating a number of projects and activities.

TechEast had produced a six point manifesto, underpinned by a detailed three year business plan of activities:

1. To promote digital tech growth and excellence in the East using local tech businesses as examples in order to attract new business and talent from other parts of the UK and internationally.

2. To establish a TechEast 'embassy'; a physical presence in London showcasing businesses and the sector, aiding business development and encouraging government investment.
3. To galvanise the sector by speaking with one voice to amplify the benefits for tech companies in the East.
4. To excel by sharing best practice between members and ensure that TechEast companies were amongst the best run tech companies in the UK.
5. To be recognised as the UK's most open and collaborative digital tech cluster where new companies and entrepreneurs could thrive and grow in a supportive environment.
6. To work with local and national educational partners to develop the relevant sector skills and benefit from cutting edge research.

By succeeding with this manifesto this would create 5,000 jobs, generate an extra £650m GVA of economic growth in the East and be one of the UK's Top 5 tech cluster by 2020.

Neil explained that the TechEast Board had been appointed in July 2016. The TechEast 'embassy' was now open and was located near to Liverpool Street Station, London. This was available for use by its members and offered small scale office space with hot desks, free wi-fi, meeting rooms and events/networking opportunities. TechEast's membership offer for local businesses had also been recently launched.

Councillor Alaric Pugh thanked Neil for this informative update and explained that it would also be useful for the Members of the Steering Group to be provided with a copy of TechEast's three year Business Plan, which provided the further detail of its purpose and desired outcomes. Neil agreed with this approach and also stated that he would be willing to come back to the Group in the future to provide a further update on progress.

With there being no decision required, the Steering Group **noted** this update, along with a further update on TechEast's progress being reported to the Steering Group in Autumn 2017.

(Councillor Peter Thompson left the meeting at 11.15 am, prior to the commencement of this item)

38. **Date of Next Meeting**

Under this item, the Service Manager (Economic Development and Growth) took the opportunity to discuss with the Steering Group a proposed Work Programme for 2017.

The Group had previously agreed that the format of their meetings should be based on themes, with one/two topics per meeting in the form of presentations/discussions. It had also been acknowledged that the agendas would need to remain flexible to allow for new topics which may require

discussion. Councillor Pugh also stated that a report from the Steering Group should also be presented directly to Cabinet, which outlined actions/recommendations from the Group.

The Service Manager (Economic Development and Growth) then provided some suggested topic areas for inclusion in the work programme for 2017, including:-

1. Suffolk Planning and Infrastructure Framework (SPIF) update and the wider South East work (*to be considered in early 2017*).
2. Infrastructure (including roads, rail, broadband etc..).
3. Skills (including an update on the Suffolk Skills Strategy) (*to be considered in early 2017*).
4. Policy Updates (including Housing Policy White Paper (which was due for publication in early 2017), Local Plans, Masterplans and Vision 2031).
5. Cambridge to Norwich Technology Corridor (*to be considered in Autumn 2017*).
6. Developer Relationships (including countryside; promoting to developers; agents and industry).
7. Sector Programme Updates (including Destination Management Organisation (DMO)/tourism industry; Agri-tech; Film Suffolk (*to be considered in Autumn 2017*); TechEast (*to be considered in Autumn 2017*)).
8. Land and premises update.

With there being no decision required, the Steering Group **noted** the proposed items for inclusion in a Work Programme for 2017.

It was also **noted** that the next meeting of the Steering Group would be held on Tuesday 21 February 2017 at 10.00 am at West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds. Additional meetings of the Steering Group could also be arranged, as and when required.

The Meeting concluded at 11.55 am

Signed by:

Chairman

Developing Suffolk Talent



February 2017 Update

This report highlights the main developments within the Suffolk Skills and Employment Programme over recent months.

Work Inspiration - a package of virtual and actual opportunities for employers and young people to connect

Careers and Enterprise Company Programme

The New Anglia Enterprise Adviser Network is continuing to recruit Enterprise Advisers to work strategically with senior leaders in Suffolk's secondary schools and colleges. By January 2017, 29 Enterprise Advisers were matched with schools. Schools and colleges in Suffolk are mostly keen to join the network and waiting to have an Adviser matched to them. The businesses already involved include Adnams, Norse, Ipswich Building Society, Abbeycroft Leisure, East of England Co-op, University of Suffolk, Atwells, Morgan Sindall, Adecco, Abellio Greater Anglia and BT.

ICanBeA...

This joint venture between the local authorities across Suffolk and the Mason Trust is showcasing economy, careers, training and employers to local young people. Following the successful launch last October, the website is progressing well. The number and diversity of online profiles is increasing, and there are now 165 live profiles on the site covering 19 employment industries, all with accompanying information, links and videos. The icanbea... team are currently working on a number of draft profiles, engaging new employers and keeping existing profiles updated and relevant for the audience.

Young person engagement has been ramping up and the icanbea... team have been attending events engaging with 1000s of young people from across the county including Suffolk Skills Show 2016, Suffolk Festival of Learning (teachers and senior managers), plus numerous school and college events. The total signups* at the end of January was 887 with 694 of those being under 25s. (*sign ups indicate a user having a personal profile on the website)

Overall the website profile is growing and the site has registered 16,417 page views in January 2017 and an impressive 38,285 page views since October 2016.

Suffolk Skills Show 2017

SSS17 has made a strong start to the year with the Vice Chair Dayle Bayliss stepping up to Chair and Michelle Pollard of Spider Recruitment taking the Vice Chair. Along with a number of developments we are pleased to announce a new 'Job Hunter' attraction for employers to promote actual work opportunities (vacancies) where they can collect CV's, conduct informal interviews and give specific recruitment advice to those who are actively looking for work.

As for previous years, the success of the event is dependent on support from the business community and our schools bringing the key audience on the day; to facilitate this we have made a number of changes based on feedback and updated the website to reflect more of what our businesses want, we run an 'early bird rate' and already have over a dozen exhibitors booked.

Looking at school bookings, we will be opening the school booking function this year with an accompanying media and communications plan to ensure effective engagement and preparation with our schools. Our ambition for 2017 is to surpass the numbers for the SSS16 event with over 100 exhibitors across multiple stands and 5000 attendees including an impressive 616 independent drop ins.

Young Flourish

Emerging from the Flourish Conference on Rural Issues back in October; Young Flourish was created to take the conference findings and introduce them to over 200 14-25 year olds collecting their thoughts, experiences, and opinions; and crucially ideas/solutions to the challenges faced by those living in rural communities across Suffolk.

The project included an open access online survey which was completed by 75 participants and face to face facilitated sessions with 7 schools and one youth group from rural areas across the county:

- Ixworth Free School (21 participants)
- IES Breckland (18 participants)
- Stour Valley (30 participants)
- Stowupland (19 participants)
- Saxmundham Free School (21 participants)
- Thomas Mills (11 full participates est. as drop in an assembly to promote survey)
- Stradbroke (20 participants)
- Fresh Aspirations Forum (Framlingham youth organisation 6 participants)

Key feedback from these sessions has been collated in to a Young Flourish Report and recommendations have been made. The report will be used in the development of the 'Skills and Aspirations for Young People' sub-strand and will be considered at the Flourish Board meeting in Spring 2017 as to it use in the emerging Flourish Rural Action Plan for Suffolk.

STEM Accelerator

The STEM Accelerator programme comes to an end in March 2017. Over the past two years in excess of 600 pupils have benefited from the project. The mentoring and curriculum enrichment strands will continue to help boost the chances of Suffolk students to compete for the top level jobs and educational places until March. Additionally, nine "STEM School Activity Weeks" have engaged pupils from year seven upwards in employer led out of school activities together with work experience, to enthuse their interest in STEM. An evaluation identifying the impact and lessons learned from the delivery of the STEM Accelerator Pilot will be produced and shared widely.

Aiming High 16-18 - learning pathways for all supported by high quality careers guidance

Apprenticeships

It's full steam ahead for Apprenticeships Suffolk with Apprenticeship week! We have finalised

our plans and will be at Otley College, West Suffolk College, Suffolk New College, Lowestoft College, Suffolk One and Lowestoft Sixth Form between 6th-10th March. We are collaborating with icanbea... for the week and will be delivering information about apprenticeships and icanbea... providing interactive sign up workshops and attending careers fairs. Toolkits for Apprenticeship Week will be available for schools to download so that support from Apprenticeships Suffolk can be accessed county wide. We are very much looking forward to our Apprenticeship Week adventure!

Increasing opportunities for young people with special needs

The Suffolk SEND Further Education and Learning Committee continues to develop and is currently taking a lead role in developing high quality post 16 SEND Provision as part of the Post 16 Area Review. The committee has recently approved to commission Archant to support a social media and media campaign to showcase the opportunities available to Employers in Suffolk by offering Supported Internships for young people age 16-25 with SEND. Work is ongoing to review the current post 16 offer of SEND provision in the county and we hope to publish a clear and current set of learning pathways in the Spring of 2017.

Improving support for young people who are at risk of becoming NEET

A new transition support offer was implemented in 2015/16 to provide better support to young people in Year 10 & 11 who are at risk of becoming NEET when they leave school. This service has been valued by schools, parents and young people and we have seen early signs of success. In November 2016, 89% of young people who were supported by a Transition Coach in Year 11 (2015/16) had made a positive, sustained progression to post 16 learning. The Local Authority will continue to build this preventative model and is committed to ensuring the service is further developed. This preventative model forms a major part of Suffolk's Participation and NEET Prevention Strategy, which will be refreshed and re-published in the Spring.

Improving the Quality of Information, Advice & Guidance

Each year Suffolk CC evaluates the quality of careers advice and guidance and all additional measures a school or provider has in place to maximize post-16 Participation. Participation Reviews take place to consider the measures the school/provider has in place to encourage, enable, and assist young people to participate in education or employment with training until their 18th Birthday. Where development needs are identified on-going monitoring and support is provided to ensure schools continue to improve their careers support. Suffolk County Council has also developed training courses for careers advisers to support this programme. The next round of Participation Reviews will commence in the Spring 2017.

Locality Reviews – Participation and NEET Prevention

As part of building Suffolk's Participation and NEET Prevention Strategy we will be undertaking a series of Locality Reviews to identify what is working well and what needs to be fixed to further reduce NEET. The results of these reviews will help to inform practice across the county and the over-arching strategy as a whole. We plan to begin the first review in April in Bury St Edmunds and the West of the county as this is an area we are concerned about with regards to the lack of post 16 provision and the growing number of young people who are NEET. We will then prioritise Ipswich, Lowestoft and Central and South Suffolk.

Learning and Work

MyGo

The Service for young people MyGo Lowestoft is now open and will extend the development of the MyGo model by piloting a different delivery approach using more staff from existing local partners to deliver the service. Therefore, we now have the Ipswich centre based model, the

Greater Ipswich outreach approach, including Stowmarket centre and the Lowestoft model running. All three will be evaluated to draw out the most successful and cost effective approach. Planning is at a very early stage to explore how the youth employment service could be extended across the remainder of Suffolk.

Suffolk's Adult Education Offer

In August 2016, Suffolk County Council awarded Realise Futures Learning and Development with a contract to deliver our Adult Learning Contract. Over £2.7m of funding is being used to deliver a full range of skills and community learning provision across the county. Our target is to reach over 8,000 learners through a range of programmes that include Traineeships, English and Mathematics, ESOL, Family Learning and many more.

Work and Health Programme

The curtailing of the devolution agreement for Norfolk and Suffolk has changed our role in co-commissioning the work and health programme (WHP). The programme for Suffolk will now form part of the national programme delivered in non-devolution areas.

In response to these changes Suffolk together with Norfolk have designed a localised work and health programme supported by New Anglia LEP to be funded by the European Social Fund which will support the benefit claimants that are ineligible for the WHP. This will ensure that with both programmes aligned more people will be able to benefit from the support tailored to their needs. The procurement of both programmes will run over the coming months with a start date for delivery due for the beginning of next year once the current programme has concluded.

Suffolk districts and boroughs will also benefit from Transformational Challenge Award funding that has been allocated by Suffolk leaders to develop an integrated work and health offer for the county. This funding will act as the enabler to attract other funding in order to provide an end to end service for residents who require support to overcome their health barriers to employment.

Skills for Growth - *skills as a growth enabler*

NALEP Skills Investment Fund

The fund provides support for employers to help them invest in securing the right skills for their workforce.

Employer Training Incentive Pilot NOW FULLY ALLOCATED

Delivered through Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, the 'ETIP' scheme has now allocated the total funding available through more than 2800 grants. The scheme provides employers with grants of up to 40% of the cost of purchasing training and courses to upskill the workforce in Norfolk and Suffolk. By incentivising employers across the region to invest in the skills in their workforce the scheme aimed to increasing the capacity of local businesses to grow and employees to progress.

New Anglia Skills Deals Programme an opportunity for employers, alongside training providers, to seek funding for project proposals that address a gap in - or barrier to accessing - training provision. Skills Deals co-fund projects that will raise skill levels, create jobs and drive enterprise and economic growth in Norfolk and Suffolk. Up to £4m is set to be invested in Skills Deals projects depending on demand. Three projects have now been provisionally allocated funding focuses on enhancing energy efficient skills in construction, new welding and fabrication provision and provision for those working in agri-tech related positions.

Two further initiatives are set to begin delivery. **Skills Support for the Workforce**, to be delivered by Seetec, will provide no-cost training needs analysis and provision to employers to help upskill the current workforce whilst **Skills Support for Emerging Leaders**, to be delivered by New Anglia Colleges, will focus on provision of leadership and management training, again at no cost to the employer.

Sector Skills Plans

NALEP Skills Board has invited employers in key growth and employment sectors to work with them to develop co-owned skills plan that address the skills needs of their sector and highlight priorities for action/investment. Plans have so far been developed for the construction and health and social care sectors and are now being put into action. The plans are helping to inform decision making by the Skills Board and the allocation of resources. A further 8 sector plans and associated data packs will be developed in 2017.

Skills Capital Funding

A proportion of Growth Deal funding from Government has been allocated to Skills Capital projects in Norfolk and Suffolk. The new £7m engineering facilities at West Suffolk College are progressing with the first phase (purchase) completed and development work for a new Energy sector focused facility in Lowestoft is progressing. It is expected that further Growth Deal funding to be allocated to the New Anglia region shortly will be made available for further potential skills capital investment.

Other Developments

European Social Funding for Skills and Employment

Specifications for activity to be funded through the New Anglia LEP European Social Fund have now been produced and are due to be published in the spring. For the unemployed, the funding will support the long term unemployed and people with health related issues progress into employment, the further roll out of the MyGo service and support for the youth pledge.

For people in employment one specification will support the health and social care sector to recruit, retain and upskill employees and another specification will provide support for businesses to adopt the pledge marque.

Further specifications are being developed which are due to be published in a second tranche in the summer to provide additional support for individuals and businesses.

Norfolk and Suffolk Post 16 Area Review

The Post 16 Area Review commenced in December 2016. The Steering Group is chaired by Dr Peter Funnell and is due to conclude at the end of March 2017. We have worked with Norfolk County Council and the New Anglia LEP to outline our key priorities and have asked providers to reflect on and take action to strengthen the learning pathways for all young people and adults that enables progression into work. In particular, to addressing the gaps in provision that develops entrepreneurial and softer skills, highlighted as important by employers, Apprenticeships and education for those with special educational needs and disabilities. We are keen to increase the number of Apprenticeships, with a focus on progression to advanced, higher and degree level learning and to increase the range of high

quality engagement provision that is focused on supporting people who become NEET and progress them into sustainable employment.

Developing and expanding our higher level and technical programmes, both in further and higher education, to provide a more tailored offer to support growth and productivity gains in our key industries and emerging sectors more effectively is also a key priority.

WHITE PAPER: 'FIXING OUR BROKEN HOUSING MARKET'

Introduction

On 7 February 2017 the Government published the Housing white paper titled 'fixing our broken housing market'. The White Paper sets out a broad range of improvements that government plans to introduce to help reform the housing market and increase the supply of new homes. Below are the links to the documents:

- Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government statement to Parliament: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/housing-white-paper-statement>
- Press release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-ambitious-plan-to-build-the-homes-britain-needs>
- Housing white paper: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market>

This briefing note provides the reader with an outline of the key objectives and actions from the White Paper.

In order to implement the vision set out in the White Paper, the Government is consulting on a range of changes to planning policy and legislation needed to implement the proposals. Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury will consider the strategic and operational impact of the proposals and respond to the consultation accordingly.

Section 1 - Planning for the right homes in the right places

Key points

Better, more realistic plan making which faces up to housing need, and makes sure that more of the homes that people want to live in are planned for in the places they want to live.

- Consult on a new standardised way of assessing housing need, ending hours of debate and legal wrangling on the appropriate methodology
- Making sure every part of the country has an up to date, sufficiently ambitious plan so that local communities decide where development should go
- Encourage higher densities and make it easier for communities to shape the development their area needs, including design
- Increase transparency over developer-held land options, so suitable development sites can be identified
- More land available in the right places – more surplus public land available, make it easier to reuse brownfield land, regenerate estates, release more small sites and allow rural communities to grow

1. Objective

- Making sure every part of the country has an up-to-date, sufficiently ambitious plan so that local communities decide where development should go.

Action

- Government will intervene, where necessary, to ensure that plans are put in place, so that communities in the areas affected are not disadvantaged by unplanned growth. Plans are likely to require updating in whole or in part at least every five years.

- Local Authorities will be expected to prepare a Statement of Common Ground, setting out how they will work together to meet housing requirements and other issues that cut across authority boundaries.

2. Objective

- Simplifying plan-making and making it more transparent, so it's easier for communities to produce plans and easier for developers to follow them.

Action

- Remove the policy expectation that each local planning authority should produce a single local plan. Instead authorities should identify the most effective way of setting out their key strategic priorities (which may be jointly with other authorities), with the expectation that more detailed matters are addressed through neighbourhood plans or more focused development plan documents.
- Set out the key strategic priorities that every area will be expected to plan for, which would be those listed already in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with an additional requirement to plan for the allocations needed to deliver the area's housing requirement.
- Spatial development strategies, produced by new combined authorities or elected Mayors, and requiring unanimous agreement of the members of the combined authority, will be able to allocate strategic sites.
- The NPPF will be amended to make clear that plans and policies should not duplicate one another and that a 'sound plan' should be an 'appropriate strategy' for the area rather than 'the most appropriate strategy'.
- Improve the use of digital tools to make plans and planning data more accessible, and review the consultation and examination procedures for all types of plan to ensure they are proportionate.

3. Objective

- Ensuring that plans start from an honest assessment of the need for new homes, and that local authorities work with their neighbours, so that difficult decisions are not ducked.

Action

- Consider options for introducing a more standardised approach to assessing housing requirements. Subject to consultation, from April 2018 the new methodology for calculating housing requirements would apply as the baseline for assessing 5 year housing land supply and housing delivery, in the absence of an up-to-date plan. Councils that decide not to use the new approach will have to explain why not and to justify the methodology they have adopted in their area.
- Strengthen national policy so that local planning authorities are expected to have clear policies for addressing the housing requirements of groups with particular needs, such as older and disabled people.
- Increase the amount of planning data that is easily available to individuals, groups, entrepreneurs and businesses. Looking to identify opportunities to prescribe open data standards for local plans and use digital tools to support better plan-making, improve the accessibility of information and help people identify and develop appropriate land for housing.

4. Objective

- Clarifying what land is available for new housing, through greater transparency over who owns land and the options held on it.

Action

- HM Land Registry will be modernised to become a digital and data-driven registration business within the public sector. The Government will examine how HM Land Registry and the Ordnance Survey can work more closely together to provide a more effective digital land and property data service. This work will assess how their combined land and property data can be made more openly available to the benefit of developers, home buyers and others.
- Government will ensure completion of the Land Register. All publicly-held land in the areas of greatest housing need will be registered by 2020, with the rest to follow by 2025. As an interim step, the Government will collate and make openly available a complete list of all unregistered publicly held land by April 2018.
- Government will consult on improving the transparency of contractual arrangements used to control land and on how the Land Register can better reflect wider interests in land.
- When preparing plans local authorities will be required to demonstrate that they have a strategy to maximise the use of suitable land in their area and the housing requirement should be accommodated unless there are policies within the NPPF that provide strong reasons for restricting development. The Government proposes to clarify which national policies it regards as providing a strong reason to restrict development when preparing plans.

5. Objective

- Making more land available for homes in the right places, by maximising the contribution from brownfield and surplus public land, regenerating estates, releasing more small and medium-sized sites, allowing rural communities to grow and making it easier to build new settlements.

Action

- Amend the NPPF to indicate that great weight should be attached to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes.
- Amend regulations so that all local planning authorities are able to dispose of land with the benefit of planning consent which they have granted to themselves – this is a discrepancy between unitary and two-tier areas.
- Consult on using powers in the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 to issue a new General Disposal Consent, which would enable authorities to dispose of land held for planning purposes at less than best consideration without the need for specific consent from the Secretary of State.
- Amend the NPPF to encourage local planning authorities to consider the social and economic benefits of estate regeneration when preparing plans and when making decisions on applications.
- Amend the NPPF to expect local planning authorities to have policies that support the development of small 'windfall' sites and to indicate that great weight should be given to using small undeveloped sites within settlements for homes.
- Amend the NPPF to highlight the opportunities that neighbourhood plans present for identifying and allocating small sites for housing development.
- Amend the NPPF to give much stronger support for 'rural exception' sites that provide affordable homes for local people – by making clear that these should be considered positively where they can contribute to meeting identified local housing needs, even if this relies on an element of general market housing to ensure that homes are genuinely affordable for local people.
- To encourage the supply of land to small and medium-size housebuilders changes to the NPPF will make clear that on top of the allowance made for windfall sites, at least 10% of the sites allocated for residential development in local plans should be sites of half a hectare or less. Also, local planning authorities will be expected to work with

developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites. Local Planning Authorities will also be encouraged to have greater use of Local Development Orders and area-wide design codes so that small sites may be brought forward for development more quickly.

- To support the development of future garden communities the Government will legislate to enable the creation of locally accountable New Town Development Corporations to strengthen local representation and accountability.
- Amend the NPPF to encourage a more proactive approach by authorities to bringing forward new settlements in their plans, as one means by which housing requirements can be addressed.

6. Objective

- Maintaining existing strong protections for the Green Belt, and clarifying that Green Belt boundaries should be amended only in exceptional circumstances when local authorities can demonstrate that they have fully examined all other reasonable options for meeting their identified housing requirements.

Action

- Amend national policy to make clear that authorities should amend Green Belt boundaries only when they can demonstrate that they have examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting their identified development requirements.
- Amend the NPPF to indicate that where land is removed from the Green Belt, local policies should require the impact to be offset by compensatory improvements to the Environmental quality or accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.
- National policy would make clear that when carrying out a Green Belt review, local planning authorities should look first at using any Green Belt land which has been previously developed and/or which surrounds transport hubs.
- For clarity the NPPF will be amended so that appropriate facilities for existing cemeteries are not to be regarded as 'inappropriate development'. In addition development brought forward under a Neighbourhood Development Order should also not be regarded as inappropriate. Also where a local or strategic plan has demonstrated the need for Green Belt boundaries to be amended, the detailed boundary may be determined through a neighbourhood plan

7. Objective

- Giving communities a stronger voice in the design of new housing to drive up the quality and character of new development, building on the success of neighbourhood planning.

Action

- National policy to be amended so that local planning authorities are expected to provide neighbourhood planning groups with a housing requirement figure where this is needed to progress with a neighbourhood plan.
- Local and neighbourhood plans (at the most appropriate level) and more detailed development plan documents (such as action area plans) will be expected to set out clear design expectations following consultation with local communities.
- National policy to be strengthened show the importance of early pre-application discussions between applicants, authorities and the local community about design and the types of homes to be provided.
- Policy will be amended so that design should not be used as a valid reason to object to development where it accords with clear design expectations set out in statutory plans.
- Planning policy should recognise the value of using a widely accepted design standard, such as Building for Life, and given weight in the planning process.

8. Objective

- Making better use of land for housing by encouraging higher densities, where appropriate, such as in urban locations where there is high housing demand; and by reviewing space standards.

Action

- The Government proposes to amend the NPPF to make it clear that plans and individual development proposals should:
 - o make efficient use of land and avoid building homes at low densities where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs;
 - o address the particular scope for higher-density housing in urban locations that are well served by public transport;
 - o ensure that the density and form of development reflect the character, accessibility and infrastructure capacity of an area; and
 - o take a flexible approach in adopting and applying policy and guidance that could inhibit these objectives.
- The Government intends to amend national planning guidance to highlight planning approaches that can be used to help support higher densities, and to set out ways in which daylight considerations can be addressed in a pragmatic way that does not inhibit dense, high quality development.
- Review the Nationally Described Space Standard and how it is used in planning, to support greater local housing choice, while ensuring we avoid a race to the bottom in the size of homes on offer.

Section 2 - Building homes faster

Key points

Giving local authorities the tools they need to make sure plans which have been carefully developed in consultation with the community are implemented, and putting in place the necessary infrastructure to support new homes.

- Introduce changes to the way that land supply is assessed, providing greater certainty for authorities that have planned for new homes and reducing scope for plans to be undermined
- Boost the capacity and capability of planning authorities to deliver
- Improve the co-ordination of public investment in infrastructure
- Support developers to build out more quickly by tackling unnecessary delays caused by planning conditions, facilitate strategic licensing of protected species, and explore new approach to developer contributions
- Hold developers to account for delivery of new homes through better and more transparent data and sharper tools to drive up delivery
- Introduce a Housing Delivery Test to hold planning authorities to account for their role

1. Objective

- Providing greater certainty for authorities that have planned for new homes and reducing the scope for local and neighbourhood plans to be undermined by changing the way that land supply for housing is assessed.

Action

- The Government will amend the NPPF to give local authorities the opportunity to have their housing land supply agreed on an annual basis and fixed for a one-year period. Local authorities that wish to take advantage of this will need to provide for a 10% buffer on their 5 year land supply.

- Policy will be amended so that communities who are planning for the housing for their communities need through neighbourhood plans, but find the housing supply policies are out-of-date will be able to demonstrate that their site allocation and housing supply meets their share of local housing.

2. Objective

- Boosting local authority capacity and capability to deliver, improving the speed and quality with which planning cases are handled, while deterring unnecessary appeals.

Action

- Local authorities will be able to increase fees by 20% from July 2017 if they commit to invest the additional fee income in their planning department. Potential to allow an increase of a further 20% for those authorities who are delivering the homes their communities need – this will be consulted on in further detail.
- £25m of new funding to help ambitious authorities in areas of high housing need to plan for new homes and infrastructure.
- Unnecessary appeals can be a source of delay and waste taxpayers' money. Government will consult on introducing a fee for making a planning appeal.

3. Objective

- Ensuring infrastructure is provided in the right place at the right time by coordinating Government investment and through the targeting of the £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund;

Action

- Target the £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund at the areas of greatest housing need.
- Amend national policy so that local planning authorities are expected to identify the development opportunities that infrastructure investment offers at the time funding is committed.
- Consulting on requiring local authorities to have planning policies setting out how high quality digital infrastructure will be delivered in their area, and accessible from a range of providers.
- Recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission will be considered by Government and where endorsed will become a statement of Government policy. The NPPF will be revised to make clear the status of endorse recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission.

4. Objective

- Securing timely connections to utilities so that this does not hold up getting homes built.

Action

- Review Better Connected, assessing its impact so far, and how existing performance standards and penalties are working to support house building at all scales from small and medium sized developments to major sites delivering many thousands of homes.
- Government will closely monitor performance to ensure house building is not being delayed and, if necessary, will consider obligating utility companies to take account of proposed development.

5. Objective

- Supporting developers to build out more quickly by tackling unnecessary delays caused by planning conditions, facilitating the strategic licensing of protected species and exploring a new approach to how developers contribute to infrastructure.

Action

- Tackle unnecessary delays caused by planning conditions by taking forward proposals, through the Neighbourhood Planning Bill, to allow the Secretary of State to prohibit conditions that do not meet the national policy tests, and to ensure that pre-commencement conditions can only be used with the agreement of the applicant.
- Streamline the licensing system for managing great crested newts – the species which particularly affects development.
- The Government will examine the options for reforming the system of developer contributions including ensuring direct benefit for communities, and will respond to the independent review and make an announcement at Autumn Budget 2017.
- Consulting on standardised open book Section 106 agreements, to reduce disputes and delays, and on how data on planning obligations could be monitored and reported on to increase transparency.

6. Objective

- Taking steps to address skills shortages by growing the construction workforce.

Action

- Change the way the Government supports training in the construction industry so that we have the best arrangements to ensure strong industry leadership to address the skills challenge, improve retention and ensure that training courses cover the right skills to the right standards.
- Launch a new route into construction in September 2019 – as announced in the Skills Plan.
- Explore whether the success of major construction programmes, such as Crossrail, can be applied more broadly in the construction sector.

7. Objective

- Holding developers to account for the delivery of new homes through better and more transparent data and sharper tools to drive up delivery.

Action

- Further improve the quality and analysis on housing delivery:
 - o An amendment to the national planning application form to require a section on estimated start date and build out rate
 - o A duty on developers to provide local authorities with basic information on progress in delivering the permitted number of homes after planning permission has been granted
 - o Set out new requirements for the Authority Monitoring Report produced by local planning authorities so a full, standardised assessment of progress is published.
- Amend the NPPF to encourage local authorities to consider how realistic it is that a site will be developed when deciding whether to grant planning permission for housing. Proposals where there is no intention to build or where there are insurmountable barriers could be discouraged.
- Considering the implications of amending national planning policy to encourage local authorities to shorten the timescales for developers to implement a permission for housing development from the default period of three years to two years, except where a shorter timescale could hinder the viability or deliverability of a scheme.
- Amend legislation to simplify and speed up the process of serving a completion notice by removing the requirement for the Secretary of State to confirm it can take effect and by allowing local authorities to serve notice before the commencement deadline has elapsed.

- The Government will prepare new guidance to local planning authorities following separate consultation, encouraging the use of their compulsory purchase powers to support the build out of stalled sites.

8. Objective

- Holding local authorities to account through a new housing delivery test.

Action

- Introduce a new housing delivery test through changes to the NPPF and associated guidance. This will highlight whether the number of homes being built is below target, provide a mechanism for establishing the reasons why, and where necessary trigger policy responses that will ensure that further land comes forward. Housing delivery would be measured using net annual housing additions and the rate of housing delivery in each area would be assessed as the average over a three-year rolling period.
- Where under-delivery is identified as a result of this monitoring, the Government proposes a tiered approach to addressing the situation that would be set out in national policy and guidance:
 - o From November 2017, if delivery of housing falls below 95% of the authority's annual housing requirement, the local authority should publish an action plan, setting out its understanding of the key reasons for the situation and the actions that it and other parties need to take to get home-building back on track.
 - o Delivery of housing falls below 85% of the housing requirement, authorities would in addition be expected to plan for a 20% buffer on their five-year land supply, if they have not already done so.
 - o If delivery of housing falls below 25% of the housing requirement, the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF would apply automatically (by virtue of relevant planning policies being deemed out of date), which places additional emphasis on the need for planning permission to be granted unless there are strong reasons not to.

Section 3 - Diversifying the market

Key points

Opening up the market to smaller and medium sized builders, boosting productivity and innovation by encouraging modern methods of construction, and attracting investors into development of homes for rent as well as for sale.

- Help small and medium sized builders access the loan finance and small sites they need to grow, and partner with them through the Accelerated Construction programme
- Support custom build homes with greater access to land and finance giving more people more choice over the design of their homes
- Encourage more institutional investors into housing, including for building more homes for private rent, and encouraging family friendly tenancies
- Support housing associations and local authorities to build more homes
- Boost productivity and innovation by encouraging modern methods of construction

1. Objective

- Backing small and medium-sized builders to grow, including through the Home Building Fund.

Action

- Launched the £3 billion Home Building Fund on 3 October 2016 to provide short-term loan finance targeted at SME's; custom-builders and innovators to deliver 25,000 homes.
- Launched the Accelerated Construction programme to diversify the market through partnership with small and medium-sized firms and others as development partners and contractors.
- Publicise 'Help to Buy' equity loan scheme to small and medium-sized builders to encourage uptake.

2. Objective

- Supporting custom-build homes with greater access to land and finance, giving more people more choice over the design of their home.

Action

- Promote the National Custom and Self Build Association's portal for Right to Build.
- Ensure the exemption from the Community Infrastructure Levy for self-build remains in place while longer term reforms to the system of developer contributions are being explored.
- Support custom build through the Accelerated Construction programme.
- Work with lenders to ensure they have plans in place to increase their lending in line with consumer demand.

3. Objective

- Bringing in new contractors through our Accelerated Construction programme that can build homes more quickly than traditional builders.

Action

- See up to 15,000 housing starts over the Parliament, through building out public sector sites faster than traditional disposal routes.
- Catalyse changes in the wider housing market, through supporting offsite manufacturing techniques and increasing the number of participants in house-building.
- Generate higher receipts for the taxpayer through sharing risk and reward in the development of Government and local authority land.

4. Objective

- Encouraging more institutional investors into housing, including for building more homes for private rent, and encouraging family-friendly tenancies.

Action

- Change the NPPF so authorities know they should plan proactively for 'Build to Rent' where there is a need, and to make it easier for Build to Rent developers to offer affordable private rental homes instead of other types of affordable housing.
- Ensure that family-friendly tenancies of three or more years are available.

5. Objective

- Supporting housing associations and local authorities to build more homes.

Action

- Set out, in due course, a rent policy for social housing landlords (housing associations and local authority landlords) for the period beyond 2020 to help them to borrow against future income.
- Put social housing regulations on a more independent footing by making the Social Housing Regulator a stand-alone body.

- Reiterate the position that housing associations belong in the private sector and implement the necessary deregulatory measures to allow them to be classified as private sector bodies.
- Expect all associations to make the best use of whatever development capacity they have to help meet local housing need.
- Expect housing associations to make every effort to improve their efficiency, in order to release additional resources for housebuilding. For example, efficiencies could be achieved through mergers or partnerships with other associations.
- Offer tailored support packages to councils who want to build on their own land at pace, through our new Accelerated Construction programme. Also announced a new £45m Local Authority Land Release fund for land remediation and small-scale infrastructure, with priority given to innovative delivery models as well as areas of high housing need.
- Interested in the scope for bespoke housing deals with authorities in high demand areas, which have a genuine ambition to build. Also look to promote the alignment of decisions on infrastructure and housing at higher spatial levels, including through joint local planning and statutory spatial plans.
- The Homes and Communities Agency will be relaunched as Homes England with a clear, unifying purpose: 'To make a home within reach for everyone'. At the heart of this renewed purpose will be the ambition to get more homes for communities across all housing tenures, put in infrastructure to unlock housing capacity and attract small builders and new players to diversify the market on a sustainable basis.

6. Objective

- Boosting productivity and innovation by encouraging modern methods of construction in house building.

Action

- Stimulate the growth of this sector through the Accelerated Construction programme and the Home Builders' Fund.
- Support a joint working group with lenders, valuers and the industry to ensure that mortgages are readily available across a range of tested methods of construction.
- Consider how the operation of the planning system is working for modern methods of construction (MMC) developments and work with local areas who are supportive of this type of manufacturing to deliver growth, provide jobs, and build local housing more quickly.
- Consider the opportunities for offsite firms to access innovation and growth funding and support for them to grow.

Section 4 - Helping people now

Key points

Doing all we can to support households now by tackling some of the impacts of the housing shortage on ordinary households, given that it will take time to feel the impact of the long-term solution of building more homes.

- Continue to support people to buy their own home – through Help to Buy and Starter Homes
- Help those currently priced out of the market to find a decent home that is right for them through our investment in the Affordable Homes Programme
- Take action to promote transparency and fairness for leaseholders, and get a fairer deal for renters
- Continue to crack down on empty homes and support areas most affected by second homes

- Develop a sustainable and workable approach to funding supported housing
- Do more to prevent homelessness, supporting households at risk before they reach crisis point

1. Objective

- Continuing to support people to buy their own home – through Help to Buy and Starter Homes.

Action

- In April 2017, the Government will introduce the Lifetime ISA. This will support younger adults to save flexibly for the long term, giving them a 25% bonus on up to £4,000 of savings a year.
- Committed £8.6 billion for the Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme to 2021, ensuring it continues to support homebuyers and stimulate housing supply.
- Make clear through the NPPF that starter homes, like shared ownership homes, should be available to households that need them most, with an income of less than £80,000 (£90,000 for London). Eligible first time buyers will also be required to have a mortgage in order to buy starter homes to stop cash buyers. There will be a 15 year repayment period for a starter home so when the property is sold on to a new owner within this period, some or all of the discount is repaid.
- Amend the NPPF to introduce a clear policy expectation that housing sites deliver a minimum of 10% affordable home ownership units. It will be for local areas to work with developers to agree an appropriate level of delivery of starter homes, alongside other affordable home ownership and rented tenures.
- Change the NPPF to allow more brownfield land to be released for developments with a higher proportion of starter homes by:
 - o Make it clear that any proposal on employment land that has been vacant, unused or unviable for a period of five years, and is not a strategic employment site, should be considered favourably for starter home-led development.
 - o Extend the current starter home exception site policy to include other forms of underused brownfield land – such as leisure centres and retail uses – while retaining limited grounds for refusal.
 - o Allow development on brownfield land in the Green Belt, but only where it contributes to the delivery of starter homes and there is no substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- Clarify that starter homes, with appropriate local connection tests, can be acceptable on rural exception sites.
- The £1.2 billion Starter Home Land Fund will be invested to support the preparation of brownfield sites to support these developments.

2. Objective

- Helping households who are priced out of the market to afford a decent home that is right for them through our investment in the Affordable Homes Programme.

Action

- Extra £1.4bn for our Affordable Homes Programme, taking total investment in this programme to over £7bn to build around 225,000 affordable homes in this Parliament. Opened up the programme, relaxing restrictions on funding so providers can build a range of homes including for affordable rent.
- This includes Rent to Buy homes alongside shared ownership, which will enable thousands of households to access home ownership through a product that fits their circumstances.

3. Objective

- Making renting fairer for tenants.

Action

- Bring forward legislation as soon as Parliamentary time allows, to ban letting agent fees to tenants.
- Implement measures introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which will introduce banning orders to remove the worst landlords or agents from operating, and enable local councils to issue fines as well as prosecute.
- Make the private rented sector more family-friendly by taking steps to promote longer tenancies on new build rental homes.

4. Objective

- Taking action to promote transparency and fairness for the growing number of leaseholders.

Action

- Consult on a range of measures to tackle all unfair and unreasonable abuses of leasehold, for example review of ground rents with short review periods with the potential to increase significantly through the lease period.

5. Objective

- Improving neighbourhoods by continuing to crack down on empty homes, and supporting areas most affected by second homes.

Action

- Community Housing Fund, which is supporting communities to take the lead in developing homes, including in areas particularly affected by second homes.
- Support local authorities to encourage efficient use of existing stock, making best use of homes that are long-term empty.

6. Objective

- Encouraging the development of housing that meets the needs of our future population.

Action

- Introducing a new statutory duty through the Neighbourhood Planning Bill on the Secretary of State to produce guidance for local planning authorities on how their local development documents should meet the housing needs of older and disabled people.

7. Objective

- Helping the most vulnerable who need support with their housing, developing a sustainable and workable approach to funding supported housing in the future.

Action

- Committed £400 million for a further 8,000 supported housing units. Over £200 million more is being invested through the Department of Health's Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund to develop 6,000 more supported homes over the next few years.
- Deferred the application of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates for supported housing until 2019/20, at which point the Government will bring in a new funding model which will ensure that supported housing continues to be funded at the same level it would have otherwise been in 2019/20, taking account of plans on social rents. The detailed arrangements for implementing the new model and approach to

short term accommodation will be set out in a subsequent Green Paper which will be published this spring.

8. Objective

- Doing more to prevent homelessness by supporting households at risk before they reach crisis point as well as reducing rough sleeping.

Action

- Government is supporting Bob Blackman MP's Homelessness Reduction Bill which will significantly reform England's homelessness legislation, placing a duty on local authorities to take steps to prevent the homelessness of anyone eligible and threatened with homelessness.
- Doubling the size of the Rough Sleeping Fund by providing an additional £10m for grants to innovative approaches to preventing and reducing rough sleeping.
- Establishing a network of expert advisors to work closely with all local authorities to help bring them to the standard of the best.
- Explore new models to support those that are the hardest to help, including whether social investment may have a role in helping to secure homes for those who are vulnerable or at risk of homelessness.
- Consider whether social lettings agencies can be an effective tool for securing more housing for households who would otherwise struggle – providing security for landlords and support for tenants to help strengthen and sustain tenancies.

Corporate Policy February 2017

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