

COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE: 20TH FEBRUARY, 2019

SUBJECT:

BUILDING MORE HOMES- INCREASING OUR AMBITION

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to set out our increased ambition to deliver more Council affordable homes over the next 10 years. This will make sure that the transformational plan not only meets general and specific housing needs, but also supports wider strategic regeneration and development priorities across the County.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To confirm our broad approach to deliver a 10 year programme of new Council homes; and
- To agree to the development of a comprehensive business plan.

Reasons:

- To ensure we are able to meet the ambition to build 900 additional new council homes over the next 10 years;

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted : NO

Exec Board Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Linda Evans (Housing Portfolio Holder)

Directorate

Communities

Designations:

Head of Homes & Safer
Communities

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**Name of Head of
Service/Report Author:**

Jonathan Morgan

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE: 20TH FEBRUARY, 2019**

**SUBJECT:
BUILDING MORE HOMES- THE NEXT STEPS**

What is the purpose of this report?

The purpose of this report is to set out our increased ambition to deliver more Council affordable homes over the next 10 years. This will make sure that the transformational plan not only meets general and specific housing needs, but also supports wider strategic regeneration and development priorities across the County.

If agreed, the plans will deliver the biggest increase in Council housing since the 1970s.

What is the context?

Following the implementation of the Right to Buy in the 1980s, there has been a steady decline in our housing stock over a 30 year period. The planned investment, if successful, would return our stock to levels last seen in the 1990s.

In 2016 the Council set out an ambitious programme to deliver over **1000** additional affordable homes across the County. Nearly three years in, we have already delivered well over half of these homes (650 to date) and are well on course to reach our target.

This delivery has been achieved using a variety of solutions including “buying back” in the private sector, supporting landlords in the private rented sector with our innovative Social Lettings Agency and bringing empty homes back into use.

It was noted at the time, however, that even more homes were needed to meet the actual housing need and we have been continually looking at new opportunities to further increase delivery, particularly new build homes

As a result of the work that has been undertaken, we are now in a position to be even more ambitious in terms of a new build programme. This is because:

- We have set up Cartrefi Croeso, our Local Housing Company. Cartrefi Croeso will be able to access funding through prudential borrowing from Council Fund and deliver a range of housing options, as an alternative to council housing. The company has a five year plan to deliver **500** additional affordable homes; and
- We have, as a result of careful financial management, more borrowing capacity through the Housing Revenue Account that will allow us to develop a potential programme of **900** additional council homes over the next 10 years.

By taking these opportunities we can deliver transformational change and investment, and set even more ambitious affordable homes targets for the future.

Making as big an impact as possible

Both the above programmes will work closely together, aligning with key strategic regeneration and development priorities to ensure that we have as big an impact as possible. Consequently our co-ordinated approach will mean:

- Delivering in areas of highest housing need, with housing options based on the need of the particular area e.g. more low cost home ownership in rural areas;
- Delivering more general and specific needs housing e.g. learning disability supported schemes;
- Linking directly to Cartrefi Croeso initiatives and wider strategic regeneration priorities across the County;
- Maximising external funding opportunities for each development and taking opportunities; and
- Defining timescales for developments identified for delivery.

How will we develop the approach?

We will set out a delivery overview and targets for the number of additional council homes that can be potentially delivered over the next 10 years. We believe over 900 homes additional council homes can be delivered, with an investment of nearly £150m.

This will be in addition to Cartrefi Croeso's planned programme. Cartrefi Croeso will be able to offer a wider range of housing options both in terms of low cost home ownership offers and market for sale or rent. This will particularly be the case in the more rural areas.

We want to create mixed communities with the council home delivery programme being used to support Cartrefi Croeso's overall offer on individual developments. This will also be the case on wider strategic regeneration developments.

The level of council housing on each development will vary according to the needs of the area and funding sources.

To support our delivery plan we will develop a banding structure, based on our strategic priorities:

BAND A- "Ready for Delivery Schemes" - schemes where details have been confirmed, funding in place, planning agreed or imminent.

BAND B- "Reserve Schemes" – schemes will be brought forward when funding becomes available.

BAND C- "Aspirational schemes" - schemes require more detailed considerations in terms of scheme numbers, strategic priority, deliverability etc.

Recommendations

1. To confirm our broad approach to deliver a 10 year programme of new Council homes.
2. To agree to the development of a comprehensive business plan.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

No - Presentation to full Council on the day.

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: **Jonathan Morgan** Head of Homes and Safer Communities

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime and Disorder and Equalities

The approach being proposed is an evolution of our Affordable Homes Delivery Plan, agreed by Full Council in 2016.

2. Legal

None at this stage, however, any services that need to be bought in to assist with the delivery plan will be subject to the Council's procurement procedures.

3. Finance

The proposed developments will be based on our affordability to deliver in relation to our HRA borrowing. No developments will be brought forward into Band A unless all funding sources are confirmed.

4. Risk Management

None at this stage

5. Staffing

There will be staffing implications associated with the setting up of the Strategic Housing Delivery team.

6. Physical Assets

The delivery programme will result in an increase in Council Housing stock on the County.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Head of Homes and Safer Communities

1. Scrutiny Committee

Will be engaged as part of the consultation process.

2. Local Member(s)

Will be engaged as part of the consultation and delivery process.

3. Community / Town Council

Will be engaged as part of the consultation process.

4. Relevant Partners

Will be engaged as part of the consultation and delivery process.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Will be engaged as part of the consultation and delivery process.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

There were no background papers used in the preparation of this report: