

## District Council CPA Self-assessment Pro-Forma for Balancing Housing Markets

How well does the council understand its housing market and from its understanding has the council developed the right proposals to help balance its housing markets?

	Ideas for hyperlinks
	Entry for Glossary

SUB BHM QUESTIONS	COUNCIL STATEMENT
<p><b>1.1 Does the council have the right research base to understand its housing market?</b></p>	<p>1.1 The council's current housing strategy is based on a comprehensive suite of surveys carried out and published in November 2000 by the consultants Fordham's, Marchaven and In house/Rand. These surveys consisted of a cross tenure housing needs survey; a private sector stock conditions survey (1,000 property sample) and a public sector stock condition survey (100%).</p> <p>The housing needs survey has subsequently been updated in March 2003 by Fordham's using a variety of sources, including estate agencies, letting agents and housing flows statistics. Information is collected regarding house prices, private rented costs and affordability, with data analysed by geographic area, income, age, gender, ethnicity, ability, etc. The survey also picked up hidden homelessness figures/statistics. As a cross tenure survey the Housing Needs Survey reflects the needs, demands and movement of all tenure types within the housing market. Estate profiles are formed by laying housing data across a variety of health, social services, education, crime and deprivation data on the web based MAIDeN project – a joint county council/health county-wide project. This data now includes relevant sets from Census 2001. This information is used to consider the impact on the housing market and predicting future trends.</p> <p>Information regarding need has previously been collated and validated by a wide range of partners during the development of a suite of special needs housing strategies. This information was updated and consolidated during the development of the homelessness review. During both these exercises mapping of existing provision was analysed with regard to needs information and action plans developed to fill gaps in service provision developed.</p> <p>In 2002 the Supporting People review took place and in 2003 a robust inter-agency homelessness review provided additional data on the most vulnerable sectors in the Cheltenham community. This supplemented analysis of council held information referring to housing advice statistics, homelessness statistics and the joint housing register (covering council and RSL properties and including transfer requests and reviewed in accordance to an annual review programme). During the development of the homelessness review, the council introduced, in partnership with other agencies, an initial housing assessment process. This is a new comprehensive software-based housing and support assessment and tracking system which has also been taken up by housing advice and support agencies within the borough. It is hoped to roll this pilot project out county-wide to clearly identify population migration due to seeking appropriate accommodation and support services. The information collated through this process enables the council to determine wider levels of</p>

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<p><b>1.2 How well does the council develop and evolve its strategies</b></p>	<p>homelessness in parallel with the more limited returns regarding statutory homelessness figures. The tracking function of these returns also enables the council to eliminate the occurrence of double counting individuals, therefore providing a more robust measuring system. Information is also gathered as a result of private sector housing enquiries, nuisance complaints, grant inspections, vacant property reports and from various initiatives such as 'affordable warmth', 'Care and Repair' and 'Care Direct'. The neighbourhood regeneration division also has input to housing needs point allocations in relation to private tenants living in properties suffering from disrepair, overcrowding, lack of amenities and/or fire safety deficiencies.</p> <p>In November 2003, a single housing needs survey will be jointly commissioned by the six districts of Gloucestershire. In addition to the standard data gained this will add the value of a comprehensive county wide picture; simplicity of inter district analysis and understanding of sub-regional housing markets; and will highlight travel, local labour market, inter and inward migration patterns. The results of this survey will be linked to a six-figure postcode allowing users of MAIDeN the local <b>geographic information system (GIS)</b> to build up estate and community profiles that are not tied to traditional ward boundaries.</p> <p>We use several methods of collating data with regard to monitoring existing levels, size and type of housing. We analyse census data to identify numbers, tenure, type, size, which is supplemented by residential land availability data (see above). Such information is also gathered through our periodic housing needs surveys. We have records of completions by number for over 20 years; by type for the last 4 years; and by size for the last 3 years. This information is held on Uniform; whilst we have complete figures for numbers and size for Council and RSL stock. The 2003 Land Availability Register also gives information on completions by number, type, size and location; and on commitments in the form of outstanding planning permissions and applications approved subject to section 106 obligations</p> <p>Our private sector stock condition survey included data on energy efficiency levels and is also gathered on a town-wide basis. The stock of our RSL partners are included in our five yearly sample private sector stock condition surveys. Information on empty homes is gathered annually from using the council tax register, but we also encourage and respond to complaints about private sector voids, concentrating our enforcement effort on around 100 properties (on a rolling basis) that have been empty longest. We are seeking to plot empty dwellings on a geographical basis from April 2004 using our new corporate GIS system. GIS will also be used locally to map RSL and local authority owned affordable housing and to help monitor and balance the provision of new housing on a tenure basis.</p> <p>1.2 The council's <b>community plan</b> sets out the key challenges for the town following extensive consultation with residents, businesses and partners. The council has aligned its new corporate business plan to ensure that the council is delivering on the issues that matter most to local people, whilst recognising the role that housing plays in tackling all these issues,. This is recognition is reflected in the latest housing investment programme, which is formatted to show how housing will deliver the agreed priorities for Cheltenham as well as relevant national and regional priorities and strategies. The business plan also provides the overall framework for the council's existing service-specific strategies which will be reviewed to reflect the community priorities.</p> <p>All strategies and plans are developed in full consultation throughout the process of their development with surveys, focus and discussion</p>

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and plans?	<p>groups which feed into an annual round of major stakeholder conferences – i.e. housing, community plan, social justice, Partnership in Power – timed to feed into major milestones such as the housing investment programme (HIP) round, private sector housing renewal policy, budget planning etc.</p> <p>As well as undertaking the statutory requirements for public consultation in the process of preparing and reviewing local plans, during the second review of Cheltenham’s local plan the council published issues papers to seek views from the wider community - a summary was delivered to all households in the borough via the council’s newspaper, The Clarion, together with a freepost comments form; this included a question about issues in the Cheltenham Viewpoint questionnaire. The council also set up a Local Plan Stakeholder Group, comprising people representing a range of different community interests, to comment on emerging drafts of the plan before the first deposit stage. At first deposit stage, the main points of the plan were summarised in The Clarion. All documents and response forms were also available on the council’s website.</p> <p>The council is preparing supplementary planning guidance (SPG) for providing affordable housing through the planning system. This has been the subject of specific consultation with representatives of the House Builders Federation and registered social landlords, and of public consultation. It is undergoing revisions to take account of representations and will be subject to further public consultation before being adopted by the council in May 2004.</p> <p>In Cheltenham, there are a number of balances we aim to achieve to deliver sustainable communities, including affordable and general needs housing; rented, purchased and shared equity; flats and houses; young people and older people; ethnic profile; extra needs and able bodied; residential and commercial and seeking to reduce further the already low proportion of long term empty properties – jobs are also required to sustain communities.</p> <p>The information listed in 1.1 is taken, analysed and consulted upon and fed into the policy making process mainly through partnership strategies. The bricks and mortar solutions are developed within the environment group including planning, transport, parks and landscapes and their many partnerships. These are brought together with people and community solutions developed in the social and community group together with leisure, recreation and public protection and their partnerships, by the corporate policy and planning team. These are the result of, and are subject to, outward consultation and involvement and feed into the community planning process through the Local Strategic Partnership and its thematic partnerships. These are matched against regional housing and local plan priorities and the corporate asset and capital monitoring strategies. Regular capital, performance and scheme standard reviews are undertaken to monitor progress, benchmark and profile options for change.</p> <p>Cheltenham covers a small area bounded tightly on three sides by Tewkesbury Borough and to the west by Cotswold District. For a decade the six housing districts in the county have worked closely together on cross-boundary strategic regeneration. Many of Cheltenham’s workers commute across the administrative boundary from Bishops Cleeve and Woodmancote in Tewkesbury and Longlevens in Gloucester, a pattern repeated across the county into the main employment towns of Cheltenham and Gloucester. Travel</p>

**SUB BHM  
QUESTIONS**

**COUNCIL STATEMENT**

to work patterns and inter-district migration are closely monitored and are important influences in community development, housing patterns and planning.

Both the local plan & housing strategy make clear reference and links to changing national, regional or local circumstances.

Housing plans are developed each year together with residents, potential residents and key stakeholders including: Developers; Cheltenham's Housing Investment Partnership – a best value joint commissioning partnership for affordable housing solutions; Cheltenham Borough Homes – our arms length management organisation (ALMO); Cheltenham Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations; private landlords; and many others listed in our HIP documentation.

Cheltenham has taken an area based approach to regeneration including housing investment and improvement, on a demonstrable 'worst first' basis. ([link to phase info](#)).

An historic anomaly, created by the early dormitory needs of the Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ), was for a heavy concentration of flats in general, and one bed flats in particular, in the Hesters Way and St Marks wards. Tenancy changes over the years led to a badly imbalanced community with a large concentration of people with a wide range of support needs leading to the creation of an unpopular letting area. A phased programme of partnership demolition and the rebuild of traditional houses with gardens has substantially redressed this imbalance. Involvement of support need groups – young care leavers, single young parents and others – in the rebuild programme from which they benefit, has created a more inclusive society. Integrated healthy living and community health care with the Primary Care Trust (PCT), lifelong learning with Gloscat, local schools and the Hesters Way Neighbourhood Project, working with the police, safer estates initiative and the Crime And Disorder Partnership (CADA) has put the heart back into Hesters Way which is now becoming a more desirable part of Cheltenham in which to invest. Integrated building skills training to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) with local builders, co-ordinated by the european-funded Young Builders Trust is also helping to replenish Cheltenham's depleted building skills base. GoSW have recently sought information from the authority to showcase Hester's Way as an example of best practice in neighbourhood regeneration.

In the private sector, the council declared a neighbourhood renewal area in 1996, including approximately 600 dwellings in the St Paul's area around the lower High street. Over the last seven years, nearly 200 owner occupied homes have been included in group repair schemes and many streets have benefited from environmental works to improve property boundaries, pavements, street lighting and road surfacing. The main streets in the area are now covered by CCTV cameras and works with partner RSL's have provided a considerable number of new affordable homes, including some for special needs clients. Eyesore sites have been the subject of compulsory purchase action and redevelopment, helping provide a significant improvement in the appearance of the area, including the provision of community facilities such as a neighbourhood resource centre which is now the base for the local home improvement agency. Private sector investment has followed this lead, with grant assistance helping to reduce the rate of property vacancy.

Through our best value joint commissioning partnership, tighter section 106 agreements and a lowering of the affordable housing threshold (and increased percentage) on new developments in our [supplementary planning guidance](#) we are attempting to in part address

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<p><b>1.3 Does the council have the right strategies and plans to help it balance the housing market?</b></p>	<p>the overwhelming requirement for affordable rented housing in Cheltenham. A situation exacerbated by an increase in student numbers, recently fuelled further by the town achieving university status. 95% of new developments in Cheltenham are on brownfield sites, but these are rapidly running out. We are seeking to address this imbalance by cross boundary partnering arrangements, though recent changes to local authority social housing grant (LASHG) rules that are likely to make the solutions a lot harder to achieve for most local housing authorities.</p> <p>We are addressing town centre regeneration through a comprehensive Civic Pride bid covering the town centre and its 'walk to work' areas – including the regeneration of housing in St Peter's and St Paul's wards.</p> <p>The council has co-ordinated the development of partnership special needs strategies and has played an active role in the development of the Supporting People initiative and strategy development, feeding into the county strategy its locally identified service provision and needs analysis to ensure it reflects the priorities for support services in the borough.</p> <p>1.3 Cheltenham Strategic Partnership has identified that the need for affordable housing is a key priority to safeguard the economic, environmental and social well being of the town. The council's business plan for 2004/05 includes the following as a top priority <i>"we want to increase the provision of affordable housing, particularly in the social rented sector, and work towards a balanced housing market"</i> The business plan will inform strategy preparation, service planning and resourcing with the intention that the council focuses on tackling its key priorities. A partnership consultation and development structure has been established to ensure that all existing and developing strategies such as the community plan; corporate plan; suite of special needs; Supporting People interim; private sector renewal; health improvement programme; homelessness and HRA business plan have influenced the development of our housing strategy and housing investment foundation document.</p> <p>Cheltenham's Local Plan was adopted in 1997 and is currently being reviewed. Its overall housing requirement is set by the structure plan and is likely to be met substantially on brownfield sites. The emerging plan seeks to secure a mix of housing types and sizes based on identified needs. It also contains a clear policy on affordable housing and a five-year target based on an up-to-date housing needs survey. As a result of the housing needs survey the council is also seeking through the plan to reduce the size threshold for sites on which the council can negotiate for an element of affordable housing and to increase the required percentage of affordable housing on others. The policy is supported by the emerging SPG. However, the provision of affordable housing through the planning system will remain inadequate to meet identified local needs. This issue has been the subject of specific consideration at Cabinet level. The council has adopted SPG on amenity space, play space, sustainable development, and security and crime prevention to help achieve liveable residential environments, and has published draft SPG on section 106 agreements.</p> <p>To comprehensively answer this it would be necessary to study the enclosed documentation</p>

## What are the council's actions and what outcomes has it achieved in helping to balance housing markets?

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	<p>Q.2 What are the Council's actions and what outcomes has it achieved in helping to balance housing markets?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable and general needs housing</li> <li>• Rented, purchased and shared equity</li> </ul> <p>Between 2000 and 2003</p> <p>Delivery –</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>- Affordable completions Rented</td> <td style="text-align: right;">276</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Shared equity/Low Cost Home Ownership</td> <td style="text-align: right;">43</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Vacant properties back in use (council action)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Private homes improved with grant aid</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,402</td> </tr> </table> <p>The council has invested heavily in its housing investment programme, with £5.348 million spent on LASHG between April 2000 and March 2003 and a similar level of expenditure on the full range of renovation grants, including the provision of mandatory disabled facilities grant assistance. During this period, housing corporation allocations to the authority totalled £6.597 million.</p> <p>These in 10 out of Cheltenham's 14 wards. 95% of all new development has been on brownfield sites. All sites are now fairly scarce within Cheltenham and land availability tends to dictate special/geographical development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flats and Houses</li> </ul> <p>Hesters Way/St Marks had approximately 3000 council flats (around 50% of the local authority dwelling stock for the area), an historical anomaly linked to early GCHQ worker demand. A concentration of system build one bed flats had a detrimental effect on the desirability of this area. Between 2000 and 2003/4 the Hesters Way Development Partnership will have replaced 293 such flats with 220 traditional houses with gardens, mostly to lifetime homes, designing out crime and providing affordable warmth to NHER 9 standard.</p> <p>Whilst the demand for affordable traditional housing remains high there is a growing demand for town centre quality small flats. We anticipate identified sites coming on stream over the next three years that will address this balance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people and older people</li> </ul> <p>Young people specific and supported - As well as competing in the general housing market we have developed a balance between residential supported into community floating support and onto sustainable independent accommodation for young people with additional support needs. Between 2000 and 2003 new schemes include 9 units at Winchcombe Street (24/7), doubling of Bromford</p>	- Affordable completions Rented	276	- Shared equity/Low Cost Home Ownership	43	- Vacant properties back in use (council action)	71	- Private homes improved with grant aid	1,402
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<p><b>2.1 How well is the council working corporately to help balance the housing market?</b></p>	<p>Housing Group's floating support provision, 4 units per year pilot pathways care leaver (floating) linked to regeneration schemes, 4 units per year full mobility for severely disabled young people, 8 units supported independent living for young single parents, doubling of the private sector rented bond scheme, dispersed Foyer amongst others. Schemes are widely distributed across the town and in the main linked to local provision and facilities.</p> <p>Older people specific and supported - Older people were the largest sector of support within the Supporting People strategy and funding. Cheltenham has 490 rented and 26 leasehold shared ownership council dwellings, 334 RSL and n private residential and nursing homes (awaiting NCS.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnic profile - Our housing needs survey and Census 2001 provided a comprehensive picture of housing needs amongst the BME community and together we produced a housing strategy tailored to the sector. As part of the new Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Market Partnership we will be commissioning a regional FBHO association work with communities to develop and action/delivery plan.</li> <li>• Extra needs and able bodied - Working closely with Social Services Department (SSD), Occupational Therapy (OT), PCT, National Star Centre College, users and carers we have a spread of accessible and adapted accommodation throughout the borough. New schemes have been located so that people with limited mobility can choose to live in a residential environment close to the local college for continuing education or near town/commercial centres. The emphasis is on integrated independent living and extended housing choice. We have an integrated approach to support services such as disabled facilities, care and repair, lifeline alarms, care direct and other provision to help achieve this.</li> <li>• Residential and commercial - Jobs are required to sustain communities and, with limited land availability, we attempt a balance between residential and commercial development. We now concentrate on cross boundary strategic development to address land availability and sustainable community issues.</li> </ul> <p><b>2.1</b> Cheltenham recently moved to a Cabinet style government and took the opportunity to restructure. This heralded a move away from perceived 'silo' departments to a group structure aimed at enhanced corporate working. Instead of an isolated housing department, bricks and mortar, regeneration now sits in the environment group with planning, transport and the built and green environment. Community services, community regeneration and stakeholder involvement is now in a group together with healthy lifestyles and public protection.</p> <p>Over-arching co-ordination is now provided by the corporate asset management working group and policy division which is responsible for preparing the new corporate business plan and supporting the preparation of the thematic strategies. A strategy co-ordination group works to ensure that there is effective corporate working on all key strategic issues. A corporate group, which brought together housing, planning, policy, regeneration and finance officers was responsible for drafting the latest housing investment strategy which was formatted to outline how combined housing and related services deliver to corporate and community plan priorities. Policy and delivery initiatives are developed within the multi agency Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and its themed groups. In housing's case mainly the</p>

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<p><b>2.2 Is the council pursuing the right actions and initiatives to help balance the housing market and are the outcomes for local residents and the housing market as a whole making the right kind of difference?</b></p>	<p>‘Regeneration’, ‘Healthy Improvement’ and ‘Crime and Disorder’ partnerships. These LSP themed groups also facilitate a more joined up approach between the council and other statutory agencies in particular the Primary Care Trust, Social Services and the County Council all of whom have an important stake in a balance housing market. Beneath and along side the LSP themed groups lie specific partnerships of multi-agencies such as the Health Improvement Plan, Supporting People Core Strategy Group, Community Safety Partnership, Social Justice Partners’ Group; and internal cross departmental groups such as the internal Supporting People Project Group, Housing Investment Project Officers group to name a few.</p> <p>Housing and planning officers have worked jointly on the local plan review and have developed new supplementary planning guidance for affordable housing which is aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing to help meet identified local needs.</p> <p>The council has a corporate approach to service delivery planning, with all divisions using a standard template, and monitors performance through quarterly monitoring reports to Cabinet and other members.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> The council subjects its actions and initiatives to a series of reality checks –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Housing Conference – 100+ users and stakeholders from across the housing market</li> <li>• Housing Investment Partnership annual review</li> <li>• Countywide annual review of supported housing strategies and homelessness strategy</li> <li>• Bi-monthly partnership meetings of Housing Investment Partnership, Supported Housing Partnership, Youth Housing Forum, Supporting People Core Group, Regeneration Partnerships, Housing Forum</li> <li>• Housing Inspectorate Report</li> <li>• Best Value Reviews</li> </ul> <p>Management information and analysis would suggest that proportionately, the council is delivering on this agenda within available resources. Recent changes to funding through local authority social housing grant capital (LASHG) and social housing management grant/supporting people revenue have restricted most authorities ability to deliver quality solutions.</p> <p>Local plan policies reflect the sequential approach to the development of land for housing and the need to make best use of land through higher densities. There is currently a 5-years supply of land in the Borough. The council has prepared and published an <b>urban capacity study</b>, which it updates annually. This indicates that the residual of the structure plan housing requirement is likely to be met by windfall sites on brownfield land. Unfortunately, most of these sites will not provide an affordable housing contribution. On appropriate sites, the council negotiates for an element of affordable housing and consistently uses section 106 obligations to secure agreed provision.</p> <p>The council has prepared development briefs for larger development sites and is intending to undertake more of these utilising additional funding through the Planning Delivery Grant.</p> <p>The Council has a housing renewal strategy which is also intrinsically linked to the housing investment foundation document, setting delivery performance objectives for the next three year period. The newly formed neighbourhood regeneration division is already building</p>



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	<p>on the Charter Mark success of the earlier private sector housing division.</p> <p>Recognising resource constraints, the renewal strategy outlines the council's new approach to targeting renovation grant assistance only at those owner occupiers in greatest need of health and safety related repairs and improvements. This policy is resulting in a considerable shift of resources away from significant expenditure on the direct funding of repairs for owner occupiers with equity, allowing the planned development of loans and equity release as alternative funding streams. Analysis of the potential for these alternatives is being undertaken in conjunction with our local home improvement agency, Care and Repair (Cheltenham) Ltd. However, the council recognises that there may be revenue funding implications for the agency and these are being discussed with the county supporting people team.</p> <p>The renewal strategy plans for the continued availability of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and introduces a new discretionary support grant which is used in conjunction with, or instead of DFG, to undertake associated repairs, or to provide an alternative form of move-on assistance to help clients relocate to more suitable accommodation. The council continues to support and work closely with the local home improvement agency, which is currently planning to extend its Handyman service, in addition to safer bathing and home from hospital initiatives.</p> <p>Work in respect of vacant property is maintained within the policy and the council continues to use a 'carrot and stick' approach with a combination of grant incentives, backed up by compulsory purchase where attempts at co-operation with private owners fail to bring properties back into use. A significant number of affordable housing units have also been provided through the creative conversion of a number of vacant buildings.</p> <p>Clear targets for enforcement activity on houses in multiple occupation link closely to our assessment of the number of properties where we have a statutory duty to inspect for fire safety, a clear area of risk for the authority. The duty to inspect is reflected by our registration scheme, which will need to be kept under review as the government's licensing proposals take shape.</p> <p>Plans for future regeneration activity are already underway, with a town-wide map of multiple deprivation highlighting the areas for more detailed investigation. The Cheltenham Regeneration Partnership provides the cross-cutting multi-agency focus for this work and involves representation from all of the main community based neighbourhood projects.</p> <p>Following the restructure and the establishment of the ALMO, the council established a specialist homelessness and allocations team alongside the council's staying at home services (i.e. disabled facilities grants and lifeline alarm service) and within the same division as the council's co-ordinator of the Supporting People programme. This team can focus on maximising housing options, and enable people to maintain their existing accommodation by linking with the staying at home services and Supporting People services. Achievements to date include a reduction in the number of placements being made into bed and breakfast accommodation clearly showing that more homelessness preventative action is being taken when the number of applications being made is increasing overall. The team also includes a Welfare Rights Advisor who actively works with the homelessness and allocations officers to assist clients facing</p>

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	<p>homelessness in dealing with housing affordability issues. The advisor also liaises closely with the Council's Housing Benefit Section in ensuring that housing benefit applications are processed quickly. Our Lifeline Alarm customer base has also increased 10% in the last 6 months enabling more vulnerable people to remain in their own homes longer, thus easing current pressures on the demand for housing. Protocols for the resettlement of care leavers into permanent housing have also been established and it is intended that this protocol will be used for other groups before the end of the year.</p> <p>Individual officers within the team have also been identified as links for vulnerable groups at both an operational and strategic level. A thorough review of homelessness was undertaken by a wide partnership of stakeholders and in wider consultation. This review provided the basis of the homelessness strategy where key priorities, actions and resources were identified to take a proactive preventative approach to homelessness and the delivery of associated services and initiatives in partnership. This has included the provision of family mediation, the expansion of rent deposit schemes and the provision of furnished temporary accommodation as an alternative to bed and breakfast accommodation.</p>

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### 3. How well does the council monitor its progress and impact in helping to balance housing markets and how effectively does this feed into future strategies and plans?

KEY BHM QUESTIONS	COUNCIL STATEMENT
<p><b>3.1 How well does the council monitor its progress and assess the impact of its work to help balance the housing market?</b></p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Our comprehensive suite of housing and community development strategies are designed as living documents. They undergo rolling reviews with partners, stakeholders and users throughout each year. Annual milestones include the autumn capital bidding round and the spring housing investment round.</p> <p>The new business plan sets out a series of strategic targets for each corporate priority. At the time of writing, the targets to meet the priority <i>“we want to increase the provision of affordable housing, particularly in the social rented sector, and work towards a balanced housing market”</i> have not been finalised. However, these are likely to include increasing the provision of social rented units in the borough, and reducing the number of empty homes in the borough.</p> <p>For each set of strategic targets, a series of <b>performance indicators</b> will be used to monitor our progress towards achieving the corporate aims. This will set the framework for the annual review of the performance of the council as a whole and its constituent groups, which will be undertaken by a performance review group. This will then be communicated to key stakeholders and the wider community via both the web-site and The Clarion.</p> <p>The council publishes an annual <b>residential land availability report</b>, which monitors residential planning permissions and building rates by brownfield/greenfield and size of site, and assesses these against structure and local plan requirements. The council also continuously monitors the provision of affordable dwellings provided, including those through the planning system, and contributions secured through section 106 agreements. This has led to the council seeking through the review of the local plan to reduce the size threshold on which it can negotiate for an element of affordable housing.</p> <p>However, we recognise the need to do more work to monitor housing flows and completions, particularly around such attributes as size, tenure, type, density and location. More work is also required to measure effectively the impact of our planning policies on the balance of the housing market and to evaluate the risk of not meeting assessed need requirements.</p> <p>Cheltenham uses a variety of fora and methods to monitor progress in this area, including:–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizens panel</li> <li>• Resident and tenant satisfaction surveys</li> <li>• Annual stakeholder reviews of the community, corporate, and service delivery plans</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews</li> <li>• Housing needs and stock conditions surveys and updates</li> <li>• Regional, county structure, housing Corporation and local plan reviews</li> </ul>

**3.2 Has the council learnt from what it is doing to help balance the housing market to develop and improve its future strategies and plans?**

- Supporting people rolling reviews
- Capital programme and corporate asset management reviews
- Best value performance indicators (BVPI's) and improvement plans
- Benchmarking – Exeter Club and Housemark
- County Strategy Officers Group
- Neighbourhood Monitoring Panels and Area Committees
- Special Needs Housing Fora
- Local regeneration partnerships: Hesters Way; Whaddon, Lynworth and Priors, and Lower High Street
- Cheltenham Regeneration Partnership – sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership
- Joint Commissioning Partnership of RSLs - CHIP

**3.2 Examples of a learning culture include:**

- Corporate restructure of the housing function to bring it into mainstream sustainable urban and community development.
- Rebalancing of affordable housing development in favour of low cost/key worker home ownership and shared equity - particularly in areas which already have a high level of social renting
- Greater emphasis on the provision of affordable housing through the planning system and planned lower threshold through the adoption of new supplementary planning guidance
- Re-balancing of resources to help maintain support for the affordable housing programme - particularly the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Housing Partnership - following the abolition of LASHG
- Move away large 'renovation grants' to smaller scale support for more private householders with essential health and safety related works, move-on assistance for disabled householders, security measures and greater support for energy efficiency
- Closer co-operation with partners, including health and social services around the development of the county affordable warmth strategy and through the county-wide 'Warm and Well' project which is led by the council and has been acknowledged as a national example of best practice (DEFRA 'Dying to be Warm' roadshow and 'GO South East' guide for local HECA support)
- More pro-active private rented sector enforcement, with our local registration scheme for higher risk houses in multiple occupation (which reflects our statutory duty to inspect) - now considering potential for local licensing scheme to address student accommodation concerns when national mandatory licensing is introduced
- Targeting of long term vacant property and in particular, high profile empty buildings which are having an adverse impact on their neighbourhoods – compulsory purchase action has been used as a last resort in a number of cases
- Re-alignment of short term priority in favour of town centre quality smaller units/higher density developments for rented, leased and shared equity starter homes in order to help counter spiralling local house prices.
- Added value to regeneration schemes and decent homes development through tenure diversification, the use of local labour on building projects and community engagement and participation
- Increasing Cheltenham's pool of building skills by linking local labour schemes to local college NVQ building skills courses
- Off-site construction methods being piloted with the Sochi Court redevelopment
- Supply chain partnering and greening the supply chain
- Designing out crime in liaison with \_\_\_\_\_ (PALO)
- Using community development, travel to work patterns and migration profiles to transcend artificial political boundaries when

developing sustainable communities, i.e. Gloucester Housing Market Package, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Housing Partnership, County-wide Supporting People Commissioning Partnership, County wide housing needs survey in 2004

- In past years, the monitoring of residential land availability has led to a change in policy and might do so again - for instance if the rate of brownfield development were proving inadequate to meet the structure plan housing requirement and/or the provision of an adequate level of affordable housing
- The monitoring of employment land has led to the council seeking to change its policy through the local plan review as a result of findings, which will have some impact on the housing market
- Integrated living, rather than isolated schemes, for people with support needs, i.e. pilot pathways for care leavers, full mobility for National Star Centre graduates, integrated living for young single parents, lifetime homes.

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