

TITLE OF REPORT: Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2024

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Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for the 2024 Housing Delivery Test Action Plan.
2. To recommend that Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Economy, Innovation and Growth in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to make minor changes and publish the Action Plan.

Background

3. The results of the latest Housing Delivery Test, published in December 2023, indicate that Gateshead delivered 93% of the required net additional housing in the year 2021-22.
4. This falls short of the 95% threshold below which the Council is required to publish an Action Plan.

Proposal

5. Approve the 2024 Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (Appendix 2).
6. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Economy, Innovation and Growth in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders and Cabinet Member to:
 - a. Make any minor changes to the action plan;
 - b. Publish the action plan and submit it to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) if necessary.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the 2024 Housing Delivery Test Action Plan
8. for the following reasons:
 - i. To continue to address under-delivery of housing
 - ii. To meet local housing need
 - iii. To satisfy the requirement to publish an Action Plan in accordance with paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Policy Context

1. The proposed Action Plan is consistent with the Council's pledge to make Gateshead A Place Where Everyone Thrives, and is aligned with the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan (CSUCP) requirement to increase housing delivery between the start of the Plan period and 2030, and the Housing Development Strategy and Delivery Programme.

Background

2. The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results have been published annually since 2018, but the latest results, for the year 2021-22, were delayed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and published in mid-December 2023.
3. The HDT measures net change in housing numbers, resulting from completions, demolitions and conversions, at local authority level, against a 3-year rolling target, which is mainly based on the government figure for Local Housing Need but adjusted on the basis of an affordability ratio which varies between local authorities, and to allow for disruption in 2020 caused by the pandemic. This target differs from, and is substantially lower than, the target in the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan.
4. Gateshead has fallen short on the Housing Delivery Test since it was introduced, but results have been progressively improving. In 2020-21 Gateshead delivered 87% of the net completions required (completions minus demolitions, taking account of net change through conversions). In 2021-22 performance improved to 93%.
5. As a result of the measurement being below 95%, Gateshead is required to publish an updated Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (HDTAP) by 19th June 2024. The previous HDTAP was approved by Cabinet on 13th September 2022. The HDTAP analyses performance since the last HDTAP, details the actions which the Council will take to improve net housing delivery, and sets timescales for them to be carried out.
6. The HDTAP is not required to be submitted to government for approval, merely published. No other sanctions result from the measurement, though separately, as Gateshead continues to fall short of a five-year supply of housing sites considered available and deliverable according to the government's definitions, the "presumption in favour of sustainable development" continues to apply. This means that in some circumstances some of the council's planning policies would be considered out-of-date and unable to be applied to some applications.

Structure of the action plan

7. As in previous years, the Action Plan firstly examines the existing situation in terms of delivery of housing in the Borough and what the consequences are in terms of under-delivery. It then examines the root causes of under-delivery

before assessing how successful the measures in the previous Action Plans have been before setting out new key actions and responses and ways of measuring these. A number of recent initiatives are already starting to increase supply and boost delivery. Therefore, the Action Plan proposes that these measures are continued, introduces new work which is already under way or programmed, and updates target dates for each action.

Next steps

8. The next set of results from the HDT are expected later this year or early 2025. They will provide an opportunity to review the action plan and the success of the measures already in place. On the evidence of housing completions in 2022-23, which will be reflected in that calculation, and 2023-24, it is uncertain whether a further updated Action Plan will need to be produced in response to those results.

Proposal

9. Approve the 2024 Housing Delivery Test Action Plan.

Consultation

10. The responses were drafted in consultation with specialists from the Housing Growth, Regeneration, Major Projects and Strategic Property, Housing Asset, and Development Management teams.
11. A report on Action Plan was taken to Environment and Transport Portfolio on 30th April.

Alternative options

1. There are no alternative options.

Implications of Recommendation

2. **Resources:**
 - a. **Financial Implications** – None.
 - b. **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resource implications arising from this report.
 - c. **Property Implications** - There are no direct property implications arising from this report.
3. **Risk Management Implication** – No risks associated with the Action Plan.
4. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – The proposed actions take account of the continuing commitment to provide a range of suitable housing for all needs.
5. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – No crime implications.

6. **Health Implications** – The proposed actions will take place in the context of of the Council’s continuing commitment to provide a range of suitable housing for all needs.
7. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** – No climate emergency and sustainability implications.
8. **Human Rights Implications** - None.
9. **Area and Ward Implications** – The actions included in the Action Plan potentially impact on all Areas and Wards.

Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2024

BACKGROUND

1. The 2022 results of the Government's Housing Delivery Test (HDT) (issued in December 2023) show that 93% of new housing required in the Borough is being delivered. Whilst this is an improvement on the 87% figure from the previous HDT results (issued in January 2022), it still falls just short of the 95% threshold above which no Action Plan is required. Therefore the Council is still required to publish an Action Plan to look at the causes of under delivery and to set out actions to increase delivery. The improvement was largely due to the measurement discounting expected completions for 5 months at the beginning of the pandemic.
2. Four previous Action Plans (as required under the previous HDT results) have been published by the Council, the latest in September 2022. For the avoidance of doubt, no Action Plan was prepared or published by the Council in 2023, as the Housing Delivery Test results for the year 2021-22 were not published by the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) until December 2023, eleven months later than usual. This Action Plan is therefore required according to the results for the year 2021-22, but was prepared in early 2024 taking account of progress and initiatives within the Council up to the date of its preparation. It substantially refreshes the commentary and actions in the previous Action Plan.
3. The HDT is a percentage measurement of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes by national household projections.
4. In comparison to the years up to 2021, Gateshead's performance against the HDT is no longer the lowest of all authorities in the north east of England, but it is still third lowest, ahead of South Tyneside and North Tyneside. If not enough homes are delivered in Gateshead this has several consequences:
 - **Jeopardise economic and population growth** – The CSUCP requires 11,000 new homes over the period 2010-2030 to support economic growth and prevent a decline in the working age population.
 - **Put at risk the ability to regenerate the urban area and other towns and villages in needs of regeneration** – including redevelopment of brownfield land.
 - Put at risk the ability to deliver housing that would **support services in neighbourhoods and villages.**
 - **Jeopardise the ability to deliver affordable housing.**

- Increase commuting into the urban core from areas outside Gateshead, **increasing traffic congestion and reducing air quality.**
 - Increase pressure to allocate further land in the **Green Belt** for housing.
 - Put at risk the ability to **deliver the Council's Housing Strategy and Housing Delivery Strategy and Delivery Programme** which ensure that the supply of new housing best meets current and future needs and aspirations.
 - Result in the presumption in favour of sustainable development applying, meaning that some planning policy could have less weight when considering the balance between deliverability and other considerations.
 - Undermine the Council's efforts to make sure that **Gateshead is a place where everyone thrives.**
5. This Action Plan reviews the root causes of under-delivery of housing in Gateshead, the actions to tackle this and whether they have been successful, and whether additional or replacement actions are required.
 6. The Plan links to other Council plans and strategies. The Council's Local Plan is made up of four parts. The joint (with Newcastle City Council) Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan (CSUCP) makes up parts 1 and 2 and was adopted in March 2015, requiring 11,000 new homes. A joint CSUCP review was approved in March 2020. Preliminary work has begun on a replacement Local Plan, for the period 2025-2045.
 7. Part 3 of the Local Plan is Making Spaces for Growing Places (MSGP) , adopted in February 2021. This is a site allocations document with provision for additional housing sites to accommodate a share of the 11,000 new homes along with the more detailed development management policies. This will also be superseded by the replacement Local Plan currently being prepared; the site allocations will be updated. Part 4 will be an Area Action Plan (AAP) for Metrogreen which is an area of change around the Metrocentre to create a new community with potential for 850 homes by 2030 and further major growth thereafter. Public consultation on the AAP Draft Plan took place from February to April 2024.
 8. The Council's Housing Strategy identifies objectives and priorities, including ensuring that the supply of new housing best meets current and future needs and aspirations and creates thriving mixed communities. The Council's Making Gateshead Thrive pledges require new housing to help people and families, tackle inequality, support communities, invest in the economy and create a better future for Gateshead.
 9. The Council's Housing Development Strategy and delivery programme identifies five key aims: to promote the delivery of a range of homes; develop more affordable homes; enable more independent living; the regeneration of places; and building partnerships.

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

10. This section reviews the root causes of under-delivery of new housing in Gateshead, the extent that the factors are contributing to under-delivery, and whether any further root causes have become apparent.

11. The previous Action Plans identified several root causes holding back the delivery of new housing in the Borough. These were:

- High number of demolitions
- Lack of diversity in the housing market
- Activity in neighbouring local authorities
- High development costs
- Time taken to sign Section 106 Agreements
- Land ownership and assembly
- Low levels of implementation of planning permissions
- Conditions imposed on planning approvals

12. This Action Plan has again reviewed these root causes. The number of demolitions has reduced. Between 2015/16 and 2017/18 demolitions had an average effect of reducing net additions by 37% and therefore this had a large impact on net delivery. However, there was a gradual reduction in the number of demolitions between 2015/16 and 2017/18 and a big drop from 2018/19 as shown below. 2022/23 was the fourth consecutive year with no demolitions by the Council, which has always been the main driver of demolitions; there were small numbers of private demolitions, though none in 2021/22 or 2022/23.

Year	Number of demolitions
2022/23	0
2021/22	0
2020/21	3
2019/20	6
2018/19	20
2017/18	107
2016/17	130
2015/16	164

13. However, council homes at Felling, Bensham and in the town centre are being emptied for demolition and redevelopment and further demolitions of council stock may take place in the next few years. This contributor to low net completions may therefore become significant again in the near future. Whilst demolitions by the Council only take place when there is no realistic alternative, this increases the importance of ensuring that new completions are maximised.

14. In regard to time taken to sign Section 106 Agreements, the 2020 Action Plan sets out that there were four large housing sites that the Council was minded to approve, but where permission had not been formally issued due to waiting for Section 106 Agreements to be signed. The sites were as follows:

- Dunston Hill (hybrid application ref. DC/17/00170/FUL) – 352 dwellings – minded to grant on 21/11/18.
 - Kibblesworth (outline application ref. DC/16/01207/OUT) – up to 225 dwellings – minded to grant on 12/12/18. Viability issues on the site have led to delays in the signing of the Section 106 Agreement.
 - High Spen East (full application DC/18/00859/FUL) – 185 dwellings – minded to grant on 12/12/18. The signing of the Section 106 Agreement is expected imminently.
 - Ryton (two full applications refs. DC/16/00320/FUL and DC/17/01376/FUL) – 550 dwellings in total – minded to grant on 13/03/19.
15. The High Spen East site and the two adjoining sites at Ryton were all granted planning permission in 2020/21 and development has begun on all three and is progressing well. The Dunston Hill application was granted in December 2023. Work is ongoing by both the Council and the developers to progress the site at Kibblesworth, but this is no longer a case of delayed signing of a section 106 agreement as a new application was submitted in 2022 for a larger number of homes on the site, which has given rise to some planning policy issues which need to be resolved. There are no currently outstanding larger sites being delayed by delays in signing s.106 agreements.

Covid 19

16. Covid 19 resulted in construction sites being closed for several weeks in 2020 and a slowing down of the housing market. This was temporary and the overall picture for the last few years is of gradually increasing, though still insufficient, progress in the development of sites in Gateshead. Covid cannot be blamed for poor delivery compared to the Housing Delivery Test measurement since, if anything, the slowdown was less than the revised test measurement (an assumed five-month hiatus in completions) allowed for.

Shortages in construction materials and wider economic situation affecting housing construction

17. According to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the cost of materials for new housing rose by a modest 2% for new housing construction work in April 2021 compared to one year before. However they then rose by 17.8% between April 2021 and April 2022 and by a further 7.5% by April 2023, but fell back by 1.4% from April 2023 to January 2024.
18. Development costs have also been affected by construction industry skills shortages, and pressure on supply chains resulting at least partly from Brexit and the war in Ukraine. The annual update of the Homebuilders' Federation report "State of Play – Challenges and Opportunities facing SME Home Builders" (2024) indicated that "supply chain constraints have largely eased".
19. In view of the ongoing changing situation regarding general inflation, incomes, mortgage interest rates and the cost of living it would be unwise at present to

speculate on the likely impact on construction costs, and the affordability of new dwellings to potential purchasers over the next few years. Average house prices fell by 0.8% in the North East in 2023, but increased by 22% from the end of 2019 to the end of 2023. Similarly, in Gateshead they rose by 22.7% from the end of 2019 to the end of 2023, but this conceals a fall of 0.5% during the year 2023. Since at least 2005 the North East has had the lowest average house prices in England, the current averages for both the North East and Gateshead being almost identical at between £157,000 and £158,000 (Office for National Statistics),

20. The above situations cannot be dealt with through this Action Plan as they involve the global supply chain and the overall economy which cannot be influenced by the Council. However, net housing completions have been increasing gradually but progressively for the last few years in Gateshead, as reflected in improved performance against the Housing Delivery Test, almost meeting the threshold for passing the test.

Issues that are not affecting delivery

21. The previous action plan identified five factors that were not affecting delivery. These were:
 - Speed in determining planning applications
 - Decisions on planning applications
 - Allocating land for housing
 - Burdens from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
 - Burdens from planning obligations
22. It is still considered that the above factors were not affecting delivery in 2022-24. There is no clear evidence to demonstrate that the imposition of CIL in certain areas of the Borough for certain types of development is affecting viability and therefore the deliverability of sites. The same applies for the imposition of planning obligations. A review of viability in Gateshead is due to take place over the next year or so as part of plan-making processes.
23. With regard to speed of determining planning applications, in each year of the two-year period 2021-23 the Council determined 100% of major planning applications for housing within 13 weeks, or in accordance with the terms of an extension of time agreement (against a national target of 70%). Of these applications, 100% (2021-22) and 90% (2022-23) were granted permission.
24. In the same period, the Council determined 72% (2021-22) and 72% (2022-23) of minor planning applications for housing within 8 weeks, or in accordance with the terms of an extension of time agreement (against a national target of 70%) Of these applications, 90% and 91% in the respective years were granted permission.
25. Despite a reduction in the speed of determining minor applications in 2020-21 and 2021-22 caused by temporary staffing and capacity issues, the position

has now fully recovered, demonstrating that the Council is dealing with applications speedily, exceeding national targets and therefore not affecting delivery.

26. With regard to land allocated for housing, the CSUCP has allocated 14 strategic sites for housing equating to approximately 4191 homes. MSGP was adopted in February 2021 and allocates 101 sites for housing equating to approximately 2789 homes.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION PLAN MEASURES

27. The previous action plan was published in November 2022. The measures set out to increase delivery in that plan were:

- Speed up the signing of S106 Agreements.
- Issue a call for sites as part of the Local Plan process.
- Speed up the disposal of Council-owned land.
- Speed up the delivery of in-house development.
- Increase the promotion of Gateshead as a place to build new homes.
- Publish the digital tool providing site information.
- Stimulate the supply of affordable new homes and focus on future affordable housing delivery.
- Identify options for redundant housing stock and existing or proposed development requirements.
- Increase publicity and a point of contact for SMEs seeking to develop in the Borough.
- Review site viability and determine the funding gap.

28. The following measures from the previous action plans have helped to increase delivery (or will in future years).

- GRP (the Gateshead Regeneration Partnership, the Council's Joint Venture Vehicle with Home Group (Registered Provider) and Countryside (private sector developer) has increased output and expanded the number of active sites. The following sites have been completed or nearly completed – Trilogy Phase II (Kelvin Grove), Birtley Northside, Rowlands Gill and Windy Nook. In addition planning permission has been granted for the Freight Depot site, as well as over £2.5 million funding secured by the Council, and construction is now under way and a number of homes have been completed and are occupied. Planning permission has also been granted for Trilogy Phase III (Hyde Park Street), a further phase of Birtley Northside, and the Hookergate School site, and work has begun on site at these three locations. There are several further council-owned sites where business plans are being progressed, and/or site marketing is taking place although there are viability issues with the majority of them.
- Permission in Principle (PIP) was granted in 2018-19 on 3 sites which will help deliver approximately 200 homes in the Borough. Of these sites, one

was granted permission in September 2022 but the other two, which have viability difficulties, have not progressed. A total of 22 Development Frameworks have now been completed.

- Section 106 Agreements have been signed, planning permission issued and work started on the large housing sites, allocated by the CSUCP, at Ryton and High Spennet East, the latter being well advanced. These two sites account for 731 homes. Permission was also granted in December 2023 for the large site at Dunston Hill (352 homes to be delivered by a volume housebuilder).
- A council owned site at Sunderland Road has secured permission for 55 affordable rented apartments and bungalows.
- A council owned site at Charlton Walk has secured permission for 18 new affordable homes and work is due to commence imminently.
- A council owned site at Wynn Gardens, Pelaw has secured permission for 20 new homes for individuals with complex needs.
- The Council-owned site at Felling Depot has secured PIP.
- The Council has received over £2 million funding from the Affordable Homes Programme which has enabled the Gateshead Regeneration Partnership to build 44 homes at Whitley Court, Wrekenton. This site has now been completed.
- The Council's Digital Brownfield Tool was published in 2021 and updated in 2022 and again in 2023.
- A call for sites was issued in the autumn of 2022 and resulted in a large number of submissions. Whilst many of these were greenfield sites in the Green Belt, and therefore not able to be taken forward currently, one important new site of nearly 7 hectares emerged in a highly sustainable urban location arising from the intended closure of a hospital which would also "unlock" adjoining derelict land. The call for sites was re-issued in early 2024 on the new basis that greenfield Green Belt sites could be submitted and potentially considered as part of the preparation of a new Local Plan, currently in its early stages. Analysis of the sites submitted in early 2024 is ongoing at the time of writing (April 2024).

29. The following measures in the action plan have not been as successful.

- In-house delivery has been slower than anticipated due to viability challenges caused by site remediation costs and a relatively weak local housing market.
- Only a small proportion of sites on Part 1 of the Brownfield Land Register have been granted Permission in Principle and placed on Part 2 of the Brownfield Land Register. Work on Permissions in Principle has stalled through pressures on staff capacity, though PIP is an encouraging and streamlining mechanism rather than a prerequisite for sites to proceed or a guarantee that they will.

KEY ACTIONS, RESPONSES AND MONITORING

30. From the above analysis there are a number of measures that are working well but also a number of measures that still need to be improved to help increase delivery (in the short, medium and long term).
31. As with the previous action plans consideration has been given to:
- The extent to which the issues are affecting delivery and therefore the extent to which factors are most likely to be improved.
 - The extent to which the issues are within the Council's control and depending on this, the other stakeholders that will need to be involved.
 - The timescales required for key actions and responses. For example, some could be achieved in the short term, but others may be medium or long term.
 - Measures which the Council currently has in place.

Extent to which the issues are affecting delivery

32. From the root cause analysis and review of measures in the previous action plans, the following issues are having the greatest potential impact on delivery.
- Lack of diversity in the housing market, meaning that there is a reliance on volume homebuilders for delivery due to a relative lack of SME homebuilders developing in the Borough.
 - A significant number of the sites allocated to the Gateshead Regeneration Partnership have viability and technical challenges.
 - Ground conditions in the Borough, in particularly relating to former mine workings, quarries and contaminated previously industrial land in conjunction with a large proportion of allocated sites being brownfield and a high proportion of those being unviable for housing development under market conditions based on the most recent viability assessment. This brings about viability and technical challenges on a high proportion of suitable and available sites.
 - Low land values in many parts of the Borough which results in major viability challenges.
 - Sluggish delivery of in-house development, partly due to a lack of resources and a poor financial business case.
 - Delays in signing Section 106 Agreements due to the need to resolve outstanding issues.
 - Delays in agreeing the disposal of council-owned land.
33. The Council is a significant landowner in the Borough and much of its land is allocated in the Local Plan for housing development. For example, the Council wholly owns or partially owns land which covers 53 sites identified in the 2023 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Update as deliverable or developable with the potential to deliver 3308 homes in 2023-32 inclusive-. Ten of these sites are under construction or have recently been

granted planning permission. Therefore as an average, between 2023 and 2032, 276 homes per year could be delivered on Council-owned land, subject however, in many cases, to viability, funding, site-specific decisions and, in a few cases, further investigation of potential constraints. The Housing Revenue Account Asset Management Strategy (2021) identifies a completion rate directly by the Council of 40 homes per year, but this is number only refers to homes to be retained within the Council stock, and in addition the Asset Management Strategy is subject to annual review and other measures in this Action Plan could result in the potential to increase the number. There is a big part for the Council to play in terms of disposing of its land for housing development and, where prudent to do so, ensuring in-house development on its own land.

34. As indicated above (paragraph 12), a number of council blocks of flats, accounting for about 600 homes, are currently being emptied and/or are anticipated to be emptied, and then demolished, in the next five years, as they are unpopular and/or beyond economic refurbishment or conversion to housing tenants wish to live in. The figure in paragraph 32 may therefore need to increase to a higher gross delivery figure so that the net completions do not fall short.
35. It is therefore considered that tackling the above issues will provide the best opportunity of boosting delivery. The Housing Development Strategy and Delivery Programme was approved in October 2022 for the period 2022-25. It also confirms the delivery of affordable homes and includes this as a strategic aim.

Extent to which the issues are within the Council's control

36. Several of the above factors are largely within the control of the Council. These include the delivery of homes directly by the Council, making it easier and more worthwhile for SME homebuilders to operate in the Borough, the planning application and Section 106 process, the Local Plan process and the disposal of Council land for housing with the Council being a major landowner in the Borough.
37. Issues that the Council has less control over include the decisions of volume homebuilders and the actions of neighbouring local authorities so there is less focus on these factors, including the very high levels of delivery, greatly exceeding identified need, in neighbouring local authorities, some of which share the same housing market area as Gateshead. The most important and difficult such factor however is the high and abnormal cost of developing many of the available sites, especially set against the low returns given the relatively low level of sale prices and rents in large parts of the Borough, especially the older, inner areas which is precisely where most of the sites which are expensive to develop are located. The Council does seek every opportunity to access funding to help bring sites forward, and supports the development of its own sites on the basis of future council tax income and the overall benefits of development to the Borough in cases where the development would not be viable in itself. Most recently the Council has secured over £5m to bring forward the Chandless and Clasper sites, both of which are now actively being marketed for development.

Actions and monitoring

38. The table below sets out the proposed actions, how they will be implemented, by whom and when. The focus is on a manageable number of tasks. In addition, the actions proposed are considered to have the potential to have the biggest impact on delivery and are generally within the Council's control.
39. The following form the measures of the revised action plan:
- Speed up the signing of s106 Agreements.. Whilst this issue is not holding up any major sites at present, it could be an issue again in the future, and a review to identify improvements could provide an opportunity for future sites to be delivered earlier.
 - Speed up the disposal of Council land for housing. The Council owns many small, and some larger, currently unused sites that are suitable for housing and many benefit from their allocation in the CSUCP or MSGP, a Development Framework, or Permission in Principle, or a combination of these.
 - Review delivery of Council-led development to ensure sites are deliverable. Work is in progress on a number of sites as indicated in the Housing Development Strategy and Delivery Programme.
 - Promoting Gateshead corporately along with regular discussions with developers to discuss any problems affecting delivery. Discussions are ongoing with Homes England, promoting Gateshead as a place for housing growth to give a better opportunity to secure funding for infrastructure to unlock various brownfield sites. Reorganisation within the Council has led to the formation of a team championing housing growth.
 - Detailed review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Strategy and identification of uneconomic housing stock to enable discussion on options for potential redundant housing stock moving forward, including any impact on existing or proposed development frameworks. This was completed in 2021 and has prompted the decommissioning and intended demolition of council housing referred to above. It is subject to annual review, resulting in incremental decision-making over that period.
40. The actions set out in the table have different timescales and are capable of being measured. Reporting would be annual to the Council's Cabinet, relevant Portfolio holders and the Planning and Development Committee and would set out the success of measures. Following the (normally) annual publication of the Housing Delivery Test results, any future requirement for an Action Plan and the contents of the plan would be signed off by Cabinet.

Actions	How implemented	Responsibility	Timescales	Already in place?	How monitored
		Strategic Director Economy, Innovation and Growth (EIG) Strategic Director Housing, Environment & Healthy Communities (HEHC)			
Speed up the signing of S106 Agreements	Review the process with Legal and Democratic Services and developers. Identify reasons for lack of progress once resolution to grant permission has been made, use of standard template and milestones set out as part of the planning application process including the signing of S106 Agreements.	EIG; Development Management	October 2024	In progress	Review takes place and results in new measures being brought in to tackle delays. However there are no major delays of this nature at present.
Complete analysis of responses to the call for sites and use it to inform work on the draft replacement Local Plan.	Selection of sites to propose for allocation in the replacement Local Plan will proceed based on a regularly-refreshed evidence base of suitable and achievable sites, the quantity and locations to follow from the emerging results of consultation on Issues and Options and worked up into a draft Plan to cover the period 2030 to 2045.	Spatial Planning. Council Cabinet approval for timing and content of each stage.	Ongoing; adoption of draft Plan envisaged in 2027	In progress	Progress on the Plan will be monitored against the timescales set out in an updated Statement of Community Involvement and, from the appropriate point, the timetable agreed with the Planning Inspectorate.
Speed up the disposal of Council-owned land	Set out target timescales for disposal where there is a Development Framework and/or PIP in place.	EIG; Property Services; Portfolio Members for Housing and Environment and Transport	December 2024	In progress	Monitoring of how quickly sites are disposed of.
Speed up the delivery of in-house development taking into account viability.	Review programme of housing delivered directly by the Council. Allocate more resources to in-house delivery,. The Housing Development Strategy and Delivery Programme has reviewed the programme but will require continuing review.	EIG; Housing Growth & Development and HEHC; Housing Strategy; Portfolio Members for Housing and Environment and Transport	December 2024	In progress	Assess the number of homes completed each year by the Council.
Increase the promotion of Gateshead as a place to build new homes.	Regular meetings with developers and the creation of a team championing new housing delivery (Housing Growth team).	EIG; Major Projects & Communications team; Portfolio Members for Housing and Environment and Transport	Ongoing	In progress	Housing Growth team continues to champion housing delivery and liaises with developers.
Publish the Digital Brownfield Tool providing site information.	Tool is available to use on the Council's website which helps to support SMEs to take on more sites and implement more existing permissions.	EIG; Spatial Planning; ICT Services	Update annually	Yes	Updated annually in conjunction with updating of the Brownfield Register. 2021 version was updated in April 2022 and September 2023.

Stimulate the supply of affordable new homes, and to provide a focus for future affordable housing delivery.	Development of a new Affordable Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan to explore and agree any new affordable housing policies in Gateshead.	HEHC; Housing Strategy	December 2022	Completed	New Affordable Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan covered by the Housing Development Strategy and Delivery Programme
Identify options for redundant housing stock and existing or proposed development requirements	Detailed review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Strategy completed 2021 but subject to annual review.	HEHC; Housing Strategy	Ongoing	In progress	Detailed review of HRA Strategy carried out.
Increase publicity and a point of contact for SMEs looking to develop in the Borough.	Publicise a point of contact within the Council as a co-ordinator for SME developers with input from Planning and Property functions to provide advice and guidance along with the digital tool, development frameworks, brownfield land register and PIPs. Improvement of the website to address this issue.	Housing Growth, Property Services and Spatial Planning.	October 2024	Partially	Promotion on website and social media.
Review site viability to determine the funding gap	Review of viability scheduled. Outcomes to be considered against funding opportunities	Spatial Planning in conjunction with and Housing Growth	June 2025	Joint viability assessment with Newcastle City Council has stalled but due to resume for Gateshead in later 2024.	Viability review completed and funding opportunities assessed