

 <b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b> <b>5<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b>		<b>Agenda Item No. 9</b>
<b>Title</b>	Student housing strategy community engagement	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Ken Bruno, Housing Strategy and Development Manager <a href="mailto:Ken.bruno@warwickdc.gov.uk">Ken.bruno@warwickdc.gov.uk</a> 01926 456044	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	All	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	31 May 2018 Executive Minute 2.	
<b>Background Papers</b>	Task & Finish Group review of WDC role in dealing with HMOs – report to Executive 1 June 2017 Student Housing Strategy – report to Executive 31 May 2018	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	N/A
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken</b>	N/A

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Deputy Chief Executive	21/1/2019	Bill Hunt
Head of Service	17/1/2019	Lisa Barker
CMT	19/1/2019	Chris Elliott
Section 151 Officer	23/1/2019	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	21/1/2019	Andrew Jones
Portfolio Holder(s)	23/1/2019	Cllr Peter Phillips
<b>Consultation &amp; Community Engagement</b>		
This report is specifically about a community engagement project and details are contained in the body of the report.		
<b>Final Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)</b>		
N/A		

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings of community engagement work, undertaken by WSA Community Consultants on behalf of Warwick District Council pursuant to the Student Housing Strategy and outlines the action plan for taking forward the recommendations of the project.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutinee Committee notes the report contained in appendix one and provides comments on the action plan attached as appendix two to this report.

## 3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1 In June 2018 the Council adopted a Student Housing Strategy that included two major pieces of work: the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document on Purpose-Built Student Accommodation and a community engagement project to research the support needs of local communities in areas with high student numbers.
- 3.2 This report sets out the findings of the second of these projects and provides, in response, an action plan for members' comments.

## 4. Policy Framework

### 4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects. This report shows the way forward for implementing a significant part of one of the Council's Key projects – the Student Housing Strategy.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

<b>FFF Strands</b>		
<b>People</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Money</b>
<b>External</b>		
<b>Health, Homes, Communities</b>	<b>Green, Clean, Safe</b>	<b>Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment</b>
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		

Taking forward the action plan will help to build cohesive and active communities and provide incentives for good landlords.	The proposals will help reduce low-level nuisance.	A welcoming and supportive environment for students helps to secure the benefits that this brings to the local economy.
<b>Internal</b>		
<b>Effective Staff</b>	<b>Maintain or Improve Services</b>	<b>Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term</b>
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers' needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		
None.	The actions set out will improve services for all residents, student and non-student, in areas of the district with high student numbers.	None.

#### 4.2 **Supporting Strategies**

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies and the relevant ones for this proposal are the Housing and Homelessness Strategy and the Student Housing Strategy. This report specifically takes forward the proposals in the Student Housing Strategy to engage with local communities and provide appropriate support services to maintain community cohesion.

It is also relevant to the Supplementary Planning Document on Purpose-Built Student Accommodation currently being developed and, upon receipt, a copy of the WSA report was supplied to the Planning Policy Team to enable any implications for that document to be considered.

#### 4.3 **Changes to Existing Policies**

This report does not seek to change existing policies. Should any of the actions contained within the action plan require a change to an existing policy then an Executive report will be brought forward in the normal manner.

### 5. **Budgetary Framework**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report. Any actions included in the action plan that require additional resources will be reported to Executive and Council as appropriate to seek funding for their implementation.

## **6. Risks**

This report is consultative only.

## **7. Alternative Option(s) considered**

7.1 This report takes forward the Student Housing Strategy previously agreed by the Council. It is not considered appropriate therefore to consider an alternative strategic option. However the views of the committee will be taken on board in finalising the action plan.

## **8. Background**

8.1 In 2016 the Overview & Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group to look in depth at the role of Warwick District Council in dealing with houses in multiple occupation.

8.2 In April 2017 the Council approved a new Housing and Homelessness Strategy and, at the same time, requested the Executive to develop a Student Housing Strategy.

8.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported this proposal, as did the Task and Finish Group when it made it's final report to the Executive in June 2017.

8.4 Executive subsequently approved the Student Housing Strategy in May 2018. This set out three aims:

- To attract students to live in the district, during and after their studies, throughout the academic year.
- To encourage the provision of purpose-built student accommodation of an appropriate type and quality in sustainable locations thereby encouraging students to move from HMO style accommodation.
- To ensure that the necessary support services are in place for the whole community to ensure community cohesion and integration across all the generations.

8.5 In order to take forward the third of these aims the strategy proposed procuring an external independent community engagement company to consult with local communities that include high concentrations of student housing and for an action plan to be developed in response to the findings of the engagement.

8.6 Funding was secured from the Local Government Association's Housing Advisers' Programme and this has covered the full costs of the project.

8.7 A procurement exercise was undertaken and WSA Community Consultants was appointed in July 2018. Because the beginning of the contract coincided with the university summer vacation period the engagement work did not commence immediately but took place largely between mid-September and December. The final report of the consultants is appended to this report as appendix one with the action plan as appendix two.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Community Engagement for the Student Housing Strategy, WSA  
Community Consultants, December 2018

Appendix 2 – Action Plan