Appendix 1 – Housing supply Task Group Recommendations

update January 2017

	STAKEHOLDER	ACTION / PROGRESS	TIMELINE	STATUS
Recommendation 1 That Cabinet work with the private rented sector to encourage landlords to let properties to residents on the Housing Register and in receipt of Housing Benefit. (paragraph 6.16)	Cabinet	Officers continue to work with private landlords both individually and through the Landlord forum which took place in September 2016. Officers have secured 31 homes in the private rented sector to meet housing need	On-going	G
Recommendation 2 That Cabinet explore the opportunity for providing temporary accommodation in house. This should include a review of both housing need and disruption to residents placed out of the borough as well as the potential financial benefits tot the Local Authority. This should also enable the council to meet requirements regarding tenure, in particular for larger units for families. (paragraph 6.28)	Cabinet	Officers in futureMerton and Housing continue to monitor the temporary accommodation position including potential changes to temporary accommodation funding regimes. This recommendation is also linked to action 13	On-going	G
Recommendation 3 That a report is presented to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel in anticipation of the proposed Pay to Stay policy on how residents	Cabinet	Government is not proceeding with the "Pay to Stay" policy	This recommendation is closed	G

Agenda Item 7

might be incentivised to move on to alternative forms of affordable housing, freeing up much needed social housing (paragraph 7.12)				
Recommendation 4 The Cabinet undertakes a review into the effectiveness of viability assessments and make recommendations on challenging developers to enable the provision of more affordable housing. (paragraph 8.12)	Cabinet	This recommendation is linked to Recommendations 5 and 6 below). Officers in the Development Control and futureMerton teams are progressing this work. Officers have engaged with London Councils and London boroughs that provide this information to members of their planning applications committees to learn from their experience and gain best practice	May	G
Recommendation 5 That Cabinet agree to consider whether viability assessments can be made available for review to Councillors on the Planning Application Committee. (paragraph 8.12)	Cabinet	To progress this matter the council will consult on Merton's requirements for developers to submit with planning applications (known as the Validation Checklist) which will take place in Spring 2017	May 2017	G
Recommendation 6 That the planning department	Cabinet	Officers in the Development Control	on-going	G

proactively considers using their right to review powers on developments that don't meet the 40% affordable housing target. (paragraph 8.12)		team have recently used this method and will continue to implement it as appropriate on a case by case basis		
Recommendation 7 That the Council encourages developers to engage with Registered Providers, at an earlier stage in the planning process, on the development of affordable housing. (paragraph 8.12)	Cabinet	Officers in the Development Control team actively encourage this at all pre-application meetings with prospective applicants and will continue to do this as part of their everyday engagement with applicants	On-going	G
Recommendation 8 The Cabinet consult with councillors and community groups on potential sites and land that present opportunities for the development of affordable housing (paragraph 8.13)	Cabinet	This work will be part of the council's revision of the Local Plan during 2017 and 2018 (programme agreed at September 2016 Full Council). Consultation will take place during summer 2017	On-going to 2018	G
Recommendation 9 That the Cabinet consider opportunities for gifting small to medium pockets of land in council ownership to Housing Associations in order to stimulate the creation of more affordable housing	Cabinet	Officers in Sustainable Communities are considering this matter and will report back on the legal and financial implications during 2017		G

to meet demand. In doing so, Cabinet should submit a report to the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel for review on the business case and council's ability to gift land and on what might be proposed to housing associations with this. As part of any agreement with Housing Associations on the use of council land/sites, the Council should receive full nomination rights to all properties developed. (paragraph 8.19)				
Recommendation 10 That Cabinet agree to consult with Registered Providers in revising the terms of reference of the MerHAG Group, to enable a more regular forum for proactive engagement with Housing Associations and Registered Providers on the opportunities for, and barriers to, the development of affordable housing in Merton. (paragraph 10.7	Cabinet	Officers continue to progress this matter.	On-going	G
Recommendation 11 That the Council effectively communicates its sites and plans policy to Registered Providers. (paragraph 10.7)	Cabinet		On-going	G

Recommendation 12 That the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel invites all Registered Providers in operation in the borough to a future meeting to gather information on their overcrowding strategies and to make any recommendations, as appropriate. The Panel should also engage other Local Authorities to look at good practice, including Richmond Council who the task group met with as part of this review. (paragraph 12.20)	Cabinet	Officers would recommend a review of this action.		
Recommendation 13 That the Council consider the proposal for a Housing Development Company in Merton and ensure that it meets Council policy on affordable housing, encouraging where possible, given that it is a Council owned vehicle that it provides above and beyond the baseline of 40% affordable housing. (paragraph 13.16)	Cabinet	Officers in Sustainable Communities took a paper to CMT in December 2016 which will then be considered by Cabinet in January 2017 to establish a housing company. Should this be approved, the housing company would be established during 2017	Cabinet meeting = January 2017 Housing company established during 2017	G
Recommendation 14 That Cabinet explore effective policy enacted by other London Councils to unlock land banking and stalled development sites to ensure that affordable housing can be developed	Cabinet	This would be addressed through recommendation 13 above	See Rec 13 above	G

sooner. (paragraph 13.16)				
Recommendation 15 That Cabinet identify sites to commission the development of intermediate products, such as Pocket homes, in order to meet the needs of those trying to secure ownership of a property but unable to afford full market values. (paragraph 14.6)	Cabinet	This would be addressed through recommendation 13 above	See Rec 13 above	G
Recommendation 16 That Cabinet identify sites to commission the development of homes, such as those offered by YCube, in order to support residents to move out of temporary accommodation or social housing (paragraph 14.10)	Cabinet	This would be addressed through recommendation 13 above	See Rec 13 above	G
Recommendation 17 That the Council lobby the Sec. of State for Health to simplify structures regarding land ownership and responsibilities for selling off NHS land. (paragraph 14.20)	Cabinet	The council has successfully bid for Stage 2 of the One Public Estate project which will provide the funding to undertake a review and consolidation of services and assets to March 2018	March 2018	G