

Information Update Request: *Oxfordshire’s Affordable Housing*

For: *Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel*

Date requested: *30th May 2019*

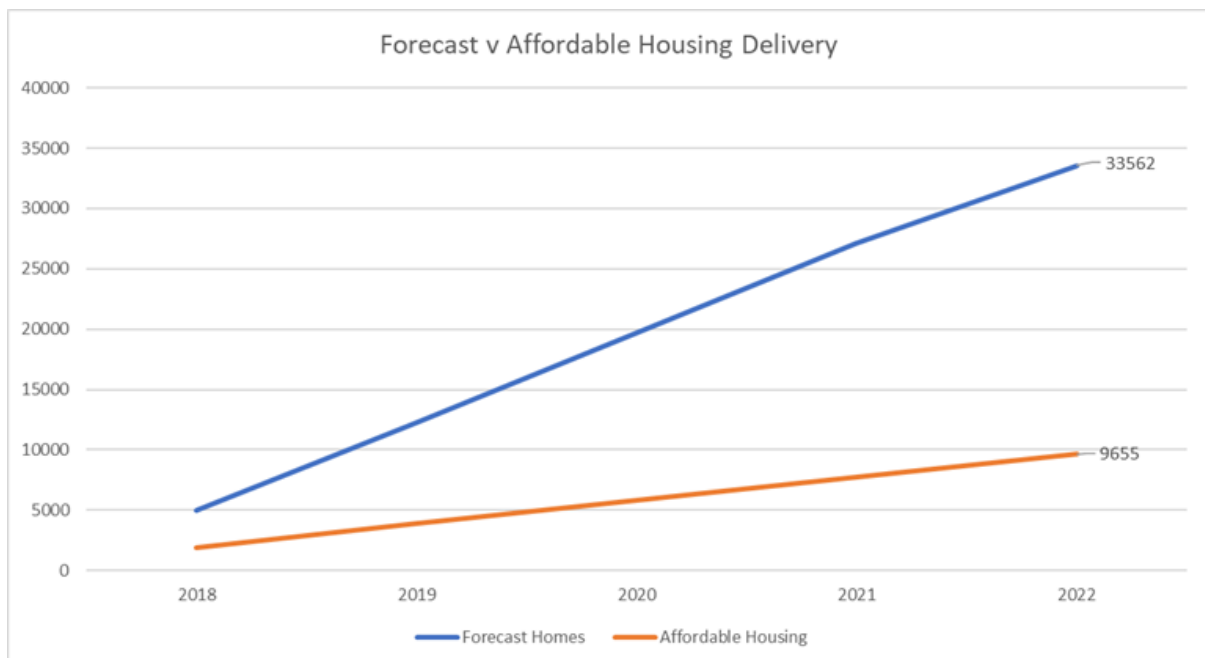
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The Scrutiny Panel requested on 30 May 2019 that officers provide the following information, as set out in the minutes from that meeting:

That Officers be asked to produce annualised housing and affordable housing trajectories with a graph comparing the actual versus forecast (4-year plan) and affordable housing as a percentage of overall housing completions derived from the Annual Monitoring Reports.

The graph below provides the relevant information.



Any estimate of councils’ affordable housing delivery is almost all derived from the overall housing trajectory and the application of the relevant affordable housing planning policies to deliver a proportion of affordable housing on sites.

When compared to the percentage of affordable housing required by policy across the partners, the trajectory offered appears modest, there are two reasons for this:

The first reason for this is that any estimate of affordable housing delivery needs to take account of the fact that affordable housing levels derived through planning policy will always be subject to the challenge of site viability, i.e. can the site reasonably deliver that level of affordable housing. Development sites will have many obligations to deliver apart from affordable housing, with many of them required to make the site deliverable, for example road or utility infrastructure. Affordable housing is the largest cost to a development that is not 'site required' and so always comes under pressure when viability is being considered.

The second reason is that a significant proportion of sites in the Oxford Local Plan housing trajectory will not have on site affordable housing. For example, there are around 90 sites on the draft housing trajectory and only around 50 sites are expected to have on site affordable housing. This is because the sites are for:

- student accommodation;
- employer linked housing; or
- conversions under permitted development.

There are also a significant number of sites that make up housing supply in the City that are not large enough to trigger the affordable housing requirement.

Both reasons will lead to the actual possible affordable housing delivery being below that which one might hope for from a pure application of the planning authorities affordable housing policy.

The countywide trajectory shown in the graph should therefore not be considered a target or indeed an ambition. Instead, it is a prudent estimate of what Oxfordshire might expect to see as future affordable housing delivery. District Councils all remain committed to maximising the delivery of affordable housing and will seek to ensure that all applications deliver as close to policy ambitions as possible as well as seeking other opportunities to bring affordable housing forward.