The Council has a duty to publish a Tenancy Strategy (as a housing authority) and Tenancy Policy (as a social housing provider and landlord) in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. The Council also needs to take into consideration any changes introduced by new legislation such as the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which introduced a mandatory requirement for all Local Authorities to offer Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies for new tenants.

The Draft Tenancy Strategy 2018-23 sets out the City Council's requirements and expectations of Housing Associations and other social housing providers in the city, in terms of:

- The kind of tenancies they grant
- The circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind
- The length of tenancy term, and
- The circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when an existing tenancy comes to an end.

It also sets out the Council's requirements of social housing providers in terms of meeting social and regulatory obligations (including reducing homelessness and rough sleeping), and how affordable housing can be provided at genuinely affordable levels, given local incomes and property prices.

To contribute towards achieving the City Council's housing vision: "Oxford to be a city where people have access to affordable and high quality homes that enable them to build settled, safe and healthy lives within sustainable and thriving communities"

the draft Tenancy Strategy sets out the following objectives:

- To promote Oxford City's housing vision with a focus to provide social rented tenancies
- To make sure that affordable housing providers adhere to the new Tenancy Strategy to the benefit of the local community
- Affordable housing providers are to let any new tenancies in Oxford at genuinely affordable rents (meaning that they must be in line with social rent or at affordable rents capped at the Local Housing Allowance levels)
- To create sustainable, mixed and balanced communities

The City Council's Tenancy Policy is included as an appendix to the strategy document. The policy describes how the Council, as a social housing provider and landlord, will deliver the requirements set out in the strategy and how it will let and manage its Council homes. The focus for the Council is to let properties at social rent levels and to offer Introductory or Lifetime tenancies. There will be exceptional circumstances where a different tenancy term or an Affordable Rent level will be offered and these circumstances are further explained in the main strategy document.

In terms of introducing Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies (i.e. a tenancy for a fixed term), Government guidance on the mandatory requirement is still awaited, with no indication yet of when it is to be published. The Council is not proposing to introduce Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies but may need to do so in the future. To make sure that the Council is meeting its legal duties, an update of the Tenancy Strategy will be
produced when the necessary Government guidance on Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies has been published.

The Draft Tenancy Strategy identifies that there is a shortage of genuinely affordable accommodation in Oxford and the demand for affordable housing exceeds the supply. Oxford City Council owns, lets and manages 7,746 homes in the City. A further 3,753 dwellings are owned, let and managed by Registered Provider partners (i.e. Housing Associations). Whilst the cost of private rented properties in Oxford is high and unaffordable for many people, private renting does provide another housing option for those households who are able to afford it. The Council is committed to working in partnership in order to make the best use of all available social, affordable and private sector housing within Oxford City.

To make sure that social housing is allocated appropriately, the Council operates an Allocations Scheme and also formed a partnership with the major Registered Providers (i.e. Housing Associations) in Oxford. This is known as the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) Partnership and the Council maintains a common register of social housing applicants on behalf of the Partnership. ORAH partners have agreed to give 90% to 100% of all lettings to Council nominated applicants.

Under the ORAH Partnership Agreement (June 2011), the Registered Providers have agreed not to dispose of their social housing stock without the Council’s consent. If they do sell any affordable housing, it is expected that they will use the capital received to build at least “one for one” replacement property that will be let at social rent levels.

The City Council also requires that social housing providers within the City, provide suitable and genuinely affordable accommodation, including property that is available to purchase on a part rent/part buy basis. The Draft Tenancy Strategy 2018-23 supports that where there are rent and service charges for a property, they are kept to minimum so that the property remains affordable.

The draft Tenancy Strategy 2018-23 is a draft for consultation. The Public consultation period will run from 21 March 2018 to 19 April 2018. Comments on the strategy are invited and can be provided through the online consultation:

www.oxford.gov.uk/tenancystrategysurvey