

## Scrutiny Standing Panel Agenda



### ***Housing Scrutiny Standing Panel Thursday, 29th July, 2010***

**Place:** Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

**Time:** 5.30 pm

**Democratic Services Officer:** Mark Jenkins (The Office of the Chief Executive)  
Tel: 01992 564607 Email: [mjenkins@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:mjenkins@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

**Members:**

Councillors S Murray (Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby (Vice-Chairman), R Barrett, D Dodeja, Mrs A Grigg, Ms J Hart, Ms J Hedges, Mrs S Jones, Mrs J Lea, L Leonard, A Lion and Mrs J H Whitehouse

**Epping Forest Tenants & Leaseholders Federation:** Mrs M Carter

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting

purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

**4. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 14)**

To agree the notes of the last meeting of the Panel held on 25 March 2010.

**5. PRESENTATION ON HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION**

The Panel will receive a presentation from Russell Wallace, Housing Options Manager, regarding Homelessness Prevention.

**6. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 15 - 20)**

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference of this Panel and associated Work Programme. This is attached. The Panel are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

**7. TENANT SATISFACTION - COMPARISONS WITH OTHER STOCK RETAINING COUNCILS (Pages 21 - 22)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**8. REVIEW OF THE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME (Pages 23 - 34)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**9. HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010, HOUSING CHARTER AND LOCAL OFFER TO TENANTS (Pages 35 - 78)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**10. HOUSING STRATEGY 2009-2012 (Pages 79 - 104)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**11. ETHNIC MONITORING (Pages 105 - 108)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**12. TENANT PARTICIPATION IMPACT STATEMENT (Pages 109 - 140)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**13. HOUSING DIRECTORATE'S SERVICE STRATEGY ON THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR (Pages 141 - 150)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**14. HOUSING CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE PROGRAMME - FINAL ACTION PLAN AND PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 151 - 176)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**15. REVIEW OF HOUSING PERFORMANCE - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2009/10 (Pages 177 - 180)**

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached report.

**16. REVIEW OF PROPOSED LICENCE CONDITIONS FOR PARK HOMES**

On 12 July 2010 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a call-in of the Cabinet's proposed licence conditions for park home sites. The Committee decided to refer the issue back to the Cabinet for further consideration and that the Panel should undertake a review of the proposals and objections received. Therefore arrangements have been made for a special meeting of the Panel to take place on Wednesday 8 September 2010 at 7.30p.m. in the Council Chamber. It is intended for the meeting to be webcast.

**17. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

To consider which reports are ready to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

**18. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next programmed meeting of the Panel will be on Thursday 28 October 2010 at 5.30p.m. in Committee Room 1 and then on the following dates:

Thursday 27 January 2011; and  
Thursday 28 April 2011

Officers have requested that the date of the Panel's meeting in April 2011 be brought forward to March. The Panel will need to consider the HRA Business Plan before it can be signed off at the end of March 2011. The suggested date for Members' consideration is Thursday 24 March 2011 at 5.30p.m. in Committee Room 1.

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**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF HOUSING SCRUTINY STANDING PANEL  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 25 MARCH 2010  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.05 - 9.40 PM**

**Members Present:** S Murray (Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Brookes, D Dodeja, Mrs A Grigg, Mrs P Richardson and J Wyatt

**Other members present:** D Stallan

**Apologies for Absence:** Mrs J Lea and Mrs J H Whitehouse

**Officers Present** A Hall (Director of Housing), R Wilson (Assistant Director (Operations)) and M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant)

**37. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

It was noted that there were no substitute members present.

**38. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

**39. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That the notes from the last meeting of the panel be agreed.

**40. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel's Terms of Reference and Work Programme were noted.

**41. DEFERMENT OF THE REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATIONS SCHEME**

The Panel received a report from Mr R Wilson, Assistant Director of Housing, requesting deferment of the annual report regarding the Review of the Allocations Scheme.

At its meeting on 21 January 2010 members were advised that a delay was required in considering the Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme for 2010. The Government's new statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England was not received until late January 2010. In order to comply with the requirements of the guidance a number of actions needed consideration which would need some months to complete. Therefore the Panel was asked to defer the review until its meeting on 29 July 2010. It was noted that the Council was not required to review the scheme on an annual basis.

**RESOLVED:**

That the reasons for the deferment of the Annual Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme to July 2010 be noted.

**42. HOMELESSNESS PRESENTATION**

Following a suggestion from the Housing Portfolio Holder and Councillor Mrs L Wagland, the Panel was asked if it would find it useful to receive a presentation on the approach the Housing Directorate took in respect of dealing with cases involving domestic violence. It was suggested that this could be expanded to include the Directorate's overall approach to homelessness prevention, including the approach taken on domestic violence. Mr R Wallace, Housing Options Manager, would make the presentation.

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the Housing Scrutiny Panel receives a presentation from the Housing Options Manager at its meeting on 29 July 2010 regarding "The Council's Approach to Homelessness Prevention" including initiatives on dealing with domestic violence; and

(2) That an invite be extended to all District Council members to attend the presentation.

**43. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2009 - 10 SIX MONTH PROGRESS REPORT**

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2009/10 (Key Action Plan) – Progress Report.

In March 2009 the Council's latest Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2009/10 was produced, incorporating the Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan. The Business Plan set out the Council's objectives, strategies and plans as landlord, in relation to the management and maintenance of its own housing stock. An important section of the HRA Business Plan was the Key Action Plan. It was noted that a number of tasks included within the Key Action Plan relating to responsive repairs had not yet been completed since they were included as part of the "Repairs Refresh Programme," involving the appointment of a private repairs management company to manage the response repairs service which had been agreed by the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:**

That the second Six Month Progress Report for the Key Action Plan, contained within the HRA Business Plan 2009/10, be noted.

**44. HOUSEMARK BENCHMARKING REPORT ON VALUE FOR MONEY**

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding the HouseMark Benchmarking Report on Value for Money of Housing Services (2008/09).

It was noted that the Housing Directorate placed great importance on benchmarking its housing performance and costs against other housing providers. It benchmarked in two ways.

#### **Annual Value for Money Review**

Each year, the Council compared its performance and costs for all of its main service areas with other groups of local authorities, using the Audit Commission's VFM Profile Tool. The Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel received a Review Report which set out:

- The Council's ranking, for each performance or cost indicator, compared to the other councils
- Details of the best performing authority
- A commentary on each performance and cost indicator including proposed actions improving performance or reducing costs.

#### **Housemark**

The Housing Directorate had been a member of "Housemark" for a number of years. Housemark was a:

- National housing benchmarking organisation
- It enabled housing to submit detailed information on their performance and costs and compared these to other housing organisations nationally.
- HouseMark enabled member organisations to compare themselves with user-defined data sets.
- Housemark had produced a detailed Benchmarking Report on the Council's costs and performance for 2008/09 compared to other stock – retaining local authorities. It also produced a VFM Summary, which had been provided to the Panel. This had established that, generally, the District Council performed extremely well compared with other housing organisations.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the HouseMark Benchmarking Report on Value for Money of Housing Services 2008/09 be noted.

#### **45. HRA BUSINESS PLAN 2010-11 REPORT**

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2010 – 2011. The Government required all local authorities to produce annual Business Plans for their Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs). The intention was to ensure that local authority housing was used and maintained to maximum effect. The HRA Business Plan dealt with the council's plans and performance for the delivery and quality of its housing services to tenants.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2010/11, incorporating the Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan 2010/11, be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder for adoption.

**46. HOME OPTION CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Panel received the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme – Progress Report.

At its meeting on 21 January 2010, the Panel considered the updated Housing Service Strategy on Allocations. The Panel had requested a progress report on the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme, including all of the provisions being made to support vulnerable applicants.

The Choice Based Lettings Scheme was introduced in November 2007 which met the requirements of Government that such a scheme should be in place by 2010. The scheme was administered by the external Choice Based Lettings agency Locata Housing Services (LHS).

The Panel were advised that in the period 16 January 2009 to 22 January 2010:

- 477 properties had been allocated
- 607 advertisements were placed in the Free Sheets
- 42,374 expressions of interest were made.
- On average there were around 70 expressions of interest each time a property was advertised.
- Almost 90% of applicants expressing an interest in properties did so over the Internet.

The Council was a member of the Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium (HEHOC) which jointly operated the Choice Based Lettings Scheme. A number of improvements had been identified and were being considered, including:

- Adding a consultation module to the Home Option Website to seek the views of users on the scheme.
- Producing a single housing application form for all HEHOC member authorities to streamline the application process.
- Offering the service to private sector landlords which would bring additional income and increase the number of housing options.
- On-line housing application registration.
- The charging of partner Registered Social Landlords for including their properties on the scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

That the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme and the Housing Activity Report for the period January 2009 to January 2010 be noted.

**47. OPTIONS FOR CROSS BOUNDARY ALLOCATIONS**

The Panel received a report from Mr R Wilson, Assistant Director of Housing, regarding Options for Cross-Boundary Allocations.

The Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium (HEHOC) were set up in 2005, to develop a joint Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL). There were six local authority partners within the Consortium. One of the objectives of the Regional Housing Strategy for the East of England was to provide mixed communities and widen choice.



The agency, Locata Housing Services (LHS), was the largest Choice Based Lettings agency in the UK and administered the HEHOC HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme. LHS advised that a number of the Consortia they administered operated some form of cross-boundary working. The allocations policies used were based around one of the following five models:

#### **Model One – Retention of own Allocations Scheme**

This was the model currently used by HEHOC, with each authority retaining their own Allocations Schemes with no cross-boundary working. However, as applicants only had priority in terms of local connection in their own area, they had much lower priority for properties advertised by their neighbouring authorities.

#### **Model Two – Retention of Own Allocations Scheme with an Over-Arching Sub-Regional Policy**

Under this model, although each authority would retain its own Allocations Scheme locally, around 5 – 10% of vacant properties selected randomly would be extracted by LHS from each HEHOC member authority for cross-boundary “bidding.” These vacancies, during each two-weekly cycle, would be allocated under a separate, over-arching, Sub Regional Allocations Policy. Banding priority would be predominantly based upon need, with those applicants who did not have local connection having less priority within each band.

#### **Model Three – Retention of own Allocations Scheme allowing Cross-Border allocations for mobility reasons**

This model was a variation of Model Two, but without the need for an over-arching policy. A random 5 – 10% of all vacancies would be made available to applicants in other local authority areas within the Consortium’s area, based on mobility need.

#### **Model Four – Voluntary Sub-regional Policy for Difficult to Let Properties**

With this model, all HEHOC members would pool all difficult-to-let properties and advertise them as being available to all applicants across the partner authorities, possibly subject to applicants being registered with the authority where the vacancy existed. Although this would demonstrate partnership working, it would not increase the housing chances of an applicant outside of an authority’s area, as they would already be placed in a lower band due to not having a local connection.

#### **Model Five – Common Assessment Policy**

Under a Common Assessment Policy, all HEHOC members would allocate accommodation across all areas under one Allocations Scheme. To make this work, all partners would need to work to either a banding or points based system. If a banding system was agreed, then local connection would give greater priority within each band rather than applicants being placed in the lowest band.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the options for cross-boundary allocations within the areas of the Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium, in accordance with the expectations of the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) be noted; and

(2) That the Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium be advised that, although the Council would wish to retain its own Housing Allocations Scheme (Model One), it would be prepared to discuss further the possibility of the Council allowing a small number of cross-border allocations for mobility reasons (Model Three) and would be happy to make cross-border allocations of difficult-to-let properties.

**48. CONSULTATION ON THE REVIEW OF THE SCOPE OF THE HOUSING APPEALS AND REVIEW PANEL**

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding consultation with the Scrutiny Panel on the Review of the Scope of the Housing Appeals and Review Panel.

At its last meeting, on the invitation of the Chairman of the Housing Appeals and Review Panel, the Panel considered whether or not it wished to be consulted on the report and recommendations of the Director of Housing to the Constitution and Member Services Scrutiny Panel, reviewing the scope of the Housing Appeals and Review Panel. The Housing Scrutiny Panel had agreed that it would like to be consulted.

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the Scrutiny Panel generally supports the recommendations within the report on Consultation on the Review of the Scope of the Housing Appeals and Review Panel; and

(2) That the Director of Housing be asked to provide to the Constitution and Member Services Standing Scrutiny Panel further details of the five appeals relating to vehicular crossovers, and the three appeals relating to allocation bandings, considered by the Housing Appeals and Review Panel over the previous two years.

**49. HOUSING STRATEGY 2009-2012: 6 MONTH PROGRESS REPORT ON KEY ACTION PLAN**

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding Housing Strategy 2009-2010: 6 Month Progress Report on Key Action Plan.

At its meeting in September 2009, the Council's Cabinet adopted the Housing Strategy 2009-2012. This followed the Housing Scrutiny Panel considering in detail and approving for consultation an earlier "Consultation Draft" Housing Strategy, and a major consultation exercise being undertaken with the Council's partners, key stakeholders and the public over a three month period. The consultation exercise included a one-day Housing Strategy Conference, to which all the consultees were invited.

The Cabinet agreed that progress with the Key Action Plan should be monitored on a 6-monthly basis by the Housing Scrutiny Panel. When adopting the Housing Strategy, the Cabinet also agreed that Key Action Plans should be produced and updated on an annual basis for approval by the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:**

That the 6-Month Progress Report on the Key Action Plan 2009/10, contained within the Housing Strategy 2009-2012, be noted.

**50. DRAFT REGULATORY FRAMEWORK ACTION PLAN**

The Panel received a report from Mr R Wilson, Assistant Director of Housing, regarding the Draft Regulatory Framework Action Plan.

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) came into effect in December 2008 and replaced the regulatory functions for housing associations, formerly undertaken by the Housing Corporation. From April 2010, the TSA would also regulate local authority housing and would be seeking to generally raise the standard of services to tenants. At its meeting on 21 January 2010, the Panel had received a detailed presentation on the TSA's proposed Regulatory Framework and Short Notice Inspections. The Panel was advised that the Housing Directorate already had a range of initiatives in place and was reasonably preparing itself for any inspection.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the draft Regulatory Framework Action Plan be agreed; and
- (2) That the draft Regulatory Framework Action Plan be monitored by the Housing Scrutiny Panel on a six-monthly basis and be added to the Panel's Work Programme.

**51. HOUSING DIRECTORATE'S SERVICE STRATEGY ON HARASSMENT**

The Panel received a report from Mr R Wilson, Assistant Director of Housing, regarding the Housing Directorate's Service Strategy on Harassment.

The Housing Directorate's Service Strategies were originally produced around 12 years ago in accordance with an agreed standard framework, and had since been updated. In total, 17 Housing Service Strategies had been produced and updated to date.

The strategies were produced to a common format that set out how individual housing services would be delivered. They had assisted Housing Services in achieving the Charter Mark Award for Customer Service Excellence and had been important to meeting the minimum requirement for Supporting People funding under the condition of the contract.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Housing Directorate's Service Strategy on Harassment be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder.

**52. TENANT PARTICIPATION PROGRESS 2009**

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding Tenant Participation Progress 2009.

At the Tenant Participation Progress (Officer) Meeting held on 23 October 2007 and discussions with the Director of Housing, it was agreed to provide an annual tenant participation update to the Housing Scrutiny Panel. The Housing Services Strategy

on Tenant Participation set out the Council's approach to tenant participation and how the service would be delivered.

Consultation of 1,563 general needs tenants through the 2008 Tenant Satisfaction Survey showed that 62% of respondents were satisfied that their views were being taken into account by their landlord (EFDC) and only 7% were dissatisfied.

Each of the resident's associations had signed a Local Tenant Participation Agreement with the Council which set out the approach each group and the Council would adopt in relation to tenant participation.

### **Special Events**

- During 2009 a Community Consultation Day was held in Loughton (Debden). It was planned to hold similar events in other parts of the District during 2010.
- A Mystery Shopping Exercise took place during November/December 2009, it was planned to set up a Mystery Shopping Group from EFDC's tenants and leaseholders in 2010.

### **New Initiatives**

- It was planned to introduce Local Area Agreements, particularly in areas where current resident's groups existed.
- The Tenant Participation Officer was working with the East of England Resident Involvement Group, sharing good practice and comparing methods for involvement.
- A Repairs and Maintenance Customer Focus Group was being set up to look at ways of improving the current repairs service provided to tenants and leaseholders.
- A Tenant Reading Group was being set up to "Tenant Approve" new literature created by the Housing Directorate.
- A focus group was being set up looking at the Housing Allocations Scheme.
- A Tenant Participation Impact Assessment was being written to record and measure the impact of tenant participation in the District.
- Officers were working with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation in agreeing a number of service standards required by the Tenant Services Authority's New Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England.

### **Diversity**

- The Government had identified a number of "Hard to Reach" groups, e.g. rural communities, younger people, minority groups and families, as part of its key lines of enquiry.
- The Epping Forest Sheltered Forum represented EFDC tenants living in sheltered or group dwelling schemes and properties covered by a scheme manager.
- The Epping Forest Rural Tenants Forum was set up in November 2006 and continued to expand.

### **Administration and Management of Tenant Participation**

- The Tenant Participation Officer held monthly progress meetings with the Housing Resources Manager and Principal Housing Officer and quarterly progress meetings with the Assistant Director of Housing (Operations).
- The Tenant Participation Officer maintained an Action Plan which monitored progress of all aspects of tenant participation.

**RESOLVED:**

That the progress made on the development of tenant participation during the period 1 January 2009 – 31 December 2009 be noted.

**53. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chairman indicated that verbal reports would be given at the forthcoming meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**54. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next programmed meeting of the Panel was taking place on Thursday 29 July 2010 at 5.30p.m.

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## TERMS OF REFERENCE - STANDING PANEL

**Title:** Housing

**Status:** Standing Panel

**Terms of Reference:**

(1) To undertake reviews of public and private sector housing policies on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Housing Portfolio Holder or Head of Housing Services and to make any recommendations arising from such reviews to the Housing Portfolio Holder or Cabinet as appropriate.

(2) To undertake specific projects related to public and private sector housing issues, as directed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and to make any recommendations arising from such reviews to the Housing Portfolio Holder or Cabinet as appropriate.

(3) To consider and provide comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder on the following matters, prior to consideration by the Cabinet:

- (i) Draft Housing Strategy (to be adopted by full Council in accordance with the Council's Constitution)
- (ii) Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy
- (iii) Draft Private Sector Housing Grants Policy
- (iv) Annual Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme

(4) To consider and provide comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder on draft versions of the following documents:

- (i) Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan
- (ii) Local Supporting People Strategy
- (iii) Housing Service Strategies

(5) To undertake the Annual Ethnic Monitoring Review of Housing Applicants and Housing Allocations, in accordance with the Code of Practice in Rented Housing.

(6) To monitor progress with the actions plans contained in the following documents, on a six-monthly basis:

- (i) Housing Strategy
- (ii) Local Supporting People Strategy
- (iii) Private Sector Housing Strategy
- (iv) Housing Services Development Plan

(7) To consider the Housing Portfolio Holder's draft response to any consultation papers relating to public or private sector housing that the Housing Portfolio Holder considers warrants a response from the Council.

(8) In relation to Traveller issues to consider and monitor: **(NEW)**

- (a) the position regarding tolerated sites and;
- (b) the management of travellers who enter onto land within the district with a view to unauthorised encampments, with particular reference to the legal remedies available, interactions with other agencies such as Essex Police and Essex County

Council and the provision of emergency and/or transit sites within the district;

(c) Government's guidance on the needs of travellers in the context of the Council's review of its District Local Plan and the Essex Housing Needs Assessment;

(d) the results of the Commission for Racial Equality's study on traveller issues in which this Council participated, once published;

(9) To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Council and the Cabinet with recommendations on matters allocated to the Panel as appropriate.

**Chairman:** Cllr Stephen Murray



## Housing Scrutiny Standing Panel – 2010/2011

Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Scheduled Date	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Revised Date for meeting scheduled for 28 April 2011	Low	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	29 July 2010 28 October 2010 27 January 2011; and 28 April 2011 (Date to be reviewed)
(2) Presentation on Homelessness Prevention	Low	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	
(3) Annual Ethnic Monitoring Review of Housing Applicants	High	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	
(4) Review of Housing Performance Indicators	Low	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	
(5) Continuous Housing Improvement Strategy	High	July 2010	<b>Not yet produced (due to other commitments) – Deferred to October 2010 meeting</b>	
(6) Value for Money Strategy in the Provision of Housing Services	High	July 2010	<b>Not yet produced (due to other commitments) – Deferred to October 2010 meeting</b>	
(7) Annual Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme	High	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	
(8) Housing Service Strategy on Information (Review and update)	Medium	July 2010	<b>Not yet produced (due to other commitments) – Deferred to October 2010 meeting</b>	
(9) Housing Service Strategy on the Private Rented Sector (Review and update)	Medium	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	

(10) Housing Service Strategy on Empty Properties (Review and update)	Medium	July 2010	<b>Not yet produced (due to other commitments) –</b> Deferred to October 2010 meeting
(11) Housing Service Strategy on Tenant Participation (Review and update)	Medium	July 2010	<b>Not yet produced (due to other commitments) –</b> Deferred to October 2010 meeting
(12) Tenant Participation Impact Assessment	High	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>
(13) 12 Month Progress Report on Housing Strategy Action Plan 2009/10	Low	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>
(14) Housing Strategy Action Plan 2010/11	High	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>
(15) Review of Housing Service Standards	High	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>
(16) Tenant Participation Impact Assessment	High	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>
(17) Six-monthly Progress Report on the Housing Regulatory Framework Action Plan	Low	October 2010	<b>Not yet required</b>
(18) Six-monthly Progress Report on Housing Business Plan Action Plan	Low	October 2010	<b>Not yet required</b>
(19) Homelessness Strategy – Action Plan Progress Report	Low	October 2010	<b>Not yet required</b>

(20) Housing Service Strategy on Rent Arrears (Review and update)	Medium	October 2010	<b>Not yet required</b>
(21) Housing Service Strategy on Anti-social Behaviour (Review and update)	Medium	October 2010	<b>Not yet required</b>
(22) Housing Service Strategy on Energy Efficiency (Review and update)	Medium	October 2010	<b>Not yet required</b>
(23) Briefing on the proposed Council rent increase for 2010/11	Low	March 2011	<b>Not yet required</b>
(24) 12-monthly Progress report on Housing Business Plan Action Plan	Low	March 2011	<b>Not yet required</b>
(25) Six-monthly Progress report on Housing Strategy Action Plan 2010/11	Low	March 2011	<b>Not yet required</b>
(26) HRA Business Plan 2011/12	High	March 2011	<b>Not yet required</b>
(27) Annual Report on the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme	Low	March 2011	<b>Not yet required</b>
(28) HouseMark Benchmarking Report on Value for Money of Housing Services	Medium	March 2011	<b>Not yet required</b>

**Items added after the original Work Programme was agreed**

(29) Housing Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan and Progress Report	Low	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	
(30) Tenant Satisfaction Surveys 2009/10 – Comparisons with other stock-retained councils	Low	July 2010	<b>On agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>	
(31) Review of Proposed Licence Conditions for Park Homes - Referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to a Special Meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel	High	September 2010	<b>Not yet required</b>	

## Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

**Date of meeting: 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

**Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan**

**Subject: Tenant Satisfaction – Comparisons with other stock-retaining councils**

**Officer contact for further information:**

**Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**



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### Recommendation:

**That the comparisons of tenant satisfaction levels, between the Council's tenants and the tenants of other stock-retaining councils nationally, as reported by Communities and Local Government, be considered, with any resultant comments passed on to the Housing Portfolio Holder and the Director of Housing for consideration.**

### Report:

1. Until a recent change by the new Coalition Government, all councils and housing associations have had to undertake Tenant Satisfaction Surveys, using common questions, every two years. The last survey was undertaken in 2008 and, at that time, the detailed results of the Council's survey were reported to the Housing Scrutiny Panel, with a summary reported in the Council Bulletin. Tenant Satisfaction Surveys appear to be no longer required by the Government, but consideration is currently being given to whether or not the Council should continue to carry out such surveys voluntary and, if so, how frequently and in what format.
2. Communities and Local Government (CLG) has recently published a national comparison of all the tenant satisfaction results for 2008. It provides details of the satisfaction levels, in relation to the 9 main subject areas surveyed, for all 182 stock-retaining councils in England.
3. For each of the subject areas reported by the CLG, the table below provides details of the Council's satisfaction levels, the national average for all stock-retaining councils, and the Council's position nationally.

<b>Tenant Satisfaction Comparisons Amongst 182 Stock-Retaining Council (Including ALMOs)</b>			
<b>Satisfaction Subject Area</b>	<b>All Councils Average</b>	<b>EFDC</b>	<b>EFDC Position</b>
Satisfaction with overall landlord service	75 %	83 %	Within Top 22 %

Satisfaction with property quality	77 %	87 %	Within Top 12%
Satisfaction with property condition	72 %	82 %	Within Top 15 %
Satisfaction with neighbourhood	75 %	83 %	Within Top 21 %
Ease of getting hold of the right staff member ("Easy")	68 %	84 %	Within Top 3 %
Helpfulness of staff member(s) ("Helpful")	80 %	89 %	Within Top 6 %
Satisfaction with repairs service	73 %	86 %	Within Top 6 %
Satisfaction with landlord taking tenant views into account	56 %	62 %	Within Top 25 %
Rating of landlord on keeping tenants informed	78 %	79 %	Within Top 30 %
<b>Cumulative satisfaction for all of the above</b>	<b>671 %</b>	<b>735 %</b>	<b>Within Top 10 %</b>

4. The last subject area (cumulative satisfaction for all of the above) has not been calculated by the CLG, but has been calculated by officers, by simply adding up the satisfaction levels for each subject area. Note that the "All Council's Average" for "Cumulative Satisfaction" is the overall average for all subject areas, for every council – and not a simple average of the 9 averages listed in the table.

5. As can be seen, the Council's cumulative satisfaction is within the top 10% of all councils nationally, and all but one are within the top quartile (25%).

6. These results have been reported to all Members of the Council, in a recent issue of the Council Bulletin.

**Reason for decision:**

The Scrutiny Panel is responsible for scrutinising the Housing Service, including tenants satisfaction levels, and comparing how the Council's Housing Service compares with other councils.

**Options considered and rejected:**

Not to report the findings from the CLG's Report

**Consultation undertaken:**

These results are also due to be considered by the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, at its meeting to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010. Any comments from the Federation will be reported orally at the meeting

## **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 29 July 2010**

**Subject: Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme**

**Officer contact for further information: Roger Wilson,  
Assistant Director of Housing (01992 56 4419)**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Housing Scrutiny Panel considers the attached draft report on the Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme, (prior to seeking the views of consultees listed under the consultation section of the report), and passes on their comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder for his consideration prior to its submission to the Cabinet.**

### **Report:**

1. At its meeting on 25 March 2010, the Panel agreed the deferment of the Review of the Allocations Scheme (which is normally reviewed annually) until this meeting. The reason for the delay this year is due to the Government's new statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England ("Fair and Flexible") not being received until late in January 2010.
2. The Housing Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider the attached draft report on proposed changes to the Allocations Scheme to take effect from 1 October 2010. The Panel's comments will be considered by the Housing Portfolio Holder, prior to the report being submitted to the Cabinet.
3. Following the Housing Scrutiny Panel's meeting, all consultees listed under the consultation section of the attached draft Cabinet report will be consulted on the proposed changes, with their comments taken into account by the Housing Portfolio Holder prior to reporting to the Cabinet.

### **Options considered and rejected:**

4. That the Housing Scrutiny Panel does not consider the report prior to its submission to the Cabinet.

### **Consultation undertaken:**

5. The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation are being consulted on the proposed changes to the scheme at their meeting on 20 July 2010, and their views will be reported verbally at the meeting. The consultation section of the attached draft Cabinet report sets out all those who will be consulted prior to the Cabinet meeting. A copy of the current scheme has been circulated to Members of the Panel.

## **Resource Implications**

Budget provision: Within existing resources

Personnel: None

Land: None

Community Plan/BVPP reference: N/A

Relevant statutory powers: Housing Acts 1985 & 1996

Background papers: The current Housing Allocations Scheme, and the Government's statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England ("Fair and Flexible")

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None

Key decision reference (if required): Not a key decision.



## **Report to the Cabinet**

**Report reference:** 2010/2011

**Date of meeting:** 13 September 2010



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Portfolio:** Housing – Councillor D Stallan

**Subject:** Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme

**Responsible Officer:** Roger Wilson (01992–564419).

**Democratic Services Officer:** Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

(1) That the Cabinet notes the reason for the delay in reviewing the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme, being due to the Government's new statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England ("Fair and Flexible") not being received until late January 2010 and the additional time that was needed to meet with its requirements;

(2) That, following detailed consideration by the Housing Scrutiny Panel, and consultation with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, partner agencies, Parish and Town Councils, Registered Social Landlord Partners, housing applicants and the local community, the proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme take effect from 1 October 2010 as set out in Appendix 1;

(3) That the Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Housing Portfolio Holder to consider any late responses to the consultations, and approve the final Allocations Scheme; and

(4) That, due to the delay referred to in Recommendation (1) above, the Allocations Scheme not be reviewed again until late 2011, with any resultant changes being effective from 1 April 2012.

### **Executive Summary:**

1. The Council is legally required to have a Housing Allocations Scheme setting out the procedures for allocating its housing accommodation and making nominations to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

2. The review of the Scheme has been delayed for 2010/2011 due to the Council having to meet a number of conditions under the Government's new statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England ("Fair and Flexible") which was not received until late in January 2010.

3. The Cabinet is asked to note the reasons why the review of the Allocations Scheme was deferred, with the new scheme being implemented 6-months later than normal with effect from 1 October 2010. It is suggested that the next review is undertaken by 1 April 2012. Although there is a legal requirement under the Housing Act 1996 to have an Allocations Scheme, the Council is not required to review the Scheme on an annual basis.

4. The Cabinet is asked to agree the changes to the Allocations Scheme, with effect from 1 October 2010.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

The review of the Housing Allocations Scheme was delayed to enable the Council to meet with the Government's new statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England ("Fair and Flexible"). The changes proposed to the Allocations Scheme to take effect from 1 October 2010, will generally update the scheme in accordance with the new guidance and ensure fairness to all applicants.

## **Other Options for Action:**

1. Not to agree the changes to the Council's Allocations Scheme from 1 October 2010.
2. To agree different changes to those recommended.
3. To review the scheme again before late 2011.

## **Report:**

1. The Council is legally required to have a Housing Allocations Scheme setting out the procedures for allocating its housing accommodation and making nominations to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

2. The Housing Scrutiny Panel has previously agreed that there be a delay in considering the Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme for 2010. The Scheme is normally considered by the Panel in December each year and approved by the Cabinet in January, with the updated Scheme coming into force on 1 April.

3. The reason for the delay this year was due to the Government's new statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England ("Fair and Flexible") not being received until late in January 2010.

4. Under the statutory guidance, local authorities are now required to meet certain conditions. As the Council comprehensively reviews its Allocations Scheme on an annual basis, it already complies with most of the requirements, although some work was needed on the following conditions:

- Extending the external agencies the Council consults to include Social Care, Health, Probation, Children's Services and the Voluntary Sector.
- "Engaging fully" with the local community in developing allocation priorities, including applicants, the general public and the community and voluntary sector. This was achieved by consulting through the Council's tenants' magazine, "Housing News" with all tenants and applicants about the proposed revised scheme. In addition, the local community was consulted through the Council's website and a press release.
- Setting up a Tenant Talk-back Panel of interested tenants and applicants in order to seek their views.
- Making appropriate information about allocations widely available in a way that is easy to access and understand, including how long applicants are likely to have to wait and the general profile of the housing stock.
- Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (now known as a Customer Impact Assessment) to consider the impact of the changes on people with the protected characteristics of age, race, disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, religion or belief or gender reassignment.

5. The Cabinet is therefore asked to note the reasons why the review was deferred, with the revised scheme being implemented with effect from 1 October 2010. It is also suggested that the next review is not undertaken until 1 April 2012. Although there is a legal requirement under the Housing Act 1996 to have an Allocations Scheme, the Council is not required to review the Scheme on an annual basis.

6. At its meeting on 29 July 2010, the Housing Scrutiny Panel considered in detail the proposed changes to the Allocations Scheme and its comments have been incorporated into this report.

7. The Cabinet is asked to consider the changes to the Allocations Scheme, with effect from 1 October 2010, which are set out in Appendix 1. A copy of the current Scheme has been distributed separately; further copies can be obtained from either the Housing Directorate, or Democratic Services.

8. The Cabinet's attention is particularly drawn to the following proposed changes, which are considered to be the most significant:

- New paragraph 9 - Introduction of penalties for homeseekers who refuse 3 offers of accommodation which should reduce void times.
- Band 1 (b) - Priority to homeseekers with mobility problems for ground floor accommodation.
- Band 4 – New Category (c) – Priority to homeseekers needing to move for mobility reasons.

**Resource Implications:**

Within existing resources

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

Housing Act 1985 & Housing Act 1996.

**Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

No implications identified

**Consultation Undertaken:**

1. The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, partner agencies, Parish and Town Councils (in accordance with the Local Council's Charter), Registered Social Landlord Partners (in accordance with the Housing Act) have been consulted. In addition, housing applicants and the local community have been consulted on the proposed changes, and where considered appropriate, their views have been incorporated into the report. A summary of all relevant comments received is given at Appendix 2, together with the views of the Housing Portfolio Holder on the comments received.

2. It is suggested that the Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Housing Portfolio Holder to consider any further late responses to the consultation received by the Council, and to approve the final Allocations Scheme.

**Background Papers:**

The current Housing Allocations Scheme, the Government's statutory guidance on Social Housing Allocations for Local Authorities in England ("Fair and Flexible") and the Customer Impact Assessment.

**Impact Assessments:**

The Council has undertaken a Customer Impact Assessment on both the review of the Allocations Scheme, and in partnership with the Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium, on the HomeOption (Choice Based Lettings) Scheme and observes its findings. In addition, a report is submitted annually to the Housing Scrutiny Panel setting out the ethnicity of applicants on the Housing Register and the ethnicity of applicants allocated accommodation.

Risk Management

None identified

Equality and Diversity:

**To be completed following the consultation exercise**

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties; reveal any potentially adverse equality implications?      Yes      No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken?      Yes      No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?

## APPENDIX 1

### Changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme from 1 October 2010

Current Allocation Scheme Reference	Proposed Change From 1 October 2010	Reason for the Change
Paragraph 2.1	<p>Amend paragraph as follows:</p> <p>“The Council operates a Choice Based Lettings Scheme where all vacant properties are advertised to applicants on the Housing Register on a website and a periodic free-sheet, showing a photograph and giving details of location, type, rent, service charge, council tax band and landlord of the available accommodation. Applicants can apply for a property by “expressing an interest” (or “bidding”) either on the website, in person, by post, telephone, text or email. The most popular method of doing this is by the Internet <a href="http://www.HomeOption.org">www. HomeOption.org</a> Restrictions are in place, which include restricting “bidding” for properties to those households which only have an assessed need for a particular property type. At the end of the two-weekly “bidding” cycle, the Council analyses the “bids” received and allocates each property following a prioritisation and selection process in accordance with this Allocations Scheme. In general terms, the property would be offered to the applicant in the highest band, who has been registered the longest, who had “bid” for the specific vacancy. The results of the “bidding” on each property advertised is then published on the Website and in a future freesheet, setting out the number of “bids” received on each property, as well as the Band and registration date of the successful applicant. This helps applicants to see how long the successful applicant has been waiting and gives greater transparency in the allocation of accommodation, as each applicant is able to clearly understand the type and location of properties for which they would be most likely to “bid” successfully. All homeseekers are provided with a Scheme User Guide which explains in detail how the scheme operates.”</p>	<p>Although detailed information on how to participate in the Choice Based Lettings scheme is available in the freesheet, the Scheme User Guide and on the Website, it is suggested that the information provided within the Allocations Scheme should be expanded.</p>
Add new Paragraph 2.2	<p>“Any homeseeker who may have difficulty in participating in the Choice Based Lettings Scheme can contact the Housing Options Team at the Civic Offices, Epping where staff will be available to provide assistance, including the submission of “bids” on behalf of applicants.”</p>	<p>To confirm that advice will be given to any vulnerable homeseekers on the Housing Register who may be having problems participating in the scheme.</p>

**APPENDIX 1 (Continued)**

**Changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme from 1 October 2010**

<b>Current Allocation Scheme Reference</b>	<b>Proposed Change From 1 October 2010</b>	<b>Reason for the Change</b>
Paragraph 6.7	Amend paragraph to: "When any homeseeker is being considered for a property, they will be required to provide up-to-date evidence of their current circumstances. Generally, any homeseeker who fails to provide this evidence within 24-hours will not be offered the property. Additional documentary evidence to substantiate an application may be required from time-to-time as the Council considers appropriate "	To avoid any delays in the letting process, thereby reducing the void period
New Paragraph 9	<p><b>Penalty for Refusal of Offers of Accommodation</b></p> <p>"Any homeseeker who refuses three offers of suitable accommodation for which they have expressed an interest within any three-month period will be ineligible to express an interest in any property for a period of six months. Following expiry of the six- month period, the homeseeker will be able to participate again retaining their former position on the Register in accordance with the Allocations Scheme."</p>	During the 2009 calendar year, 184 suitable offers of Council accommodation made in response to expressions of interest were subsequently refused by applicants, which has an adverse effect on void times and rental income, and also delays offers to resultant applicants.
Paragraph 9.1	<p>Becomes paragraph 10 - Add sentence 5<sup>th</sup> line after..."Band One of the Allocations Scheme." "If no successful expressions of interest are made, the Council will express an interest in a maximum of three suitable properties that the Council considers suitable for a further 4 weeks (2 cycles) on behalf of the homeseeker,"</p> <p>Delete start of next sentence "If no successful expressions of interest are made" replace with "If the homeseeker is still unsuccessful"</p>	This clarifies the change made under the last review of the Allocations Scheme and ensures that the details in the information section is consistent with the Paragraph under Band 1 (c).

**APPENDIX 1 (Continued)**

**Changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme from 1 October 2010**

<b>Current Allocation Scheme Reference</b>	<b>Proposed Change From 1 October 2010</b>	<b>Reason for the Change</b>
Paragraph 20.1	<p>Add to those consulted to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Tenants and Leaseholder’s Federation</li> <li>• Housing Applicants</li> <li>• Local Community</li> <li>• Partner Agencies</li> </ul>	<p>Clarifies that the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and partner agencies have been consulted on changes to the Scheme over many years, and adds two further groups who are now consulted, which complies with the Government’s new statutory Guidance.</p>
Band 1 (b)	<p>Add sentence “Homeseekers with mobility problems will be given priority for ground floor flats and bungalows above those in this same band, regardless of their waiting time.”</p>	<p>It is considered that homeseekers with strong medical or welfare grounds <u>and mobility problems</u> should be offered ground floor flats or bungalows above those in the same band who are physically able.</p>
Band 1 (c)	<p>Amend fourth bullet point</p> <p>Delete “.....following their situation being resolved.”</p> <p>Add “.....where the Manager of Brook Haven has notified the Council that the tenant is ready to move on.”</p>	<p>The Brook Haven Scheme is accommodation for those fleeing domestic violence.</p> <p>This amendment is to clarify that only assured tenants who are deemed ready to move on from Brook Haven will be placed in Band One. This does not include those who have been served a Notice to Quit due to breaches of tenancy conditions, as in these circumstances the Council’s housing duty would end.</p>

**APPENDIX 1 (Continued)**

**Changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme from 1 October 2010**

<b>Current Allocation Scheme Reference</b>	<b>Proposed Change From 1 October 2010</b>	<b>Reason for the Change</b>
Band 1 (e)	Add Railway Meadow, the Young Parents Scheme	Railway Meadow, the Young Parents Scheme in Ongar, will be completed at the end of October 2010. Homeseekers who have been in the scheme for at least 9-months will be given Band 1 status if they are ready to move on.
Band 4	Add new Category (c)  "All Homeseekers living in the District for more than a year immediately prior to application, wanting to move to or be nearer to their place of work, or to take up an offer of permanent employment, or a long term (full-time) training opportunity which will lead to employment."	To enable all homeseekers to transfer to accommodation for mobility reasons, which is in accordance with the Government's new statutory guidance. It will give such applicants equal priority to others in this category and could enable some applicants to enter Band 3.
Band 4	Amend Category (e)  "Households including a child under the age of 11 years....."	Reduce the age from 15 years to 11 years as it is considered that, bearing in mind the shortage of accommodation, having a garden for a child over 11 years of age is not as essential as some of the other categories.
Amend supplementary information under **	End paragraph at "...access to specialist medical treatment."	Remainder of this paragraph to be deleted as employment or training is now covered in the new Band 4 Category (c) above.



## APPENDIX 1 (Continued)

### Changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme from 1 October 2010

<b>Current Allocation Scheme Reference</b>	<b>Proposed Change From 1 October 2010</b>	<b>Reason for the Change</b>
Amend supplementary information under **	Add to end of paragraph – “Any applicant who is awarded a higher banding due to any medical preference will have their medical position re-assessed if they express an interest for a property and then refuse an offer of that accommodation. In addition, should any applicant move from their existing accommodation and remain on the Housing Register, a further medical assessment will be undertaken.”	This clarifies what is currently normal practice. Cases are assessed to determine why any offer was refused and if the medical issues are still relevant. In addition, if an applicant moves accommodation and remains on the Housing Register their medical priority is reassessed, based on the change of circumstances.

**APPENDIX 2**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Allocation Scheme Reference</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Housing Portfolio Holder's Views/Comments</b>

## **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 29<sup>TH</sup> July 2010**

**Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan**

**Subject: Housing Service Standards 2010, Housing Charter and Local Offer to Tenants**

**Officer contact for further information:**

**Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**



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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) That consideration be given to the attached draft report to the Housing Portfolio Holder and the accompanying;**
  - (a) Housing Service Standards attached as Appendix 1; and**
  - (b) Housing Charter attached as Appendix 2;**
- (2) That consideration be given to the proposed methodology for formulating the Local Offer to tenants required by the Tenant Services Authority's new Housing Regulatory Framework, as proposed by the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation at its meeting to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010 - with their proposals being reported orally at the Scrutiny Panel meeting; and**
- (3) That the Scrutiny Panel provides any comments on the draft report to the Housing Portfolio report and appendices, and the proposed methodology for formulating the Local Offer to tenants, prior to consideration by the Housing Portfolio Holder.**

### **Report**

1. A self-explanatory draft report to the Housing Portfolio Holder, reviewing the Housing Service Standards agreed in 2007 (amended in 2009), and performance against those standards, at Appendix 1, and the Housing Charter at Appendix 2 is attached.
2. The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider the report and appendices in detail and provide the Director of Housing with any comments prior to submission to the Portfolio Holder.

### **Housing Regulatory Framework – Local Offer**

3. In April 2010, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) introduced its new Housing Regulatory Framework. In addition to setting out National Standards, with which the Council must comply, the Regulatory Framework also requires Registered Providers of Housing (including the Council) to consult with tenants and publish, by April 2011, a "Local Offer", setting out the service that tenants can expect, and explain how the Council will meet the TSA's National Standards.

4. The nature of the Local Offer is very much left to local discretion but, crucially, must be based on what the Council's tenants expect.

5. At its meeting to be held on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010, the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation will be considering the draft Housing Portfolio Holder Report, together with its methodology for considering and formulating with senior housing officers the Local Offer.

6. In his report to the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, the Director of Housing has suggested that the Federation forms a small Local Offer Sub-Group to work with senior housing officers to discuss and develop the Local Offer, and to put forward, in the first instance, a draft Local Offer to the Federation and Housing Portfolio Holder for consideration.

7. Once the draft Offer has been agreed by the Federation and Housing Portfolio Holder, it is suggested that all the Council's tenants be consulted on the Local Offer - through the "Housing News" - with an invitation to comment on the Draft Local Offer. The Federation and Housing Portfolio Holder could then consider the views received from tenants, before agreeing the final Local Offer before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

8. It is suggested that, in principle the revised Housing Service Standards and the Housing Charter could form the "core element" of the Local Offer, supplemented with additional proposals for the forthcoming year, that would be discussed with the proposed Local Offer Sub Group, including proposed housing improvements for the year.

9. The views of the Federation on the methodology for formulating the Local Offer, and their comments on the draft Housing Portfolio Holder report and appendices, will be reported orally at the Scrutiny Panel meeting.

#### **Reason for decision:**

The Housing Service Standards and Housing Charter were first introduced in 2007. Since that time, they have been reviewed once (in 2009). Following consultation with, and review by, the Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, it is proposed that they be amended as set out. It is good practice to review the Housing Service Standards and performance against the standards annually.

#### **Options considered and rejected:**

(1) Not to review or update the Housing Service Standards and/or the Housing Charter.

(2) To make different changes/additions/deletions to the Housing Service Standards and/or the Housing Charter than those proposed.

#### **Consultation undertaken:**

By the time the Scrutiny Panel meets, the draft report and appendices should have been considered by the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010. Any comments arising from that meeting will be reported orally for the Scrutiny Panel's information.

#### **Resource implications:**

Budget provision: Nil

Personnel: Nil

Land: Nil

Relevant statutory powers: N/A

Background papers: None

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None  
Key Decision reference: Not for Housing Scrutiny Panel

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## Decision by Portfolio Holder



Epping Forest  
District Council

Report reference: C/ /200 - 0  
Date of report: 1 August 2010

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan Author: Alan Hall, Director of Housing  
Committee Secretary: Rebecca Perrin

Subject: Housing Service Standards 2010, Housing Charter and Local Offer to Tenants

Decision:

- (1) That performance against the previously agreed Housing Service Standards in 2009/10 (where measured), as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;
- (2) That, following consultation with the Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, the proposed changes and additions to the Housing Service Standards (as set out in bold italics within in Appendix 1) be approved, and that the relevant leaflets be updated;
- (3) That no changes be made to the Housing Charter, set out in Appendix 2;
- (4) That in principle, and subject to further discussion and consultation with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, the revised Housing Service Standards and the Housing Charter form the core element of the Council's Local Offer to tenants, as required by the Tenant Services Authority's new Housing Regulatory Framework;
- (5) That the Housing Service Standards, and performance against the Service Standards in 2010/11, be reviewed again in July/August 2011; and

[ Further recommendations to be inserted, setting out the proposed methodology for formulating the Local Offer - to be agreed by Tenants and Leaseholders Federation at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010].

**ADVISORY NOTICE:**

*A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a prejudicial interest.  
A Portfolio Holder with a personal interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.*

I have read and approve/do not approve (delete as appropriate) the above decision:

Comments/further action required:

Signed:

Date:

*Personal interest declared by Portfolio Holder/  
conflict of interest declared by any other  
consulted Cabinet Member:*

*Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:  
Yes/No or n/a*

Initialled as original copy by  
Portfolio Holder:

**Office use only:**

Call-in period begins:

Expiry of Call-in period:

***After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY***

**Reason for decision:**

The Housing Service Standards and Housing Charter were first introduced in 2007. Since that time, they have been reviewed once (in 2009). Following consultation with, and review by, the Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, it is proposed that they be amended as set out. It is good practice to review the Housing Service Standards and performance against the standards annually.

Under the Tenant Services Authority's (TSA's) Housing Regulatory Framework, the Council must consult tenants on, and provide to them by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, a "Local Offer". This must set out the service that tenants can expect, and explain how the Council will meet the TSA's National Standards. It is felt that, in principle, the revised Housing Service Standards and Housing Charter could form the core element of the Local Offer, together with proposed housing improvements for the year.

**Options considered and rejected:**

- (1) Not to review or update the Housing Service Standards and/or the Housing Charter.
- (2) To make different changes/additions/deletions to the Housing Service Standards and/or the Housing Charter than those proposed.
- (3) Not to have the Housing Service Standards and/or the Housing Charter, in principle, as the core elements of the Local Offer.

**Background**

1. In 2007, following consultation with the Housing Scrutiny Panel, Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and the Housing Customer Perspective Group, the Housing Portfolio Holder agreed a range of Housing Service Standards, covering all of the Housing Directorate's main areas of activity. An updated Housing Charter was also agreed, which sets out the Council's approach and ethos to the delivery of its housing service to customers.
2. Subsequently, a leaflet setting out all of the agreed Housing Service Standards was issued to all the Council's tenants and added to the Tenants Handbook. In addition, a number of leaflets were produced setting out the Housing Service Standards for particular areas of activity.
3. At the same time as agreeing the Service Standards, it was also agreed that the Housing Directorate's performance against the Housing Service Standards (where possible and appropriate) should be considered annually.

**Performance Against the Housing Service Standards in 2009/10**

4. Appendix 1 provides details of the Housing Service Standards and – where measurable and appropriate – the Housing Directorate's performance in meeting the standards in 2009/10. As a comparison, Appendix 1 also provides details on the performance in 2006/7 and 2008/9 (the year before the Housing Service Standards were introduced). It should be noted that there was no review in 2007/8



5. It is emphasised that it is not possible to measure performance against every Service Standard. In a number of cases, there is nothing that can be measured, since the Standard is a “statement of intent”; in a number of other cases, whilst performance could potentially be measured, it is considered that the time and resources that would be required to properly record and monitor performance is not warranted.

### **Proposed Changes and New Service Standards**

6. The Director of Housing has reviewed the Housing Service Standards, having regard to performance in 2009/10 and changes in legislation and Council policy. As a result, a number of changes are proposed. These are set out in bold italics under the description of the relevant standard in the first column of Appendix 1.

7. A number of the proposed changes result from:

- (a) The Housing Directorate’s intention for the Careline Service to be accredited by the Telecare Services Association (TSA). Accreditation demonstrates that the Careline Service meets nationally agreed standards, and is necessary if the Council is to offer its Careline Service to other councils or housing associations. The TSA has its own standards that the Council would have to adopt and publish – hence the reason for the proposed changes; and
- (b) The proposed introduction of Housing Service Standards for Tenant Participation. Although these are set out in detail within the District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement the Council has with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, it is suggested that the main requirements are also included within the Housing Service Standards for completeness.

### **Housing Charter**

8. The Council’s Housing Charter is attached at Appendix 2, and has also been reviewed. However, no changes are proposed.

### **Housing Regulatory Framework – Local Offer**

9. In April 2010, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) introduced its new Housing Regulatory Framework. In addition to setting out National Standards, with which the Council must comply, the Regulatory Framework also requires Registered Providers of Housing (including the Council) to consult with tenants and publish, by April 2011, a “Local Offer”, setting out the service that tenants can expect, and explain how the Council will meet the TSA’s National Standards.

10. The nature of the Local Offer is very much left to local discretion but, crucially, must be based on what the Council’s tenants expect. The Director of Housing will be discussing with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010, how the Local Offer should be formulated and what it should contain.

**[ The final version of this report will set out the proposed methodology for formulating the Local Offer - to be agreed by Tenants and Leaseholders Federation at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010]**

11. The current thinking is that the Housing Service Standards and the Housing Charter could form the core element of the Local Offer, supplemented with additional proposals for the forthcoming year, including proposed housing improvements for the year.

## **Consultation with the Housing Scrutiny Panel and Tenants and Leaseholders Federation**

12. The Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation have been consulted on this report, the performance against the Standards, the proposed changes and additions, and the proposed methodology for formulating the Local Offer, at their meetings held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010 and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010 respectively.

13. The comments of the Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation have been incorporated within Appendix 1 and the recommendations of this report.

## **Adoption of the New Housing Service Standards**

14. It is recommended that the proposed changes and additions to the Housing Service Standards - as set out in Appendix 1 - be approved, that the relevant leaflets be updated and that performance against the standards be reviewed again in July/August 2011.

### **Consultation Undertaken:**

As set out in the detailed report above.

### **Legal and Governance Implications:**

The appropriate setting of Service Standards and the monitoring of performance against those Standards is considered to contribute towards good governance.

### **Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

None

### **Background Papers:**

None

### **Impact Assessments:**

The regular consideration of Housing Service Standards, to some extent, helps to mitigate risks.

It is not considered necessary to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment

### **Key Decision Reference (Y/N):**

Yes

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	2009/10	Comments
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# We aim to....

**GENERAL**

<b>(G1)</b> Report on our performance against these Service Standards to your Tenants and Leaseholders Federation every year, and review the Standards in the light of performance	Director of Housing	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Reported to, and reviewed by Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Federation – July 2010
<b>(G2)</b> Generally satisfy at least 80% of our tenants with the overall housing service provided	Director of Housing	Level of tenant satisfaction (Tri-annual STATUS survey)	85%	83.5%	83.5%	Surveys are only undertaken every 2 years – so none was undertaken in 2009. Recent CLG Study for 2008/9 surveys shows EFDC to be in the top 21% of 182 stock-retaining councils, including ALMOs
<b>(G3)</b> Respond to your letters within 10 working days on routine matters, or acknowledge within 5 working days and then provide you with a full response within 28 days on more complex issues	Director of Housing	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	When the electronic records and document management system is introduced in Housing later in 2010/11, response times will be able to be monitored

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<b>(G4)</b> Give you an opportunity to appeal within 3 months to a senior officer about any decision made about your housing that affects you, and then <b>(for certain specified types of appeals)</b> give you a further opportunity within a further 3 months to appeal to the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors <sup>(a)</sup>	Director of Housing	(a) Senior Officer appeals	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	The proposed change reflects the new approach to housing appeals and reviews, agreed by the full Council towards the end of 2009/10.  This is being collected from April 2010 and will be reported next year
		(b) Panel Appeals / reviews heard	9	6	10	
<b>(G5)</b> Give you an opportunity to complain about anything you are unhappy about, fully investigate your complaint, and inform you of the outcome of your complaint within the Council's published timescales.	Director of Housing	(a) No. of Step 2 complaints (to Director of Housing) received	4	20	9	
		(b) No. of Step 3 complaints (to Chief Executive, investigated by Complaints Officer) received	9	14	12	
<b>(G6)</b> If you are unhappy about the way your complaint has been dealt with by housing officers, arrange to have your complaint heard by a panel of district councillors	Director of Housing	No. of Step 4 complaints received	1	0	0	

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<b>(G7)</b> Deliver a copy of the Council's "Housing News" to your home (giving useful information about your housing) at least three times each year	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	No. of copies of Housing News produced	3	1	2	
<b>(G8)</b> Consult you on any significant matters relating to your tenancy and take your views into account when making decisions  <i>(Proposal – Move Service Standard to new (TP1))</i>	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	No of <b>major</b> consultations undertaken, affecting all tenants	1	0	0	There were no major consultations affecting all tenants in 2009/10
<b>HOMELESSNESS</b>						
<b>(H1)</b> Give you an interview with a Homelessness Prevention Officer within 7 days of initial contact, or on the same day if an emergency	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>(H2)</b> If necessary, provide you with suitable temporary accommodation, whilst we investigate your homelessness application, until we provide you with a written decision	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	Total no. of applicants in temporary accommodation at end of year	91	80	46	This interim assistance is provided to ensure that the Council complies with its statutory duty under section 188 of the Housing Act 1996Pt V11

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<p><b>(H3)</b> If requested by you, review a homelessness decision that you are unhappy with (by either a senior officer or the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors) within 8 weeks <sup>(b)</sup></p> <p><i>(Statutory right and timescale)</i></p>	Director of Housing	% Within target time (unless with the permission of the applicant to extend period)	100%	100%	100%	All internal reviews were dealt with in the statutory timescale or by extended period if agreed by both parties.
<p><b>(H4)</b> Advise you of your right of appeal to the County Court within 21 days on a point of law if you are unhappy with the homelessness decision after it has been reviewed</p> <p><i>(Statutory right and timescale)</i></p>	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	% of applicants notified of their right	100%	100%	100%	
<p><b>(H5)</b> Keep you in temporary accommodation for at least 3 months after providing you with our written decision, before making you an offer of suitable permanent accommodation, unless provided with accommodation through our Fresh Start Scheme, in which case permanent accommodation will be provided after no more than 3 years</p>	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	(a) Average timescales	N/A	N/A	21 Weeks	

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**HOUSING REGISTER AND ALLOCATIONS**

<b>(HR1)</b> Register your housing application or garage application, and advise you of the level of priority (band) given, within 10 working days of receipt of all the information we need from you and other people.	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	(a) Average time	Not measured	Hg - 3 days G's - 4 days	3 - 4 days	
		(b) No. of applications awaiting registration at end of year	0	0	0	
<b>(HR2)</b> Notify you in writing of any change in your priority banding, within 7 days of the change being made	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	100%	
<b>(HR3)</b> Write to you at least every year if you have not expressed any interest in vacant properties under the Home Options Scheme, and ask if you wish to remain on the Housing Register	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>(HR4)</b> Give you at least 5 calendar days notice between offering you a tenancy and the tenancy commencement date	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	

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<b>(HR5)</b> Unless you are a homeless applicant <sup>(c)</sup> , allow you to choose the vacant Council or housing association home you would like to be offered (through our Home Option Scheme), subject to the interest expressed by other applicants with higher priority	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>(HR6)</b> If you are not a Council tenant already, offer you an Introductory Tenancy initially, followed by a Secure Tenancy automatically after 1 year, if you have not caused any anti-social behaviour, have had any significant rent arrears or broken any other Conditions of Tenancy.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>(HR7)</b> Give you a decision on your request for a mutual exchange within 5 working days of receiving an application from you and the other party/parties, with all the required information provided.	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	



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**HOUSING MANAGEMENT**

<p><b>(HM1)</b> If you are a new tenant, visit you at home within 10 weeks of your tenancy commencing, to introduce you to your local housing officer and to discuss the main conditions of your tenancy and any queries you may have</p>	Area Housing Managers	No. of new tenant visits undertaken, and no. undertaken within 10 weeks	Not measured	Not measured	182 out of 202 visits	Visits after 10 weeks are usually due to tenants being unable to provide access within the required period.
<p><b>(HM2)</b> Provide you with the following options to pay your rent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At one of the Council's Cash Offices</li> <li>• At any post office</li> <li>• At any "PayPoint" access point</li> <li>• By direct debit</li> <li>• By text</li> <li>• By standing order</li> <li>• Through the internet</li> <li>• By telephone</li> <li>• By salary deduction (if you Work for the Council)</li> </ul>	Housing Resources Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	

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<p><b>(HM3)</b> Provide you with the opportunity to pay your rent at post offices, "Pay-points" and "Pay-zones" throughout the country.</p> <p><b><i>Proposed that this Standard be deleted</i></b></p>	Housing Resources Manager	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	It is proposed that this Standard be deleted, since it duplicates (HM2). Payment at "Pay-Zones" is also no longer available
<p><b>(HM4)</b> Give you a choice of three dates in the month to pay your rent by direct debit.</p>	Housing Resources Manager	No. of direct debit payment dates available as at end of year	3	3	3	
<p><b>(HM5)</b> Provide you with written confirmation of the balance on your rent account in April/May each year (unless your account is clear or only in credit or arrears by less than £1)</p>	Area Housing Managers	Whether or not balance confirmations are sent out by end of May	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<p><b>(HM6)</b> Provide you with a detailed statement of your rent account for the previous 12 months on request or automatically every three months if you are in arrears by more than £1</p>	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Yes	Under the Pre-Court Rent Arrears Protocol, the Council must have provided a quarterly rent statement before legal action can be taken.

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<b>(HM7)</b> Make every effort to enter into an agreement with you to clear any rent arrears that you have through reasonable instalments, before we take any legal action to recover the arrears	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	Yes	
<b>(HM8)</b> Make every effort to meet with you to discuss any rent arrears before any court hearing takes place	Area Housing Managers	No. of visits to tenants' homes to discuss rent arrears	827	655	865	No. of visits to tenants' homes to discuss rent arrears
		No. of office interviews held to discuss rent arrears	1,373	1,407	1,320	No. of office interviews held to discuss rent arrears
<b>(HM9)</b> If you are an Introductory Tenant or a Demoted Tenant <sup>(d)</sup> , give you an opportunity to appeal to a senior officer against any proposed legal action within 2 weeks of you being advised of the proposed legal action.	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	(a) No of reviews held for introductory tenants	0	9	6	
		(b) No. of reviews held for demoted tenants	1	1	0	
<b>(HM10)</b> Remove abandoned vehicles from housing estates (after making enquiries of the DVLA on ownership and contacting the owner) within 5 weeks of receiving a complaint	Area Housing Managers	No. of abandoned vehicles removed (HM10 and HM11)	37	59	51	

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<b>(HM11)</b> Remove clearly abandoned and potentially dangerous vehicles from housing estates within 5 working days of receiving a complaint	Area Housing Managers					
<b>(HM12)</b> If you live in a flat with more than four flats in the block, clean the communal area weekly and re-charge you the cost to the Council.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Yes	Time sheets are provided by Mobile Cleaners on a weekly basis, confirming locations cleaned. Notice boards in each block advise tenants and leaseholders which day they can expect their block to be cleaned. Attendance is also monitored by Housing Managers via Vehicle Trackers.
<b>(HM13)</b> Where we clean communal areas of blocks or flats, inspect the standard of cleaning at least twice a year	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Yes	Although numbers are not recorded, inspection records are kept
<b>(HM14)</b> Undertake a formal inspection of your estate by a housing officer with a representative of any recognised tenant association covering your area and make a note of any required work at least once every year.	Area Housing Managers	No. of estate inspections undertaken	53	54	73	

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<b>(HM15)</b> Give you a decision on your request for permission to carry out improvements to your Council home (or former Council home) within 2 weeks of us receiving your request and all the required information.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	Yes	
<b>(HM16)</b> When you vacate your Council home, inform you of your right to compensation for certain improvements you have undertaken within 7 days of you informing us of your vacation and give you a decision on your request for compensation to your Council home within 2 weeks of us receiving your application and all the required information.	Area Housing Managers	No. of compensation claims agreed	2	7	4	
<b>(HM17)</b> If you are unable to succeed <sup>(e)</sup> to a tenancy because there has already been one succession, we will offer you a new tenancy of the property in which you are currently living or, if you are not a spouse and are under-occupying the property, the tenancy of another property.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	

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<b>(HM18)</b> Comply with the Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management in dealing with anti-social behaviour on housing estates	Area Housing Managers	Date of self-certification for compliance with the Standard	June 2007	June 2007	June 2007	
<b>REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE &amp; IMPROVEMENTS</b>						
<b>Proposed new Service Standard:</b> <b>(R1) Ensure that your home meets the Government's Decent Home Standard</b>						With a handful of exceptions (due to tenants not allowing access), all of the Council's properties met the Decent Homes Standard by the 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2010, and programmes of work are being undertaken to ensure that no homes become non-decent in the future. It is therefore felt that this new Service Standard is key.
<b>(R2)</b> Carry out emergency repairs within 24 hours of you reporting the repair.	Housing Repairs Manager	% emergency repairs completed within target time	99%	99%	98%	

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<b>(R3)</b> Carry out urgent repairs within 5 working days of you reporting the repair.	Housing Repairs Manager	(a) Average time to complete urgent repairs	6 days	6 days	4 days	
		(b) % urgent repairs completed within target time	89%	86%	94%	
<b>(R4)</b> Carry out routine repairs within 6 weeks of you reporting the repair.	Housing Repairs Manager	(a) Average time to complete routine repairs	4 weeks	4 weeks	Not available	
		(b) % routine repairs completed within target time	90%	86%	95%	It should be noted that, prior to 2009/10, the target time was 8 weeks.
<b>(R5)</b> Confirm in writing to you the details of any repairs you report, and give you a target date for completion on the day you report the repair (or the next day if reported after Noon)	Housing Repairs Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>(R6)</b> Keep any appointments that we make for tradesmen to carry out repairs to your home.	Housing Repairs Manager	% appointments kept	96%	95%	97%	
<b>(R7)</b> Satisfy at least 97% of tenants with the general standard of the repairs service we provide <sup>(f)</sup> .	Housing Repairs Manager	% tenant satisfaction	98%	98%	98%	

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<b>(R8)</b> If a repair needs to be inspected first, give you an appointment for a Housing Inspector to visit your home for a morning or afternoon within 10 working days of your request.	Housing Repairs Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>(R9)</b> Arrange for Repairs Inspectors to randomly inspect the quality of work of a sample of repairs carried out by our Works Unit and contractors	Housing Repairs Manager	Average number of properties visited per week to inspect repairs (including where no access is given)	36	0	36	Post repair inspections were ceased from the end of 2006/7. However, as part of the Repairs Refresh Programme they were recommenced from July 2009
<b>(R10)</b> If you are dissatisfied with a repair, arrange for a Supervisor to telephone or visit you within 5 working days of you telling us of your dissatisfaction.	Building Maintenance Manager	(a) No. of repair requests completed	15,163	18,664	17,062	
		(b) No. of dissatisfied tenants	54 (0.36%)	62 (0.33%)	28 (0.16%)	
		(c) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered justifiable	14 (26 %)	16 (26%)	4 (14%)	
		(d) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered due to minor problem	19 (35 %)	20 (32%)	11 (39%)	



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		(f) No. of cases where dissatisfaction was considered to be not due to the Repairs Service	4 (7 %)	9 (14%)	2 (7%)	
		(g) Properties unable to gain access	8 (15 %)	7 (11%)	5 (18%)	
<b>(R11)</b> If we do not complete certain specified repairs within specific timescales, arrange for another repairs contractor to carry out the repair within the same timescale on request <sup>(9)</sup>  <i>(Statutory requirement)</i>	Housing Repairs Manager	No. of tenants exercising their "Right to Repair"	0	0	0	
<b>(R12)</b> If a second contractor does not complete certain specified repairs within specific timescales, pay you compensation of £10 + £2 per day until the repair is carried out (upto a maximum of £50) <sup>(9)</sup>  <i>(Statutory requirement and amounts)</i>	Housing Repairs Manager	Amount of compensation paid	£ Nil	£ Nil	£ Nil	

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<b>(R13)</b> Service all the gas appliances in your home (or undertake a safety check if you have installed the appliance yourself), and provide you with a copy of the associated safety certificate, once a year	Housing Assets Manager	% of properties where servicing not undertaken within 12 months (due to access not provided by tenants)	North – 0.25 %	North – 1.27%	North - 0.19%	
			South – 1.4 %	South - 3.08%	South - 1.25%	
<b>(R14)</b> Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home to attend to a gas appliance that is required as an emergency (e.g. a water/gas leak) within 2 hours	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 2 hours	North – 100 %	North – 100%	North - 100%	
			South – 100 %	South - 86.5%	South - 100%	
		% attended within 1 hour	North – 99.5 %	North – 100%	North - 99%	
			South – 70.9 %	South – 86.5%	South - 100%	
<b>(R15)</b> Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home and carry out a repair to your heating or hot water system within 24 hours (if no part is required)  <b><i>Proposed revision to the Service Standard as follows:</i></b>	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 24 hours	North – 100 %	North- 100%	North – 100%	The proposed change is to reflect what is required by the Gas Servicing and Repair Contract, as well as what happens in practice.
			South – 100 %	South - 86 %	South – 100%	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	2009/10	Comments
<p><b><i>“Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home and carry out a repair to your heating or hot water system (if no part is required):</i></b></p> <p><b><i>(a) Within 24 hours during the week, or if an older person; and</i></b></p> <p><b><i>(b) On Monday, if over the weekend”</i></b></p>						
<p><b>(R16)</b> Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home to repair a gas appliance within 5 working days (when a part is required)</p>	<p align="center">Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>% attended within 5 working days</p>	<p>North – 100 %</p>	<p>North – 100%</p>	<p>North - 100%</p>	
			<p>South – 100 %</p>	<p>South – 96.5%</p>	<p>South - 100%</p>	
<p><b>(R17)</b> If you are over 60 years of age and live in a 1 or 2 bed property, redecorate 1 room in your home, on request, every 5 years and within 13 weeks of your request</p>	<p align="center">Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>(a) No. of internal decorations completed</p>	<p align="center">80</p>	<p align="center">53</p>	<p align="center">102</p>	<p>The extension of the scheme to 2 bed properties was agreed by the Housing P/H in August 2009</p>
		<p>(b) Average time from request to completion</p>	<p align="center">5.1 weeks</p>	<p align="center">6.5 weeks</p>	<p align="center">5.4 weeks</p>	
		<p>(c) No. of internal decorations outstanding at end of year, not completed within target timescale</p>	<p align="center">0</p>	<p align="center">0</p>	<p align="center">0</p>	

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**DISABLED ADAPTATIONS**

<b>(D1)</b> Advise you in writing about whether or not you are eligible for specific adaptations to your Council home within one week of us receiving a request from the Occupational Therapy Service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Minor adaptations	1.7 days	1.3 days	1.3 days	
		(b) Major adaptations	2.9 days	1.9 days	1.7 days	
<b>(D2)</b> Carry out minor adaptations to your home within 4 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Average time from decision to completion of work	27 days	22 days	22 days	
		(b) No. of minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time	2	8	0	
<b>(D3)</b> Carry out non-minor adaptations to your home within 13 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy Service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Average time from decision to completion of work	8 weeks	32 weeks	35 weeks	
		(b) No. of non-minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time	1	66	16	

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**SHELTERED HOUSING & CARELINE**

<b>(S1)</b> Test your Careline alarm in sheltered accommodation every 3 months and in non-sheltered accommodation every 6 months	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	This requirements for tests is monitored, but statistics are not kept on numbers
<b>(S2)</b> Install an individual Careline alarm in your home within 2 working days (provided that no other telecare equipment is required)  <b>Proposed that this Standard be amended to:</b>  <b>“(a) Install 90% of urgent basic telecare packages within 2 working days and 100% within 5 working days</b> <b>(b) On average, install non-urgent (full) telecare packages within 10 working days, and install all non-urgent telecare packages within 15 working days”</b>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average time to install a Careline alarm	0.9 days	1.5 days (Basic pendant & alarm)	5.5 days (Telecare package)	Since the Telecare Services Association (TSA) has its own standards on installation timescales, it is proposed that this standard be replaced with those shown.
<b>(S3)</b> Renew mains batteries in individual (dispersed) alarms every 5 years	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	The requirement for battery renewals is monitored, but statistics are not kept on numbers.

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>(S4)</b> Treat all your alarm calls to Careline as potential emergencies, until proved otherwise	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>(S5)</b> Answer your alarm calls to Careline, on average, within 10 seconds	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average time to respond to calls (including non urgent, routine calls from scheme managers and test calls)	6.3 seconds	6.6 seconds	7.7 seconds	
<b>(S6)</b> Answer 97 % of all alarm calls to Careline within 30 seconds  <i><b>Proposed that this Standard be amended to:</b></i>  <i><b>“Answer 99 % of all alarm calls to Careline within 60 seconds”</b></i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	% of calls answered within 30 seconds	98.9 %	98.9%	97.8%	Since the Telecare Services Association (TSA) has its own standards on call response times, it is proposed that the Council's current standard be replaced with the TSA's, as shown.
<b>(S7)</b> Liaise with other agencies and nominated contacts to ensure the wellbeing of our Careline customers	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	This is a TSA requirement
<b>(S8)</b> Record and monitor all alarm calls to Careline, to help train our staff and look at how we can improve our service	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Whether all calls have been recorded and monitored	Yes	Yes	Yes	.

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><b>(S9)</b> Repair your Careline alarm, or provide you with a replacement, within 24 hours of us being made aware (excluding Telecare sensors)</p> <p><b><i>Proposed that this Standard be amended to:</i></b></p> <p><b><i>“(a) Repair 90% of critical faults to telecare equipment within 2 working days, and 100% within 4 working days</i></b></p> <p><b><i>(b) Repair 100% of non-urgent faults to telecare equipment within 15 working days”</i></b></p>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	No. of repairs completed within 24 hours	100%	100%	100%	Since the Telecare Services Association (TSA) has its own standards on repairs, it is proposed that the Council's current standard be replaced with the TSA's, as shown.
<b>(S10)</b> Visit you annually to test the back-up batteries in your Careline alarm and to review your personal details held on our records	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Records for Individual visits are kept, but statistics on overall numbers are not kept
<b>(S11)</b> Record, maintain and update your Careline records in a confidential and secure manner	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	This is a TSA requirement
<b>(S12)</b> Train all our Careline staff to a high standard	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	All new staff receive a minimum of 8 wks induction training and periodic training thereafter.

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>(S13)</b> If you live in sheltered accommodation, ensure that your Scheme Manager gives you a home visit (or accounts for you) every day (Monday to Friday – subject to holidays and sickness)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Visiting schedule are kept but numbers visited are not measured.
<b>(S14)</b> If you live in sheltered accommodation and your Scheme Manager is on holiday or sick, arrange for another Scheme Manager to visit you 3 times a week	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Whether or not 3 visits per week have been arranged for absent scheme managers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Records of visits are kept on file
<b>(S15)</b> If you do not live in sheltered accommodation, but are visited by a Scheme Manager, ensure that you receive a visit every week, fortnight or month, as appropriate (as determined by a risk assessment)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average no. of visits per week	214	255	250	
<b>(S16)</b> If you live in sheltered or non-sheltered accommodation for older people, provide you with a Tenant Support Plan – explaining the type and level of support that we will give you - and review the Tenant Support Plan every 12 months (or sooner if requested by you)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Except for those certifying that they do not want a Tenant Support Plan, all tenants have a Tenant Support Plan which is reviewed annually



**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>(S17)</b> Carry out fire drills at sheltered accommodation every 3 months	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	No of schemes where fire drills have not been undertaken within 3 months	0	0	0	
<b>HOUSE SALES</b>						
<b>(HS1)</b> Confirm whether or not you are eligible for the Right to Buy within 2 weeks of receiving a properly completed application from you  <i>(Statutory requirement, but the statutory timescale is 4 weeks)</i>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average periods	F/hold - 3.0 days L/hold - 4.2 days	F/hold - 4.7 days L/hold - 2.7 days	F/hold - 3.2 days L/hold - 5.7 days	
		(b) % within statutory timescale (4 weeks)	F/hold - 100 % L/hold - 100 %	F/hold - 100% L/hold - 100%	F/hold - 100% L/hold - 100%	
<b>(HS2)</b> Advise you of the valuation, discount and purchase price for the property you wish to purchase within 8 weeks of us confirming the Right to Buy if your property is a house or bungalow or 12 weeks if your property is a flat or maisonette	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average time to provide information	F/hold - 4.5 weeks L/hold - 4.3 weeks	F/hold - 7.4 weeks L/hold - 5.5 weeks	F/hold - 4.8 weeks L/hold - 4.9 weeks	

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>(Statutory requirement and timescales)</i>		(b) % within statutory timescale	F/hold - 96 % L/hold- 100 %	F/hold – 60% L/hold - 100%	F/hold – 92% L/hold - 100%	Delays undertaking two valuations to freehold properties prevented the statutory requirements being met.
<b>(HS3)</b> Give you an opportunity to appeal against our valuation of your home, and to obtain an independent valuation (free of charge) from the District Valuer, within 3 months of you receiving our valuation  <i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No of appeals to DV	3	0	4	
<b>(HS4)</b> Complete the purchase of your property within 10 weeks of you confirming that you wish to proceed, provided that you and your solicitor deal with all required matters promptly	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Average time taken to complete a purchase	N/A	17 wks (7 sales)	15 wks (8 sales)	The actual timescale often depends on how quickly the applicant's solicitor takes to complete. The Housing Directorate has no control over this performance.
<b>(HS5)</b> If you do not proceed with your purchase, give you two formal notices of 8 weeks each before cancelling your Right to Buy application  <i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although overall statistics are not kept, cases are monitored to check how long applicants are taking to proceed, so that formal notices are issued at appropriate times.

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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**LEASEHOLD SERVICES**

<b>(L1)</b> Provide you with a detailed breakdown of your <u>estimated</u> annual service charge at least 2 weeks before the beginning of the financial year	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of weeks before the beginning of the reference year when all estimated service charge accounts were issued for the reference year	4 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	
<b>(L2)</b> Provide you with a detailed breakdown of your <u>actual</u> annual service charge within 6 months after the end of the financial year	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of months after the end of the reference year when all actual service charge accounts were issued for the reference year	6 months	6 months	6 months	
<b>(L3)</b> If you fall into arrears with your actual service charge, give you an appropriate amount of time to clear the arrear in accordance with the Council's Sundry Income and Dept Policy <sup>(h)</sup>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Formal action to recover service charges are only taken on <u>actual</u> service charge arrears, not estimated charges). However, arrears against estimated charges are also pursued.

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><b>(L4)</b> Consult you on proposed major repairs and improvements (over £250) and give you the opportunity to nominate a contractor to provide a tender for the work at least 30 days before seeking tenders</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although overall statistics are not kept, records of individual consultations are kept.
<p><b>(L5)</b> Consult you on the estimated cost of major repairs and improvements and advise you of the selected contractor before commencing the work, and give you at least 30 days to provide any comments you may have, which we will take into account</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although statistics are not kept, records of individual consultations are kept.
<p><b>(L6)</b> Provide you, on request, with a copy of your current service charge account and other relevant information (perhaps if you wish to sell on the leasehold), for a fee, within 2 weeks of your request</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>(L7)</b> Support a District-wide Leaseholders Association and ensure that it meets at least 4 times each year	Tenant Participation Officer	No. of meetings held	5	4	3	The quarterly meeting scheduled for Nov 2009 was postponed at the request of the Leaseholders Association
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING</b>						
<b>(PS1)</b> Visit 95% of applicants for our Caring And Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Service within 3 weeks of the initial enquiry	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	% of visits undertaken within 3 weeks	Not measured	100 %	100%	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS2)</b> Undertake jobs through our Handyperson Service within 2 weeks of request	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time for jobs to be completed	Not measured	14 days	13 days	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS3)</b> Generally satisfy at least 95% of our customers for both CARE's core service and Handyperson Service	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	% satisfied with CARE's core service and the Handyperson Service	Not measured	100 %	100%	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS4)</b> Respond to applicants for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) within 10 working days of receiving a referral from an occupational therapist (OT)	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to respond to referrals	Not measured	10 days	10 days	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>(PS5)</b> Issue a decision on a formal application for a DFG within 5 working days of receipt	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to issue a decision	Not measured	4 days	4 days	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS6)</b> Respond to applicants for other private sector grants within 5 working days of receiving a request	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to respond to requests	Not measured	2 days	6 days	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS7)</b> Issue a decision on a formal application for other private sector grants within 5 working days of receipt	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to issue a decision	Not measured	3.5 days	4 days	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS8)</b> Respond to requests for assistance from private tenants allegedly being harassed by landlords within 24 hours	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	% of responses within 24 hours	Not measured	100%	100%	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS9)</b> Respond to initial enquiries for other private sector housing services (e.g nuisance, filthy / verminous properties, mobile homes, HMOs) within 5 working days	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	% of responses within 3 working days	Not measured	99%	99.5%	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10
<b>(PS10)</b> Issue licences for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) within 6 months of receiving a properly completed application	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	% of licences issued within 4 months	Not measured	100%	100%	This new Service Standard was introduced for 2009/10

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	2009/10	Comments
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**TENANT PARTICIPATION**

<p><i><b>(TP1) Consult you on any significant matters relating to your tenancy and take your views into account when making decisions</b></i></p> <p><i><b>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11 (Moved from (G8))</b></i></p>	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	No. of major consultations undertaken, that affect all tenants	1	0	0	
<p><i><b>(TP2) Consult you on major issues that affect your estate (such as improvement schemes) and offer individual choices where appropriate.</b></i></p> <p><i><b>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</b></i></p>	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<p><i><b>(TP3) Agree our approach to tenant involvement with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and maintain a written Tenant Participation Agreement which we review every 3 years.</b></i></p> <p><i><b>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</b></i></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	Whether or not the Agreement was reviewed	No	No	No	The Tenant Participation Agreement was last reviewed and updated in 2007/8. It is due to be updated next around November 2010

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><b><i>(TP4) Invite 2 representatives of all the recognised tenants associations in the District to become members of the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, which will have a written constitution explaining how it will operate.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></b></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	Whether or not 2 representatives from recognised tenants associations have been invited	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<p><b><i>(TP5) Consult the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation on proposed new, or changed, housing plans, strategies and policies, and take their views into account before making decisions.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></b></p>	Director of Housing	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<p><b><i>(TP6) Look for opportunities to form new tenants associations, and support these groups by providing practical or financial support.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></b></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	



**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><b><i>(TP7) Provide start-up funding of £100 to any recognised steering group wishing to form a recognised tenants association, and a further grant of £200 when formally recognised.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></b></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<p><b><i>(TP8) Make premises available for meetings of tenants groups or meet any reasonable costs of hall bookings.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></b></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<p><b><i>(TP9) Consider the training requirements of tenants and leaseholders who are members of the Federation or other tenants associations, and assist in arranging suitable training.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></b></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

<b>Service Standard</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2008/9</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><i>(TP10) Provide a variety of ways to involve residents, for those that prefer not to attend meetings, including surveys, panels and public events.</i></p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<p><i>(TP11) Review the success of the Council's tenant participation strategy through consultation with the Federation and by conducting a survey once every three years.</i></p> <p><i>Proposed new Service Standard for 2010/11</i></p>	Tenant Participation Officer	STATUS survey on tenant satisfaction that your views are taken into account by the landlord	N/A	62%	62%	

**Epping Forest District Council  
Housing Directorate**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2009/10**

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2006/7	2008/9	2009/10	Comments
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**Notes:**

(a) Decisions relating to homelessness are considered *either* by a senior officer or the Housing Appeals and Review Panel, and have different timescales.

(b) Decisions relating to the priority need of single people, suitability of accommodation and referrals to other councils are considered by a senior officer. All others are considered by the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors.

(c) Homeless applicants are able to participate in the Choice Based Letting Scheme, for a period of 8 weeks (4 cycles) after receiving their homelessness decision letter. If no successful expressions of interest are made by the applicant, the Council will initially make expressions of interest on their behalf. If this is still unsuccessful, the Council will make the applicant one offer of accommodation when a suitable property becomes available.

(d) A demoted tenant is someone who held a secure tenancy but whose secure tenancy rights have been taken away by a court and has therefore become a (demoted) tenant - who is allowed to live at the property but with limited rights.

(e) Succession takes place when someone legally takes over the tenancy from their spouse or another family member, following the previous tenant's death. In law, there can only be one succession. A person (spouse or family member) who would otherwise be a successor tenant, but cannot in law because there has already been one succession, will be offered a new tenancy of either the property they are living in or another one, depending on whether or not they under-occupy the property.

(f) Measured through the Council's ongoing repairs satisfaction survey from satisfaction forms provided to tenants for all repairs requested.

(g) Under the Right to Repair legislation, defined repairs must be undertaken within either 1,3 or 7 days as specified by the legislation.

(h) Under the Council's Sundry Income and Debt Policy, people are given the following time periods to repay the following levels of debts:

Debts below £500      Upto 3 months  
Debts below £1,500    Upto 6 months

Debts below £2,500    Upto 9 months  
Debts above £2,500    Upto 12 months

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## Epping Forest District Council

# HOUSING CHARTER

In the provision of housing services<sup>(\*)</sup>, the Council will:

- Treat you courteously, politely and with respect - in person and on the telephone (and will expect the same in return)
- Treat you fairly and in accordance with your needs and wishes
- Investigate complaints thoroughly and respond wherever possible within 10 working days or send you an acknowledgement and then respond to you fully as soon as possible
- Explain and give advice promptly on any housing matters you do not understand
- Consult you on matters that significantly affect you
- Seek to provide high standards of service to you
- Take into account your needs and the needs of others when considering individual housing cases, and the effect decisions will have.
- Keep you informed of housing issues
- Manage the use of your rent payments prudently
- Make provision for any special needs you may have when communicating with you
- Treat you equally, irrespective of your race, disability, gender, faith, belief, age or sexual orientation and comply with the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Race Relations Code of Practice Related to Rented Housing and the Good Practice Standards for Social Landlords on Tackling Harassment

(\*) Housing services are provided, in the main, to:

- Council Tenants
- Leaseholders
- Housing applicants
- Homeless applicants
- Private tenants and owner-occupiers

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## **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

**Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan**

**Subject: Housing Strategy 2009-2012:**

**(a) 12-Month Progress Report on Key Action Plan 2009/10**

**(b) Key Action Plan 2010/11**



**Officer contact for further information:**

**Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) That the 12-Month Progress Report on the Key Action Plan 2009/10, contained within the Housing Strategy 2009-2012 – attached as Appendix 1 – be considered, with any comments passed to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Director of Housing accordingly;**
- (2) That appropriate uncompleted actions be carried forward to the Key Action Plan 2010/11; and**
- (3) That the proposed Key Action Plan 2010/11 – attached as Appendix 2 – be recommended to the Cabinet for adoption.**

### **Report:**

1. At its meeting in September 2009, the Council's Cabinet adopted the Housing Strategy 2009-2012. This followed the Housing Scrutiny Panel considering in detail and approving for consultation an earlier "Consultation Draft" Housing Strategy, and a major Consultation Exercise being undertaken with the Council's partners, key stakeholders and the public over a three-month period. The Consultation Exercise included a one-day Housing Strategy Conference, to which all the consultees were invited.

2. The Housing Strategy assesses the District's current and future housing needs - having particular regard to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment produced by six local authorities in the eastern part of the LCB Sub-Region - and sets out the Council's approach to meeting those needs. As well as taking account of national, regional and sub-regional priorities, it also links with other Council and non-Council strategies that both influence, and are influenced by, the Housing Strategy.

3. The Strategy also includes a Key Action Plan, which sets out the proposed actions that will be taken by the Council to contribute towards the achievement of the housing objectives over the 3 years of the Housing Strategy.

4. The Cabinet agreed that progress with the Key Action Plan should be monitored on a

6-monthly basis by the Housing Scrutiny Panel, in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

5. The first 6-Month Progress Report was considered by the Scrutiny Panel in March 2010, and the 12-Month Progress Report is attached as Appendix 1, which the Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider, and to provide any comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Director of Housing. It is proposed that appropriate uncompleted actions be carried forward to the Kay Action plan 2010/11.

6. When adopting the Housing Strategy, the Cabinet also agreed that Key Action Plans should be produced and updated on an annual basis for approval by the Cabinet. An updated Key Action Plan is therefore attached at Appendix 2, which the Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider and recommend to the Cabinet for adoption in September 2010.

**Reason for decision:**

The Housing Strategy includes a Key Action Plan, on which the Cabinet has asked the Housing Scrutiny Panel to monitor progress on a 6-monthly basis. The Cabinet has also agreed that a new Key Action Plan should be produced each year, for the duration of the Housing Strategy

**Options considered and rejected:**

None.

**Consultation undertaken:**

None

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: Nil

Personnel: Nil

Land: Nil

Community Plan/BVPP reference: Meeting Housing Need

Relevant statutory powers: N/A

Background papers: None

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None

Key Decision reference: N/A



**Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2009-2010**

**Twelve-Month Progress Report – July 2010**

<b>No</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Current Position</b>
1	Housing Market	Disseminate the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment undertaken with the 5 partner LAs through the Council's website and local media	Principal Housing Officer (Information / Strategy)	Dec 2009	<b>Achieved</b> – The SHMA has been produced by a research company on behalf of the 5 local authority partners and reported to the Local Development Framework Committee.
2	Housing Market	Following the completion and analysis of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, consider with partner local authorities the implementation of viability studies to test the deliverability of potential development sites	Asst. Director of Planning & Economic Development	June 2010	<b>In Progress</b> – A consultancy, Levels, has been jointly-appointed by the local authorities in the SHMA Area to undertake the Viability Assessment. The final draft has been produced and it is anticipated that the final version will be published in Summer 2010.  <b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b>
3	Housing Market	In collaboration with the other 13 local authorities in the London Commuter Belt Housing Sub Region, formulate a revised Sub Regional Housing Strategy and Action Plan	Director of Housing	April 2010	<b>Limited Progress</b> – Question marks have been raised about the future of the sub-regional group. It has reduced its scope of coverage and there are suggestions that the Herts authorities are looking to form their own County group. As a result, little progress has been made on the formulation of a Sub Regional Housing Strategy.
4	Affordable Housing	Work with RSLs and developers to provide 396 affordable homes for rent and shared ownership at the following sites with detailed or outline planning permission:	Director of Housing	Dec 2011	<b>On Target</b> – 63 affordable homes were completed in 2009/10. A further 27 affordable homes were completed in Quarter 1 of 2010/11 and it is expected that a total of 126 affordable homes will be built in 2010/11. Planning permission has been granted for a further 205 homes, that are expected to complete within the next 2 years.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Epping Forest College (Phase 2), Loughton</li> <li>(b) St Margarets Hospital, Epping</li> <li>(c) White Lodge/The Limes, Waltham Abbey</li> <li>(d) Ongar Station, Ongar</li> <li>(e) Merlin Way, North Weald</li> <li>(f) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell</li> <li>(g) St Johns School, Epping</li> <li>(h) Church Hill, Loughton</li> <li>(i) Acres Avenue, Ongar</li> <li>(j) Theatre Resource, Ongar</li> <li>(k) Off site provision from Warren Hill development, Loughton</li> </ul>			<b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan in a different form.</b>
5	Affordable Housing	Provide 5 Home Ownership Grants of £34,000 to existing Council tenants to purchase in the private sector and review the success of the scheme and the take-up to consider whether a scheme should be introduced on a more permanent basis	Housing Resources Manager	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – Following a good response to the marketing campaign for the Home Ownership Grants (HOGs) in 2009, the Cabinet has agreed the provision of a further 6 HOGs in 2010/11 (at a reduced amount of £28,000 each), which are currently being marketed.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
6	Affordable Housing	<p>Investigate the feasibility and viability of the Council building social housing for rent itself, including the possible development of the following 6 Council-owned sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Chequers Rd, Loughton</li> <li>(b) Millfield, High Ongar</li> <li>(c) Thatchers Close, Loughton</li> </ul>	Director of Housing	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – Detailed investigation by the Housing Scrutiny Panel's Affordable Housing Group identified that, for complex accounting reasons, it is not currently viable. However, the Cabinet has agreed the concept in principle, and agreed that the Leader should write to the Minister for Housing and Planning asking him to amend the accounting regulations to make it viable for the Council.</p> <p>The Minister responded and advised that changes will be made.</p>

		(d) Kirby Close, Loughton (e) Langley Meadow, Loughton (f) Harveyfields, Waltham Abbey			The required change is awaited, but it may be incorporated within the proposed changes to the HRA Subsidy System.  <b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b>
7	Affordable Housing	Produce a Development and Design Brief for the Broadway, Loughton, following the consultation exercise, providing significant levels of housing, including high levels of affordable housing with a mix of shared ownership and social rented housing	Asst. Director of Planning & Economic Development	April 2010	<b>Achieved</b> – The Brief has been finalised. Senior Housing, Estates and Planning Officers are now considering the most appropriate way forward to develop the Council's landholdings within the Development Brief area.
8	Affordable Housing	In partnership with one of the Council's Preferred RSL Partners, convert the Council-owned Leader Lodge and develop the associated grounds to provide 6 affordable flats	Director of Housing	Dec 2010	<b>Delayed</b> – Following the withdrawal of the tenders submitted by the preferred and reserve housing associations, due to the worsening market conditions, a further tendering exercise was undertaken by the Director of Housing. A preferred housing association was selected.  However, this housing association also withdrew, due to uncertainties around the implications for recently-introduced regulations on rural areas, which includes North Weald.  The Director of Housing and Housing Portfolio Holder are considering the best way forward on this project.  <b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan in a different form.</b>
9	Affordable Housing	Work in partnership with one of the Council's Preferred RSL Partners to convert 20 unpopular bedsits for older people at Marden Close, Chigwell Row into 10 self-contained rented flats for families	Director of Housing	Dec 2010	<b>In Progress</b> – Agreement has been reached in principle with the charity that owns the freehold (the Council owns the leasehold), regarding the terms of the surrender of the existing lease by the Council and the provision of a new lease to the Council's selected housing association. However, the length of lease still needs to be determined. The charity's solicitors are currently drafting the new lease.

					<p>The Director of Housing will then undertake a tendering exercise amongst the Council's Preferred RSL Partners to undertake the conversion scheme.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
10	Homelessness	Operate a scheme providing Rental Loans to potentially homeless people, to enable them to stay in their private rented accommodation	Housing Options Manager	April 2010	<b>Achieved</b> – The Rental Loan Scheme is operating successfully, with additional funding from the CLG and the Council.
11	Homelessness	Continue to actively engage with the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme	Housing Options Manager	April 2010	<b>Ongoing</b> – To date, six mortgage rescues in the District have been facilitated by the Council – the most within the whole of the Essex, Sussex and Kent Homebuy Region.
12	Homelessness	Investigate the feasibility and viability of the Council establishing a Local Housing Company to purchase properties on the open market and let to homeless and other Housing Register applicants at market rents, in many cases funded by housing benefit	Director of Housing	April 2010	<p><b>Achieved</b> – The Feasibility Study has been completed. It established that, although the approach was legal, and the Council could potentially receive additional income from loans and services provided to the Local Housing Company (LHC) than from its usual investment deposits, the LHC itself would not be viable, with the anticipated income from rents being insufficient to meet its costs.</p> <p>In April 2010, the Cabinet agreed not to pursue the proposal any further.</p>
13	Black & Minority Ethnic Groups	Record the ethnicity of all Council tenants, using data obtained from the latest Tenants Census.	Principal Housing Officer (Information / Strategy)	Dec 2009	<b>Achieved</b> – All the data has been loaded onto the Housing Directorate's OHMS integrated housing IT system.
14	Black & Minority Ethnic Groups	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2010	<p><b>Achieved</b>– The annual report comparing the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants has been submitted to the Housing Scrutiny Panel in July 2010.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>

15	Black & Minority Ethnic Groups	Review all customer satisfaction monitoring conducted by the housing service to ensure the diversity of customers is monitored in relation to satisfaction	Principal Housing Officer (Information / Strategy)	March 2010	<b>In Progress</b> – Although some diversity information is collected, the Housing Directorate is awaiting the introduction of corporate guidance on monitoring equality and diversity.  <b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b>
16	Gypsies & Travellers	Continue to challenge the Government's proposals to require Epping Forest to provide an additional 34 authorised pitches for gypsy and travellers	Asst. Director of Planning & Economic Development	April 2010	<b>Achieved</b> – The Minister has withdrawn the Direction to complete a Development Plan Document on Gypsies and Travellers and the East of England Plan specifying required numbers has now been revoked.
17	Gypsies & Travellers	Following consultation on the draft proposals, produce and submit for examination a Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document addressing the provision of new sites for gypsies and travellers in the District.	Asst. Director of Planning & Economic Development	April 2010	<b>No Longer Required</b> – In view of the withdrawal of the Direction on Gypsies and Travellers, proposals for Gypsies and Travellers will be incorporated within the Local Development Document on Site Specific Allocations.
18	Gypsies & Travellers	Identify the most suitable locations for the additional authorised pitches for gypsy and travellers required by the East of England Plan	Asst. Director of Planning & Economic Development	April 2010	<b>No longer Required</b> – The East of England Plan has now been revoked.
19	Gypsies & Travellers	Produce a Gypsies and Travellers Delivery Strategy, explaining how the required number of pitches for gypsies and travellers will be provided in practice	Asst. Director of Housing (Private Sector & Resources)	April 2010	<b>Not yet required</b> – In view of the East of England Plan's revocation, and the withdrawal of the Direction, a Delivery Strategy is not yet, and may never be, required.

20	Gypsies & Travellers	Work in partnership with registered social landlords to provide and manage affordable gypsies and travellers sites in the District	Asst. Director of Housing (Private Sector & Resources)	April 2011	<p><b>In Progress</b> – Discussions continue to be held with RSLs. Four of the Council’s five Preferred RSL Partners have advised that they currently have no plans to develop and manage gypsy sites. The remaining Preferred RSL Partner is in the process of developing a gypsy site in Norfolk, and does not want to commit to any further sites until the success of its Norfolk site can be evaluated.</p> <p>Discussions will be held with any other interested RSLs. However, very few appear interested.</p>
21	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Investigate the potential, with Essex Adult Care Services, for Jessopp Court, Waltham Abbey to be designated an Extra-Care Housing Scheme	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	April 2010	<p><b>Achieved</b> – Discussions with Essex Adult Care Service (EACS) have established that Jessopp Court would <b>not</b> be suitable for designation as an Extra-Care Scheme. However, discussions with EACS have led to EFDC being a partner of Essex CC in its Expression of Interest to the Department of Health (DoH) for PFI funding for the development of a new Extra Care Scheme in the District, on EFDC land.</p> <p>Following the Expression of Interest being accepted, Essex CC is now formulating the Outline Business Case, which must be submitted to the DoH by April 2011.</p> <p>This process has led to the Housing Directorate undertaking a Strategic Review of its Older Peoples Accommodation, to assess how fit for purpose its sheltered housing schemes are, and to determine a strategy for the future. It is envisaged that this may result in a site being identified as suitable for a new Extra-Care Scheme. However, the review has been delayed, since Essex CC has reneged on its agreement to joint fund the review.</p> <p><b>Carry forward these two projects to 2010/11 Action Plan, in a different form</b></p>

22	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Obtain TSA accreditation for the Council’s Careline Service	Housing Manager (Older People)	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress, but delayed</b> – Good progress has been made. However, it will not be possible to obtain accreditation until the extension of the Careline Control Centre has been completed, and the service returns to its enlarged accommodation in September 2010, from its current temporary location.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
23	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Investigate with Ability Housing Association the potential to provide an extension to their existing supported housing scheme for wheelchair users at Mason Close, Waltham Abbey	Director of Housing	April 2010	<p><b>No Progress</b> – In order for the extension to proceed, the landowner (a large developer) has to be prepared to sell adjacent land at a reasonable price, and the developer continues to be reluctant to discuss reasonable terms.</p>
24	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	In partnership with East Thames Housing Group, commence a development at Station Approach, Ongar, in partnership with Brentwood and Uttlesford Councils, to provide 13 self contained flats with adequate support for young parents	Director of Housing	Dec 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – The building is under construction, and the Project Team has been meeting to discuss operational aspects of the scheme. The scheme has been named “Railway Meadow”, and is due for completion in October 2010.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
25	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	In partnership with East Thames Housing Group, commence a development of 9 affordable homes for people with learning disabilities, with associated drama therapy from the Theatre Resource Project, at Gt Stony, Ongar	Director of Housing	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – The building is under construction, and due for completion in May 2011.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>

26	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Through the LDF Core Strategy, seek to introduce a requirement that all new housing developments in the District should meet the Lifetime Homes Standard	Director of Planning & Economic Development	Dec 2010	<p><b>No Progress</b> – Progress with undertaking the LDF Core Strategy has been delayed, mainly due to staff resources having to be diverted to the Gypsies and Travellers Consultation Exercise.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
27	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Contribute towards the production of the Essex Strategy for Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs), setting out the approach to be taken to HIA's in Essex beyond 2010	Private Housing Manager (Grants & C.A.R.E.)	Dec 2009	<p><b>In Progress</b> – The Housing Directorate, along with other HIAs, continues to engage with the Essex Supporting Team on the proposed new arrangements. However, due to delays by Essex CC, all the HIAs' existing Supporting People (SP) Contracts have been extended until April 2011. In view of the Government's withdrawal of SP Admin Grant, the future of this project is in doubt.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
28	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Liaise with the North Essex Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust to assess the housing need in the District for people with mental health problems and the level of funding available from mental health sources	Principal Housing Officer (Information & Strategy)	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – Meetings have now been held with the Foundation Trust at a senior officer level, to discuss the housing needs of people with mental health problems in the District. A potential housing solution to assist single vulnerable people with mental health problems is under consideration.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
29	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Work with other councils to investigate the feasibility of other councils connecting its emergency alarms into the Council's Careline Control Centre	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	Dec 2009	<p><b>Limited Progress</b> – It was hoped that EFDC could tender for the contract to provide a Careline monitoring service for Harlow DC. However, EFDC was not invited, since our Careline Control does not currently have the Telecare Services Association (TSA) accreditation, which Harlow DC required.</p> <p>Any other opportunities will be actively pursued.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>



30	Empty Homes	Write to all owners of properties that have been empty for at least 2 years encouraging them to bring their properties back into use and advising them of the options available	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	April 2010	<b>Achieved</b> – Letters have been sent to all owners of long-term empty properties, with advice on ways of enabling the properties to be occupied,
31	Empty Homes	Develop the Council's web-site to provide further information and advice to the owners of empty properties	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Dec 2010	<p><b>No Progress</b> – Due to insufficient staff resources within the Private Sector Housing Section and other commitments, it has not been possible to progress this task.</p> <p>However, the Cabinet has agreed to the appointment of an additional part-time temporary Technical Officer, who has recently been appointed; one of the post's responsibilities is to progress the Council's Empty Property Strategy.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
33	Empty Homes	Bring at least 5 long-term empty properties back into use by Council intervention.	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	April 2010	<p><b>Not achieved</b> – Although one property has been brought back into use through the Council's PLACE Scheme, it has not been possible to progress this task further. However, the additional part-time temporary Technical Officer referred to above will be responsible for increasing the number of private properties brought back into use.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
34	Under-occupation	Write to all under-occupying Council tenants, encouraging them to transfer to smaller accommodation	Housing Options Manager	Dec 2010	<p><b>No Progress</b> – Due to other commitments</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>

35	Rural Housing	Investigate the development potential for rural housing schemes in Moreton and other villages, in partnership with the Parish Councils and Hastoe Housing Association, under the Council's planning exceptions policy	Director of Housing	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – The Housing Directorate has been working closely with Hastoe HA and parish councils on potential development sites. As a result, one site is due to be developed imminently (see (No. 36) below). Hastoe HA is in contact with other parish councils on other potential sites. However, no site has yet been identified for Moreton</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan in a different form</b></p>
36	Rural Housing	Work with Abbess Berners and Beauchamp Roding Parish Council and Hastoe Housing Association to provide a rural housing development in the Parish, under the Council's planning exceptions policy	Director of Housing	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – A site in Abbess Roding has received planning permission as a Planning Exceptions Scheme, has received funding from the Homes and Communities Agency, and is currently on site, due to complete in March 2011.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
37	Decent Homes – Public Sector	Undertake programmes of work to ensure that all the Council's homes meet the Decent Homes Standard by April 2010	Housing Assets Manager	April 2010	<p><b>Achieved</b> – All but a handful of the Council's properties met the Decent Homes Standard by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. There were a small number of properties that could not be surveyed, due to the tenants not allowing access.</p>
	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Provide, through housing assistance, a year-on-year increase in the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in Decent Homes.	Private Housing Manager (Grants & C.A.R.E.)	April 2010 and ongoing	<p><b>Achieved</b> – 123 Small Works, Thermal comfort and Decent Homes grants were provided in 2009/10.</p> <p>A Private Sector House Condition Survey is planned for 2010/11, which will provide information on the most up-to-date estimate of the number of non-decent homes in the private sector.</p>
39	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Implement an Affordable Warmth Scheme as a joint initiative with other LCB authorities	Private Housing Manager (Grants & C.A.R.E.)	April 2010 - March 2011	<p><b>Achieved</b> – Funding has been provided by the East of England Regional Assembly, and the scheme (called the Home Energy Efficiency Partnership – HEEP) is currently being undertaken in partnership with other local authorities in the LCB Sub-Region.</p>

40	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Work on a joint project with other LCB authorities for a joint equity-release / loan-based housing product	Private Housing Manager (Grants & C.A.R.E.)	Dec 2010	<b>No Progress</b> - It is considered that an Equity Loan Scheme is unviable in the current housing market.
41	Housing Growth	Work with Harlow Council to agree the number of new homes required in the Epping Forest District, and the most suitable locations, to contribute to Harlow's growth	Director of Planning & Economic Development	Dec 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> - Senior members and planning officers have been meeting regularly with Harlow DC, and a number of joint studies have been commissioned. A Joint Investment Plan requested by the Homes and Communities Agency is currently being produced.</p> <p>However, the future of Harlow's growth strategy is now in doubt, due to the revocation of the East of England Plan. EFDC members will need to decide its approach to contributing towards Harlow's growth</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan in a different form</b></p>
42	Housing Growth	Produce a Local Development Document on Site Specific Allocations, setting out the locations and numbers of housing growth within the District	Director of Planning & Economic Development	April 2010	<p><b>In Progress</b> – Although delayed, due to staffing resources having to be diverted to the Gypsy and Travellers Consultation Exercise, progress is being made by planning officers.</p> <p>However, due to the revocation of the East of England Plan, EFDC members need to decide whether to retain the former Plan's targets for new house-building in the District, or to formulate new ones.</p> <p><b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b></p>
43	Energy Efficiency	Complete energy efficiency surveys for all the Council's properties	Housing Assets Manager	April 2010	<b>Achieved</b> – Energy efficiency surveys have been undertaken for all the Council's sheltered housing schemes and Norway House. Surveys are also undertaken in all empty Council properties, with an Energy Certificate issued to the incoming tenant.

44	Energy Efficiency	Seek funding for a small pilot scheme using renewable energy sources to a group of Council properties	Housing Assets Manager	April 2010	<b>No Progress</b> – Appropriate funding has not yet been identified.  <b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b>
45	Energy Efficiency	Set up a Fuel Poverty Referral System in the District.	Environmental Co-ordinator	April 2010	<b>No Progress</b> – Due to other commitments of the Environmental Co-ordinator  <b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b>
46	Energy Efficiency	Produce a leaflet on domestic energy efficiency.	Environmental Co-ordinator	April 2010	<b>Achieved</b> – A page on domestic energy efficiency was included within the Environmental Booklet produced in 2009, which was delivered to all homes in the District with The Forester.
47	Respect & Anti-Social Behaviour	Produce an updated leaflet for the public on the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Apr 2010	<b>In Progress</b> – Due to a number of other commitments of the Principal Housing Officer (Strategy) it has not been possible to progress this task as quickly as it was hoped.  <b>Carry forward to 2010/11 Action Plan</b>
48	Respect & Anti-Social Behaviour	Consider the feasibility of the Council's Careline Service providing a 24 hour monitoring service for Council CCTV cameras in the District	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Apr 2010	<b>Achieved</b> – It has been agreed that the Careline Control Centre will provide a 24-hour monitoring service for all of the Council's CCTV cameras that can be accessed from the Control Centre.

**Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2010-11**

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Current Position
1	Housing Market	Following the completion and analysis of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), produce with partner local authorities a Viability Assessment for the SHMA's area of coverage, to assess the amount of housing required in the District.	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	October 2010	
2	Housing Market	Produce a Strategic Housing Land Assessment (SHLA), to provide an assessment of the potential capacity for new house-building in the District	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	March 2011	
3	Housing Market	Review the target for the number of new homes to be provided within the District between 2011-2031, following the revocation of the East of England Plan	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	March 2011	
4	Housing Market	Progress the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy to the Issues and Options Stage	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	April 2011	
5	Regeneration	Undertake a public consultation on a proposed Development and Design Brief for the St Johns Area of Epping, including market and affordable housing	Asst. Director of Planning & Economic Development	March 2011	

6	Affordable Housing	<p>Work with RSLs and developers to provide 319 affordable homes for rent and shared ownership between April 2010 and March 2012, at the following sites with detailed planning permission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Epping Forest College, Loughton</li> <li>(b) St Margarets Hospital, Epping</li> <li>(c) White Lodge/The Limes, Waltham Abbey</li> <li>(d) Ongar Station, Ongar</li> <li>(e) Merlin Way, North Weald</li> <li>(f) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell</li> <li>(g) Acres Avenue, Ongar</li> <li>(h) Theatre Resource, Ongar</li> <li>(i) School Lane, Abbess Roding</li> <li>(j) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell</li> </ul>	Director of Housing	March 2012	
7	Affordable Housing	Provide 6 Home Ownership Grants of £28,000 to existing Council tenants to purchase in the private sector and review the success of the scheme and the take-up to consider whether the scheme should be continued into 20011/12	Housing Resources Manager	March 2011	
8		Introduce an innovative and unique Open Market Home Ownership Scheme with Broxbourne Housing Association (BHA), to enable first time buyers in the District to purchase a	Director of Housing	March 2011	

		property of their choice from the open market through shared ownership, funded jointly by the Council, BHA and the applicant			
9	Affordable Housing	<p>Investigate the feasibility and viability of the Council building social housing for rent itself, including the possible development of the following 6 Council-owned sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Chequers Rd, Loughton</li> <li>(b) Millfield, High Ongar</li> <li>(c) Thatchers Close, Loughton</li> <li>(d) Kirby Close, Loughton</li> <li>(e) Langley Meadow, Loughton</li> <li>(f) Harveyfields, Waltham Abbey</li> </ul>	Director of Housing	March 2011	
10	Affordable Housing	Investigate the development potential of difficult-to-let Council-owned garage sites, where more than 20% of garages are vacant	Director of Housing	March 2011	
11	Affordable Housing	Implement the proposals of the Development and Design Brief for The Broadway, Loughton relating to the Council's land-holdings, to provide significant levels of affordable housing	Director of Housing	December 2011	

12	Affordable Housing	Review the options for the development/conversion of Council-owned Leader Lodge, North Weald and select one of the Council's Preferred RSL Partners through a competitive process to implement the agreed option	Director of Housing	March 2011	
13	Affordable Housing	Work in partnership with one of the Council's Preferred RSL Partners to convert 20 unpopular bedsits for older people at Marden Close, Chigwell Row into 10 self-contained rented flats for families	Director of Housing	Sept 2011	
14	Affordable Housing	<p>Review HomeOption, the Council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme, in partnership with the other local authorities in the Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium, to consider:</p> <p>(a) Charging housing associations for advertisements of vacant properties, to share the costs;</p> <p>(b) Discontinuing the production of a glossy Freesheet, advertising vacancies, to reduce/redirect costs;</p> <p>(c) Some level of cross-border nominations, to assist mobility</p> <p>(d) Adding a consultation module to the HomeOption Website, to seek the views of users</p>	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Sept 2011	



		<p>(e) Producing a single housing application form for all HEHOC member authorities, to streamline the application process</p> <p>(f) Providing an on-line housing application registration, to ease and improve access to the Housing Options Service</p> <p>(g) Offering the service to private landlords, to bring additional income and increase the housing options available to applicants</p> <p>(h) Adding a link to the HomeSwapper national mutual exchange scheme on the HomeOption website</p>			
15	Affordable Housing	Introduce a policy of disallowing housing applicants to express interest in vacant properties through the HomeOption Scheme for six months, if they have refused three tenancy offers of vacant Council or housing association homes for which they had expressed an interest	Assistant Director of Housing (Operations)	October 2011	
16	Homelessness	Review the funding for the continuation of the Council's Homelessness Prevention Service, in the light of the homelessness grant funding from Communities and Local Government being channelled through Essex CC's Area Based Grant from April 2011	Assistant Director of Housing (Operations)	February 2011	

17	Homelessness	Investigate with the North Essex Mental Health Foundation Trust the possibility of providing dedicated accommodation for vulnerable homeless adults with mental health problems, supported by community psychiatric nurses.	Housing Options Manager	March 2011	
18	Diversity	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2011	
19	Diversity	Review all customer satisfaction monitoring conducted by the Council's Housing Service to ensure the diversity of customers is monitored in relation to satisfaction	Principal Housing Officer (Information / Strategy)	July 2011	
20	Diversity	Review and update the Customer (Equality) Impact Assessments of the Housing Strategy & Development, Homelessness, Private Sector Housing functions	Director of Housing	March 2011	
21	Gypsies & Travellers	Consider the appropriate number of new pitches required for gypsies and travellers in the district in future, having regard to the County-wide Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessment	Director of Planning and Economic Development	Sept 2011	

22	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Undertake a Strategic Review of Older People’s Accommodation within the District, and formulate a resultant strategy for future provision of older people’s accommodation	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2011	
23	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Work with Essex CC to submit an Outline Business Case to the Department of Health for funding from the Private Finance Initiative to provide a new Extra Care Scheme within the District	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2011	
24	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Obtain TSA accreditation for the Council’s Careline Service	Housing Manager (Older People)	April 2011	
25	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	In partnership with East Thames Housing Group, complete a Young Parents Scheme at Ongar Station, in partnership with Brentwood and Uttlesford Councils, to provide 13 self contained flats with adequate support for young parents	Director of Housing	Nov 2010	
26	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Work with East Thames Housing Group to complete a development of 9 affordable homes for people with learning disabilities, with associated drama therapy from the Theatre Resource Project, at Gt Stony, Ongar	Director of Housing	May 2011	

27	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Through the LDF Core Strategy, seek to introduce a requirement that all new housing developments in the District should meet the Lifetime Homes Standard	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	March 2012	
28	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Contribute towards the production of the Essex Strategy for Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs), setting out the approach to be taken to HIA's in Essex beyond 2011	Private Housing Manager (Grants & C.A.R.E.)	March 2011	
29	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Liaise with the North Essex Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust to assess the housing need in the District for people with mental health problems and the level of funding available from mental health sources	Director of Housing	March 2011	
30	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Work with other councils and housing associations to investigate the feasibility of other councils connecting its emergency alarms into the Council's Careline Control Centre	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	October 2011	
31	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Install the latest version of the Careline Control Centre monitoring equipment, to improve the Careline Service further and to enable a partnering arrangement to be introduced with another control centre with compatible equipment for business continuity.	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	March 2011	

32	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Update the Council's obsolete Piper Haven speech alarm equipment in its sheltered housing schemes and designated homes for older people, with the newer Piper Communicall equipment	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	March 2012	
33	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Work with Essex CC and other Essex councils to minimise the effect of the Government's withdrawal of Supporting People Administration Grant and the likely significant reduction in the Supporting People Programme Grant on vulnerable people within Essex in need of supported housing	Director of Housing	March 2011	
34	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Introduce the "Hub and Spoke" arrangement to extend the provision of support to older people in the community, including owner occupiers, by the Council's Scheme Managers	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	March 2011	
35	Empty Homes	Develop the Council's web-site to provide further information and advice to the owners of empty properties	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2011	
36	Empty Homes	Bring at least 5 long-term empty properties back into use by Council intervention, including the continued use of the PLACE Scheme	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2011	

37	Empty Homes	Enter into an agreement with Pathmeads Housing Association to manage vacant properties in the District served with an Empty Dwelling Management Order by the Council	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	October 2011	
38	Under-occupation	Write to all under-occupying Council tenants, encouraging them to transfer to smaller accommodation	Housing Options Manager	March 2011	
39	Rural Housing	Continue to work with Hastoe Housing Association and Parish Councils to investigate the development potential for rural housing schemes in villages, through the Council's Rural Planning Exceptions Policy	Director of Housing	October 2012	
40	Rural Housing	Work with Hastoe Housing Association to complete the provision of 6 affordable homes at School Lane, Abbess Roding, through the Council's Rural Planning Exceptions Policy	Director of Housing	March 2011	
41	Decent Homes – Public Sector	Undertake programmes of work to ensure that all the Council's homes continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard	Housing Assets Manager	October 2012	
42	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Undertake a Private Sector House Condition Survey, to provide information on the most up-to-date estimate of the number and location of non-decent homes in the private sector.	Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector and Resources)	March 2011	

43	Decent Homes – Private Sector	After completion of the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, produce a new Private Sector Housing Strategy	Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector and Resources)	Dec 2011	
44	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licence conditions for new and existing park home sites in the District, following consultation with site owners, representatives of known park home residents association and statutory agencies	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2011	
45	Housing Growth	Reconsider the Council's position with regard to the allocation of land for housing within the Epping Forest District to contribute towards the growth of Harlow, in the light of the revocation of East of England Plan	Director of Planning and Economic Development	March 2011	
46	Housing Growth	In partnership with Harlow DC, Uttlesford DC and the Homes and Communities Agency, produce a West Essex Joint Investment Plan, setting out the proposed approach and resources required for development and regeneration within the three districts	Deputy Chief Executive	Dec 2010	
47	Energy Efficiency	Seek funding for a small pilot scheme using renewable energy sources to a group of Council properties	Housing Assets Manager	Dec 2011	
48	Energy Efficiency	Set up a Fuel Poverty Referral System in the District.	Environmental Co-ordinator	Dec 2011	

49	Energy Efficiency	Investigate with Hastoe Housing Association the feasibility of developing the second (known) affordable housing development in the country constructed from straw bales at Millfield, High Ongar, significantly reducing thermal efficiency and CO2 emissions	Director of Housing	March 2011	
50	Respect & Anti-Social Behaviour	Produce an updated leaflet for the public on the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Sep 2011	



## **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 29 July 2010**

**Subject: Ethnic Monitoring**

**Officer contact for further information: R Wilson,  
Assistant Director of Housing (01992 56 4419)**

**Committee Secretary: M Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That no recommendations be made concerning amendments to the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme due to ethnicity as current figures do not show a significant disparity between the ethnicity of applicants on the Housing Register, and those allocated both general needs and sheltered accommodation through the Housing Register.**

### **Report:**

1. The Council has a Policy Statement for Equal Opportunities in the Provision of Housing Services. The Policy Statement includes a requirement for an annual review of the ethnicity of applicants on the Housing Register, compared with the ethnicity of those allocated accommodation. In addition during 2006, the Council undertook Race and Diversity Impact Assessments across all Services which are to be renewed this year. When assessing Older Peoples' Housing Services it was identified that the ethnicity of applicants allocated sheltered accommodation should be monitored separately and is therefore included in this report.
2. The reason for the review is to identify whether or not there are any indications to suggest the Council may be discriminating against any one ethnic group. The review is undertaken by the Housing Scrutiny Panel.
3. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register for both 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 is set out in the following table:

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>2008/09 (%)</b>	<b>2009/10 (%)</b>
White British/Irish	78	79
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0.8	0.7
African/Caribbean	3.0	3.2
Mixed Race	1.2	1.2

Other	5	4.4
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>2008/09 (%)</b>	<b>2008/09 (%)</b>
Not Stated	12	11.5

4. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of Housing Register applicants allocated Council accommodation in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 is set out in the following table:

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>2008/09 (%)</b>	<b>2009/2010 (%)</b>
White British/Irish	82.0	76.4
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0.2	0.9
African/Caribbean	1	2.2
Mixed Race	0.8	0.6
Other	3	4.6
Not Stated	13	15.3

5. Generally, the statistics confirm that the ethnicity of applicants allocated accommodation is similar to those of different ethnic groups on the Housing Register.

6. The following table shows the breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register awaiting sheltered accommodation in both 2008/2009 and 2009/2010.

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>2008/09 (%)</b>	<b>2009/10 (%)</b>
White British/Irish	80	83
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0	0
African/Caribbean	1	0.2

Mixed Race	0	0
Other	1	1.3
Not Stated	18	15.5

7. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of Housing Register applicants allocated sheltered accommodation during both 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 is set out in the following table:

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>2008/09 (%)</b>	<b>2009/10 (%)</b>
White British/Irish	88	83.8
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0	0
African/Caribbean	0	2.6
Mixed Race	0	0
Other	0	2.6
Not Stated	12	11

8. When comparing the ethnic breakdown, there appears to be no significant disparity between the ethnicity of applicants in need of sheltered accommodation in the District and those allocated sheltered accommodation.

9. The breakdown of the ethnicity of the population of the District is set out in the table below for information (source EFDC Census 2001):

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
White British/Irish	92.41
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	2.14
African/Caribbean	0.78

Mixed Race	1.04
Other	3.63

**Statement in support of recommended action:**

10. Although a large number of housing applicants do not disclose their ethnicity, it is evident from the analyses shown in the report that the ethnic make up of the Housing Register mirrors the allocation of vacancies sufficiently for the Council to be confident that its Allocations Scheme does not racially discriminate, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, no adjustments to the Allocations Scheme are recommended.

**Consultation undertaken:**

11. The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation will be updated on the report at their next meeting. The Housing Portfolio Holder has asked that the report be published in the Member's Bulletin after the meeting of the Panel.

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: None

Personnel: None

Land: None

Community Plan/BVPP reference: Social inclusion

Relevant statutory powers: Housing Act 1996, as amended

Background papers: Equality Impact Assessments, Housing Service Strategy on Equality and Diversity & the Code of Practice in Rented Housing.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: N/A

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A

## **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 29 July 2010**

**Portfolio: Housing – Councillor D. Stallan**

**Subject: Tenant Participation Impact Statement**

**Officer contact for further information: Roger Wilson, Assistant Director of Housing  
(01992 56 4419)**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**



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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Housing Scrutiny Panel considers the draft Tenant Participation Impact Statement, and passes on any comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder for consideration.**

### **Report:**

1. At its meeting on 21 January 2010, the Panel received a detailed presentation on the Tenant Services Authority (TSA's) proposed Regulatory Framework and Short Notice Inspections. The Panel was advised that the Housing Directorate already has a range of initiatives in place and is currently reasonably prepared for any Inspection.

2. However, although the Housing Directorate meets many of the Framework's requirements, it was recognised that a number of actions are required to fully comply and be prepared for any Inspection.

3. Therefore, at its next meeting on 25 March 2010, the Housing Scrutiny Panel considered and agreed the draft Regulatory Framework Action Plan. The Plan identifies a number of actions required over the coming months to fully meet with the requirements of the TSA's new Regulatory Framework.

4. One of the items on the Action Plan was the completion of a Tenant Participation Impact Statement to include publishing arrangements for involving and empowering tenants and how support will be provided to achieve this aim. The Statement measures the impact tenants have on policy making and sets out both the issues we have consulted tenants on and intend to consult on in the future

5. The Panel are asked to consider the Tenant Participation Impact Statement which is attached as an appendix to the report, and pass on any comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder for consideration.

### **Reason for decision:**

6. To agree the new Tenant Participation Impact Statement and pass any comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder for consideration.

**Options considered and rejected:**

7. Not to consider the Tenant Participation Impact Statement prior to consideration by the Housing Portfolio Holder.

**Consultation undertaken:**

8. The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation will be consulted on the Tenant Participation Impact Statement at their meeting on 20 July 2010 and their comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: N/A

Personnel: N/A

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference: N/A

Relevant statutory powers: Housing Act 1985

Background papers: TSA's Regulatory Framework 7 Regulatory Framework Action Plan.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: N/A

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A

**Epping Forest District  
Council Housing  
Directorate  
Tenant Participation  
Impact Statement  
2010**



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE



Page 111







## **Foreword**

**By Molly Carter – Chair of Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation**

As Chair of the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, I have been able to see at first hand the difference that tenant participation has made, both in local terms and to the District as a whole.

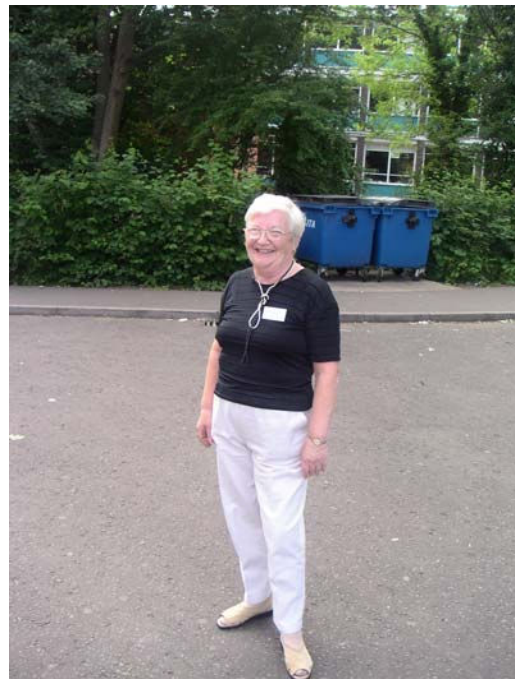
The Federation takes its role as the 'flag bearers' for tenant participation in Epping Forest very seriously and as a group, we are pleased to have the opportunity to be involved in so many important decisions affecting the lives of our friends and neighbours throughout the District.

It is becoming increasingly important that tenants are given more of say about how their homes and neighbourhoods are managed and we must ensure that we continue to promote tenant participation and involve as many tenants as possible in the shaping of the housing service.

This Tenant Participation Impact Statement shows a high level of tenant involvement and influence at all levels within Epping Forest and, on behalf of the Federation, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed in any way to the many projects, meetings, innovations, consultations and events that have helped to make a difference.

I look forward to the future of housing in Epping Forest with great optimism and would encourage all tenants and leaseholders to become involved in any way they can to ensure that Epping Forest District Council continues to provide us with a housing service to be proud of for many years to come.

*Molly Carter*



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 What is Tenant Participation?

- A two-way process involving sharing of information and ideas, where tenants are able to influence decisions and take part in what is happening
- All the activities and processes that the Housing Directorate undertakes that helps it to know what its residents and communities want
- All the activities and resources that enable people to be involved in shaping their Housing service
- The framework in which the participation process is delivered

## 1.2 What do we hope to achieve as a result of Tenant Participation?

- Feedback and influence, which will help us to improve services
- Better value for money
- Informed tenants who are able to express their views and influence the service
- More satisfied residents

## 1.3 How can we measure the impact of Tenant Participation?

Is Tenant Participation helping to achieve the objectives listed above? It is hard to measure all of the results of Tenant Participation. However, this document outlines the ways in which tenants/residents have made a difference.

We aim to measure this by:

- Monitoring targets in the Action Plan within the Housing Directorate Strategy on Tenant Participation
- Reviewing how tenants have influenced policies and decisions
- Asking residents about the impact of Tenant Participation
- Collecting information from staff about how Tenant Participation has helped them to improve services
- Feedback from surveys and other consultations
- Performance Monitoring

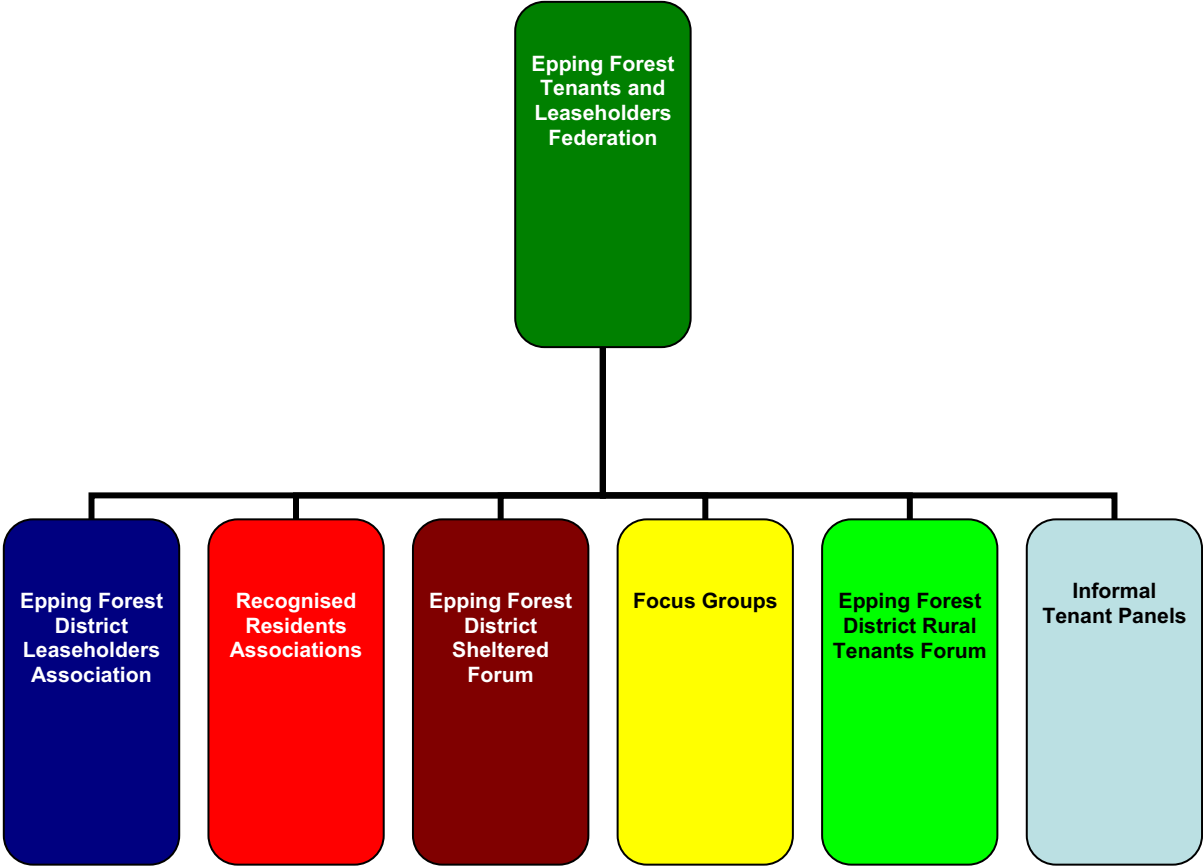
This Impact Statement shows how many tangible examples of how Tenant Participation has made a difference at different levels

- To policy

- On estates and in neighbourhoods
- To individual residents



## 2. How is Tenant Participation Organised in Epping Forest?



The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation meets with the Council’s Housing Portfolio Holder, Director of Housing and other senior housing managers every 2 months to be consulted and informed about issues affecting the residents of Epping Forest. The Federation represents all of the Council’s tenants and leaseholders and the Executive Committee is made up of 2 representatives from each of the Council’s recognised Residents Associations, Tenant Panels, the Leaseholders Association, the Rural Tenants Forum and the Sheltered Forum.

The Leaseholders Association represents the Council’s leaseholders and meets with Council officers quarterly to discuss issues affecting leaseholders and leasehold services.

The Rural Tenants Forum meets quarterly with Council officers and represents tenants living in Epping Forest’s rural villages.

The Sheltered Forum is made up of representatives from the Council’s sheltered housing and group-dwelling schemes. The Forum is held every 2 months and is attended by a number of Council officers. Issues affecting residents living in accommodation with a scheme manager are discussed and guest speakers attend each meeting.

The Council currently has 5 recognised residents associations and 2 Tenant Panels, being the Debden Tenants Panel, Loughton; Limes Farm Community Association, Chigwell; Ninefields Residents Panel, Waltham Abbey; Oakwood Hill Residents Association, Loughton; Romeland Residents Association, Waltham Abbey; Roundhills Residents Association, Waltham Abbey and Shelley Residents Association, Ongar.

A Repairs and Maintenance Customer Focus Group has been established and the formation of a focus group to look at Housing Allocations and a Reading Group to 'Tenant Approve' Housing Directorate produced literature are in progress.

## **2.2 Tenant Participation Officer**

The Council employs a dedicated full-time Tenant Participation Officer, whose main function is to involve the tenants and leaseholders of the District in the management of the homes and neighbourhoods, and the shaping of their housing service.

The Tenant Participation Officer works closely with existing residents groups and encourages the formation of new groups in areas without formal representation, as well as administering the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, the Leaseholders Association, the Sheltered Forum and Rural Tenants Forum.

## **2.3 The Epping Forest District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement**

The Council and the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation have entered into a Tenant Participation Agreement (also known as a Compact) which is reviewed and updated every three years.

The main aims of the agreement are to set out the intentions of the Council and the Federation in the approach they will take for;

- the provision of information to tenants and to tenant participation generally;
- the operation of the Federation; and
- reviewing the Agreement.

Similar agreements have also been made with the Epping Forest Leaseholders Association, the Epping Forest Sheltered Forum and the Epping Forest Rural Tenants Forum.

## **2.4 Local Tenant Participation Agreements**

Each recognised residents group enters into a Local Tenant Participation Agreement with the Council. These agreements take a similar form to the District-wide agreement and are reviewed and renewed annually.

## **2.5 Financial Support to Residents Groups**

The Council provides the following financial support to its residents groups:

- Initial 'Start-up' funding of £100
- Support Grant of £200 on formal recognition of the group
- Annual Support Grant of up to £250
- Annual 'Minor Estate Enhancement Grant of up to £500

Certain reasonable costs are also met for the hire of halls and printing of literature.

**2.6 Training opportunities**

The Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Association and other recognised residents groups are regularly offered a programme of training opportunities through organisations such as the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), InStep and Capita. In house training sessions on Housing Law and Housing Finance have also been held.

Through its work with the East of England Resident Involvement Group, Epping Forest District Council has joined a Training Consortium which will offer value for money resident training, in partnership with other member organisations. The training subjects will be selected in consultation with residents groups throughout the member organisations.

**3. Profile of involved tenants**

The Housing Directorate’s Tenant Participation network is spread throughout the District giving all tenants and leaseholders the opportunity to be involved.



Residents in the South of the District are represented in Chigwell by Limes Farm Community Association and in Loughton by the Debden Tenants Panel and Oakwood Hill Community Association.

In the West of the District Ninefields Residents Panel, Romeland Residents Association and Roundhills Residents Association represent residents of Waltham Abbey.



The East and North of Epping Forest are mostly comprised of rural villages and tenants in these areas can be involved through the Rural Tenants Forum. Residents of Shelley, Ongar have their own representation through Shelley Residents Association.

Tenants of the Council's sheltered and group-dwelling schemes are represented through the District's Sheltered Forum. Sheltered Schemes are situated in Buckhurst Hill, Epping, Loughton, Nazeing, North Weald, Ongar and Waltham Abbey.

The District's leaseholders are represented by the Epping Forest Leaseholders Association. All new leaseholders are invited to join the Association. A number of Community Consultation events have been held across the District in Roydon and Sheering villages; North Weald; Ninefields Estate, Waltham Abbey; Debden Estate, Loughton, Shelley Estate, Ongar and Oakwood Hill Estate, Loughton.

## **4. Consultation**

### **4.1 Regular Consultations**

The Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation is consulted on a regular or periodic basis on the following:

- 17 Housing Directorate Service Strategies are renewed tri-annually following consultation with the Federation.
- The Council's Housing Strategy is reviewed and updated tri-annually.
- The Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation Tenant Participation Agreement is reviewed and updated Tri-annually.
- All petitions received by the Housing Directorate are discussed at Federation meetings.
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan (including Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan) is considered annually by the Federation, prior to formal consideration by the Council and includes the comments of the Federation.
- Progress with the HRA Business Plan is considered and reviewed by the Federation every six months.
- Council's performance against 21 tenant-selected indicators is considered quarterly.
- Performance against the Council's Housing Service Standards and proposed changes are considered annually.



## **5. Residents influence on policy and procedures**

The Epping Forest District Tenants and Leaseholders Federation is consulted on all draft reports to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Council committees involving new or varied housing policies, plans and strategies. The Federation's comments are either included in the final report, or reported orally, depending on timing. In many cases, the Federation members are consulted on their views at a much earlier stage, prior to any reports being drafted.

### **5.1 Housing Directorate Service Strategies**

The Housing Directorate has the following 17 Housing Service Strategies:

- Home Ownership
- Rent Arrears
- Rent Collection and Administration
- Homelessness
- Under-occupation
- Housing Information
- Tenant Participation
- Private Rented Sector
- Housing Management Services
- Older Peoples Housing Services
- Housing Allocations
- Housing Advice
- Empty Properties
- Energy Efficiency
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Harassment
- Diversity and Equality

Each strategy is produced to a common format, and provides detailed information on the subject matter, including an action plan. All strategies are updated and renewed every three years in consultation with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation.

### **5.2 Housing Service Standards**

The Housing Directorate has developed a full set of service standards in consultation with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation covering:

- General Housing
- Homelessness
- Housing Register and Allocations
- Housing Management
- Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements
- Disabled Adaptations
- Sheltered Housing and Careline
- Home Ownership
- Leasehold Services
- Tenant Participation

The Service Standards were provided to all tenants when they were initially produced and to all new tenants subsequently.

### **5.3 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan**

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, which incorporates the Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan, sets out the Housing Directorate's aims and objectives for the housing service in the medium term. The Business Plan is developed in conjunction with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and a 'special' meeting of the Federation is held each year consider the draft plan and to agree the Federation's comments for inclusion in the final published plan.

### **5.4 Housing Strategy 2009-2012**

The Housing Directorate's Housing Strategy 2009 -2012 was developed following intensive consultation with partners, including all of the District's Residents Groups. The Housing Strategy assesses the District's housing needs and sets out the Council's approach to meeting those needs. In addition, the Strategy sets out the Council's vision for housing in the District, the key housing objectives and the aims and objectives relating to individual issues. An action plan explains how the Council intends to achieve these aims and objectives.

### **5.5 Housing Stock Options Appraisal**

In 2003, The Council undertook an extensive Stock Options Appraisal. The Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation played a key role throughout the appraisal process in reporting information to tenants and attending meetings and presentations. The Federation was consulted at every stage of the process and were a major influence in the Council's decision to retain its housing stock without the need to ballot its tenants.

### **5.6 Tenant Selected Performance Indicators**

The Tenant Services Authority's (TSA) new Housing Regulatory Framework makes it clear that tenants (or more appropriately, tenants' representatives) should be encouraged to monitor their landlord's performance throughout the year, and provide feedback to their landlord. As the Housing Directorate has around 175 different housing performance indicators it currently monitors, it was agreed that the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation choose a smaller number of indicators, that it considered to be of particular interest to tenants, to monitor on a quarterly basis. At its meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010, the Federation agreed 21 Housing Indicators to be monitored quarterly and reported on by the Council in its new Annual Report to Tenants by 1<sup>st</sup> October each year.

### **5.7 Repairs Advisory Project Group**

The Repairs Advisory Project Group was set up to oversee the restructuring of the Council's Building Maintenance Works Unit and Housing Repairs Service. Two members of the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation were elected to the project group whose functions included the selection of an external Management Contractor to manage the service.

## 5.8 Housing Scrutiny Panel

The Housing Scrutiny Panel, which is made up of elected Council Members, considers many issues in detail and monitors progress with a number of activities. Most of the activities are reported to the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, prior to the Scrutiny Panel meeting. For this reason, the Chair of the Federation is a co-opted member of the Housing Scrutiny Panel and attends every meeting.

The following pages show further examples of how residents have influenced housing policies and procedures through tenant participation.



### 5.9 Epping Forest District Tenants and Leaseholders Federation

The Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation meets regularly with the Housing Portfolio Holder, the Director of Housing and other senior housing managers, to be consulted on issues affecting all tenants and leaseholders including all draft reports to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Council committees involving new or varied housing policies, plans and strategies that affect tenants in any way.

The Chair of the Federation is a co-opted member of the Council's Housing Scrutiny Panel.

The following table shows a number of ways in which the Federation's involvement in decision making has impacted on residents of the District.

Date	Subject	Decision or Outcome	Outcome or Impact
13 March 2008	Building Maintenance and Housing Repairs Review	To combine the Housing Repairs Team and the Building Maintenance Works Unit, reducing the number of craft workers but retaining a core to undertake a proportion of the day-to-day ad hoc repairs to the Council's housing stock, and those to void properties, with the balance of the work being externalised.	Repairs staff and craft workers now on same premises making communication easier.  Reduction in repairs completion times. More repairs done by appointment. Reduced costs and better value for money. Greater customer satisfaction.
20 May 2008	Careline Review	Extending the routine repairs reporting service for tenants from 5pm to 8pm on each working day by using existing Careline facilities and staff.	Tenants and Leaseholders now able to report repairs outside of 'normal' working hours. Greater customer satisfaction Value for money as existing resources used.
20 May 2008	Rent free weeks for new lettings	To introduce a rent-free week for new tenants who sign up for a tenancy on Thursday or Friday for a tenancy starting on the following Monday.	Reduction in costs for new tenants. Greater customer satisfaction.
20 May 2008	Policy on designated dwellings	To let properties to younger people that were previously designated for older people, on the basis that they are 'difficult to let'.	Reduction in waiting list times for younger people
22 July 2008	Void property re-let standards	Adoption of Void Property re-let standards and a questionnaire to be completed by new tenants.	Better customer involvement in lettings process. Greater customer satisfaction Reduced costs and better value for money.

23 September 2008	Housing Allocations Scheme	Annual review of Allocations Scheme and adoption of changes agreed with Federation	Greater clarification to Housing applicants with regards to banding
24 March 2009	Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (including Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan)	Approved the Business Plan and agreed with the objectives, key housing priorities and the action plan for the coming year.	Tenants have clearer understanding of the Housing Directorate's aims and how funding is spent.
24 March 2009	Housing Strategy 2009-12	Agreed Council's plans for the development of the Housing Service for the period 2009-12	Tenants aware of Council medium-term priorities for the service

## 5.10 Epping Forest District Sheltered Forum

The Epping Forest District Sheltered Forum meets bi-monthly with Council officers to discuss issues affecting residents of the Districts Sheltered Schemes, Group Dwelling Schemes and dwellings visited by a Scheme Manager. The following table shows a number of ways in which the Forum's involvement in decision making has impacted on residents of the District.

Date	Subject	Decision/Outcome	Outcome/Impact
13 August 2008	Tenant Support Plans	Adoption of Tenant Support Plans containing vital information on individual tenants.	Council able to provide greater support to tenants. Increased welfare provision for tenants. More practical use of staff resources leading to increased value for money.
11 Feb 2009	Review of Older Peoples Services	Adoption of 'Hub and Spoke' and 'Floating Support' models of working for scheme managers and 'tenure neutral' housing related support	Better service provision. More efficient allocation of resources. More residents able to access services.
24 February 2010	Careline Information Pack	Introduction of a Careline Information Pack, providing new users of the Careline service with essential information.	Tenants using Careline able to access services quicker and easier. Increased independence for users of Careline. Value for money as tenants have the information required to access services directly without always involving a staff member. Staff time 'freed up'.

### 5.11 Epping Forest District Leaseholders Association

The Epping Forest District Leaseholders Association meets with Council officers on a quarterly basis to discuss issues affecting the District's leaseholders. The following table shows a number of ways in which the association involvement in decision making has impacted on leaseholders in Epping Forest.

Date	Subject	Decision/Outcome	Outcome/Impact
26 February 2008	Leaseholders Handbook	Introduction of a Leaseholders Handbook providing essential information for the District's leaseholders.	Leaseholders able to access services more easily and directly. Reduction in staff time dealing with queries that can be answered through the handbook. Staff time now spent enhancing the service elsewhere. Increased value for money due to less enquiries, etc.
19 August 2008	Leaseholders Survey	Profiling information gathered about leaseholders circumstances. Specific issues raised by leaseholders	Able to provide information to specific leaseholders in large print meaning they are now able to access services more easily. Able to deal with specific issues as identified by survey. Increased customer satisfaction.
18 February 2009	Home Ownership Staffing Resources	Increase in staffing resources for Home Ownership Section by 1 part-time post funded from surplus in Leasehold Administration Account. Fixed Management Fees	Improved service to Leaseholders. Fixed Management Fees meaning leaseholders able to budget more easily Efficiency savings as staff able to dedicate more time to debt recovery.



## **6. Informal Involvement**

### **6.1 Mystery Shopping**

During November and December 2009 tenants of South Essex Homes (Southend) undertook a Mystery Shopping exercise on behalf of Epping Forest District Council. Twenty scenarios were used to look at all sections of the Housing Directorate:

- Housing Options
- Housing Management
- Housing Resources
- Housing Assets
- Older Peoples Services
- Building Maintenance and Repairs
- Private Sector Housing

The results of the exercise were then fed back to section managers and suitable action taken to make improvements to the service where necessary and compliment staff as appropriate.

Future Mystery Shopping exercises will be undertaken by Epping Forest District Council's own tenants, who will be trained by South Essex Homes.

### **6.2 Satisfaction Surveys**

#### **Tenant Satisfaction STATUS Survey**

A survey undertaken by the National Housing Federation in 2008 showed the following:

- Overall satisfaction with the Housing Directorate was 84% - 12% above peer group average
- Overall satisfaction with the final outcome of contacts with the Housing Directorate was 75% - 10% above peer group average
- 62% of tenants were satisfied that their views were being taken into account – an increase of 14% on the 2006 survey

Following the survey, the National Housing Federation concluded that:

“The Council and its staff have every right to be pleased to learn that, overall tenant satisfaction with the landlord service that the Council provides remains high and significantly above that reported by most other landlords. Key driver analysis showed that satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service and satisfaction with the outcome of their contacts with staff have the greatest impact on overall tenant satisfaction. Importantly, the survey identified that the Councils' repairs service and the customer service provided by its staff are both particularly strong aspects of the Council's overall service. The high level of tenant satisfaction with these two key services underpins the unusually high level of overall satisfaction amongst Epping Forest District Council's tenants.”

## **HomeOption User Survey**

In May 2008, following the introduction of a Choice Based Lettings allocations scheme (HomeOption), a user survey was undertaken to assess the following:

- Did applicants receive enough information about the scheme and find the user guide easy to follow?
- What method did applicants use to express an interest in a property?
- Were the freesheets easy to obtain and use?
- Were staff knowledgeable and helpful?
- Overall satisfaction with the scheme

The survey helped identify any difficulties applicants were having in using the scheme and why certain applicants were not using the scheme.

Applicants having difficulties were contacted by a member of staff or by letter giving detailed information on how the scheme works.

Applicants not using the scheme were contacted and offered advice. Vulnerable applicants were identified and are now regularly assisted with making expressions of interest.

## **Repairs Satisfaction Survey**

A Repairs Satisfaction Survey form is sent out following every repair. Tenants are asked to rate the standard of service they have received in terms of the following:

- Notice period given for access to carry out work
- The overall quality of work
- Helpfulness and politeness of the contractor
- The way any complaints were dealt with
- Helpfulness of the council officer, or his representative in charge of the works
- The overall service

The data collected is then used to make improvements to the service where necessary.

Tenants expressing "poor satisfaction" are visited by a Repairs Manager to discuss the reasons and to rectify any problems.

The results for 2009/10 were as follows:

- Quality of Repair – Good or Satisfactory - 98.5%
- Polite/Co-Operative Workers – Good or Satisfactory - 99.75%
- Works Completed on Time – 99%
- General Standard of Service – 99%

## **Other Satisfaction Surveys**

All tenants having planned/cyclical maintenance are invited to complete satisfaction forms.

All tenants are given satisfaction forms in respect of gas breakdowns at the time of the visit. The Council uses two separate contractors to carry out this work, Graceland and Kinetics.

The results for 2009/10 were:

- Overall Satisfaction – Graceland – 100%
- Overall Satisfaction – Kinetics – 97%

All tenants having disabled adaptations carried out are given satisfaction forms.

The results for 2009/10 were:

- Tenant Satisfaction with Disabled Adaptations (Major) – 96.7%
- Tenant Satisfaction with Disabled Adaptations (Minor) – 95.75%

During 2010/11 it is planned to introduce regular tenant satisfaction sampling of residents in sheltered housing and Careline users, in respect of the service provided.

## **6.3 Continuous Improvement Meetings**

Results of all satisfaction surveys are considered at Continuous Improvement Meetings, attended by the Director of Housing, Assistant Directors of Housing and relevant Housing Managers, where any required resultant action is discussed, agreed and recorded.

## **7. Residents improving life in their home or neighbourhood**

### **7.1 Springfields Improvement Scheme**

During the period November 2007 - August 2009 work was undertaken to carry out essential improvements to 96 Council flats in Springfields, Waltham Abbey.

Residents were involved in the process from the outset through:

- Design of initial survey to establish residents' priorities
- Establishment of residents focus group to represent residents
- Two resident representatives on the Council's internal project team
- Continuous liaison with the local Residents Association (Roundhills RA) throughout the project
- Two resident representatives involved in contractor selection process
- Choosing of colour scheme for external rendering and new front doors



### **7.2 Limes Farm Community Hall**

Limes Farm Community Association undertook a survey of residents in December 2006 to gain residents' views on potential improvements to Limes Farm Community Hall and the adjacent Drop-in centre. At the time, the hall was managed by Chigwell Parish Council on behalf of the Epping Forest District Council. Residents were given a number of options for the future of the hall and asked to choose which option they favoured.

The majority of residents who replied were in favour of the hall being completely refurbished and extended and suggested the following to be part of any future improvements:

- New kitchen and toilet facilities
- A Youth Centre to replace portable drop-in centre
- Space for pre-school activities
- Activities for Primary aged children
- Space for Older Peoples Group
- Use of hall as a Community Hub

The hall was returned to the District Council's management from 1 April 2009 and plans were drawn up in consultation with Limes Farm Community Association to carry out the necessary work in line with the original residents' survey. Some external funding was secured and approval to start the work was given by the Council's Cabinet on 19 April 2010.

### 7.3 Ninefields Community Hall

Following a successful Community Consultation event held in March 2008 the Ninefields Residents Panel was formed and, in response to residents' comments, a youth group (We Don't do Bored) was set up by the Council's Community Development team.

At the initial meetings of the residents' panel, much of the discussion centred around youth nuisance and the fact that there was nothing for young people to do. Since the formation of the youth group, discussion about youth nuisance at meetings of the residents' panel has become minimal. Indeed, residents have commented on how much things have improved.

Following on from the success of the youth group, funding was sought and secured from Essex Community Cashback to improve the façade of the Community Hall which was in need of attention. The youth group worked with a local sculptor to design a new façade for the hall, based on the community activities that take place there. A number of designs were created and presented to the residents' panel on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010 to choose the final design. The work was completed on 16 June 2010.



**Ninefields Community Hall 'Before and After'**



Further examples of residents improving life in their neighbourhood include:

- Creation of a new communal allotment at Parsonage Court Sheltered Housing Scheme
- Improvements to patio area at Buckhurst Court Sheltered Housing Scheme
- Oakwood Hill estate drying areas
- Grove Court tree removal scheme
- Ninefields tree removal programme
- New refuse area at Grove Court Group-dwelling scheme
- Rochford Avenue fencing replacement scheme
- Gladeway tree replacement scheme
- Shelley open space
- Duck Lane shrub and bush Removal Scheme

Details of the above schemes can be found in the Epping Forest District Public Consultation Register

### 7.4 Community Consultation Events

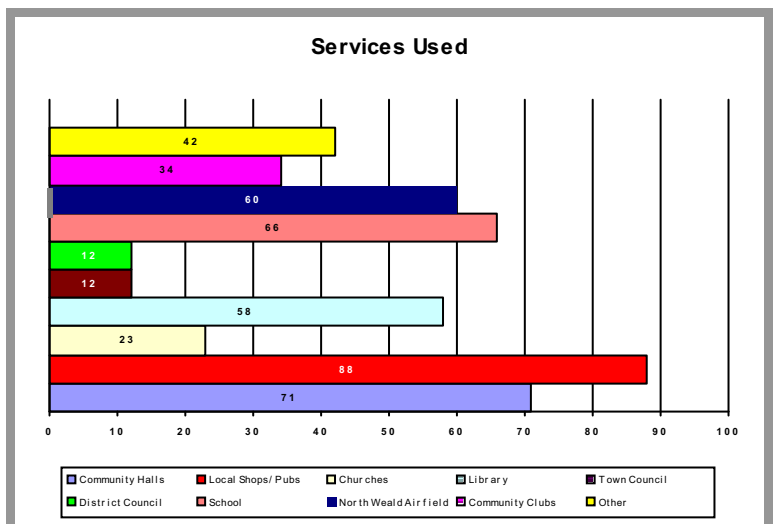
Since December 2006 EFDC Housing and Community Development have jointly held the following Community Consultation Events:

- Sheering Village – December 2006
- Roydon Village – April 2007
- Ninefields, Waltham Abbey – March 2008
- North Weald – May 2008
- Debden, Loughton – May 2009
- Shelley, Ongar – March 2010
- Oakwood Hill, Loughton – May 2010

The events are structured to enable residents to give their views on local issues and services in an interactive and fun way via a series of giant wall mounted questions, using coloured sticky dots and post-it notes. Local groups and in particular schools, are encouraged to become involved and local service providers attend to offer advice and information.

Following the event, the results of the consultation are collated and residents invited to attend a follow-up meeting to discuss them and agree a course of action with Council officers. Residents are encouraged to form or join a local residents group to ensure continued involvement.

Through this type of consultation and participation the Council is able to tailor resources to areas as required to improve the lives of residents. Other areas of concern are passed to the relevant service providers.





## 7.5 Accompanied Estate Inspections

The Council's Housing Management Teams carry out regular estate inspections throughout the District and residents are invited to accompany Housing Officers on these inspections. The inspections are used to identify any issues of concern to residents such as:

- Abandoned vehicles
- Dumped rubbish
- Grounds maintenance, trees, shrubs
- Repairs to communal areas
- Poorly maintained properties or gardens
- Graffiti



Residents and Officers before the Ninefields Estate 'Walkabout' May 2010

## 8. Value for Money

The Council's Tenant Participation Service has identified a number of ways in which it can operate cost effectively:

- Partnership working through the Eastern Region Resident Involvement Group. Sharing of good practice and information
- Joint training sessions through the Eastern Region Training Consortium
- Partnership working with EFDC Community Development Team to hold community events and consultations.
- Mystery Shopping carried out by tenants
- Meetings held in EFDC venues where possible to reduce hire costs.
- Use of Epping Forest Community Transport to take residents to and from meetings and events

**In the HouseMark Value for Money Benchmarking Summary – 2008/9 the service ranked overall first in the top Quartile for direct cost per property of resident involvement.**

The overall budget for the Tenant Participation service is currently £80,370 per annum.

All recognised Residents Associations are invited to apply for Support grants of up to £250 per year and Minor Estate Enhancement grants of up to £500 per year.

Although taxis can be provided to enable residents to attend certain meetings, residents are encouraged to provide their own transport, for which an allowance is paid, and to car share. Costs are further reduced by the use of Voluntary Action Epping Forest Community Transport to take residents to and from meetings.

## **9. Diversity and Equality**

The Housing Directorate has introduced two relevant housing service strategies relating to diversity and equality:

- The Housing Service Strategy on Harassment
- The Housing Service Strategy on Diversity and Equality

The Service Strategy on Diversity and Equality sets out the Housing Directorate's approach to promoting equality and diversity in line with the Council's corporate equality schemes and its statutory duties as a public authority to promote equality. This includes actions designed to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity
- Recognise and value the needs and contributions of individuals and identifiable groups within the wider community served by the Council
- Ensure that everyone who needs housing advice and services is fully able to access them
- Promote understanding and tolerance of different cultures and good relations within the communities served by the Council.

In addition, a Customer Impact Assessment (sometimes referred to as an Equalities Impact Assessment), including an action plan has been produced for Housing Information and Tenant Participation.

The District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement and all other Tenant Participation Agreements contain a Diversity and Equality Statement.

### **9.1 Diversity Profile of the Council's Tenants**

In 2008/9, the Housing Directorate undertook a full Census of its tenants and collected data on a variety of diversity and equality information, which helps the Council to shape its service.

From a response rate of 3,808 (58%) the following information was obtained:

Gender	60% of occupants are female; 40% are male.
Disability	1,081 occupants (23%) consider they have a disability.
Hearing Problems	30 occupants (0.6%) have a hearing problem; 5 occupants read sign language and 25 lip read.



Sight Problems	216 occupants (4.7%) have a sight problem; 1 occupant reads Braille 209 occupants would prefer to read documents in large print and 6 occupants would welcome information in audio form.
Ethnicity	4,293 occupants (96%) of those who stated their ethnicity are White British. The next highest ethnic group are White Irish, Asian and other White races (2.6%).
English not 1 <sup>st</sup> Language	28 occupants (0.6%) do not have English as their first language. The second most common first language after English is Turkish, which is spoken as a first language by 8 occupants (0.17%). Seven other languages are the first language of the remaining 20 occupants (0.43%) who do not have English as their first language.

The Housing Directorate has introduced a number of initiatives to involve tenants in communities perceived as 'Hard to Reach'.

## **9.2 Epping Forest District Sheltered Forum**

The Epping Forest District Sheltered Forum has been established to represent tenants living in the Council's Sheltered Housing Schemes and Group-dwelling Schemes.

## **9.3 Epping Forest Rural Tenants Forum**

The Epping Forest Rural Tenants Forum was set up after consultation with local Parish Councils to represent tenants living in the Districts outlying villages, which are often too small to generate interest in individual residents groups.

## **9.4 Limes Farm Pampering Event**

In November 2008 a 'Pampering Event' was held on the Limes Farm Estate in Chigwell. The purpose of the event was to enable the Council to engage with the young women, who make up a large proportion of the residents in the area. Residents were offered free 'pampering' by way of nails, make-up, reflexology and indian head massage and in return were asked to complete a questionnaire about issues affecting residents of the estate. A free crèche facility was also provided. The information gathered was used to better tailor services to residents' needs.

## **9.5 Tenant Talkback**

Following a survey of tenants through the Housing Directorate's Housing News newsletter, which is delivered to all tenants, a database of tenants was set up to establish Focus Groups to look at specific Housing services. Among the groups the service is looking to set up are a Diversity and Equalities Focus Group and a Disabilities Focus Group.

## 10. SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT analysis sets out the current position with regard to Tenant Participation in Epping Forest

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Knowledgeable and committed staff</li> <li>○ Charter Mark for customer service excellence</li> <li>○ District-wide network of tenant involvement</li> <li>○ All, tenants, leaseholders and applicants receive up to date news and housing information via a dedicated section of a District-wide tenants newsletter</li> <li>○ All tenants receive a Tenants Handbook, which includes a section on Tenant Participation</li> <li>○ Information about Tenant Participation available on-line</li> <li>○ Regular progress meetings held between Tenant Participation Officer, Section Managers and Service Heads.</li> <li>○ Partnership working with EFDC Community Development Team</li> <li>○ Good working relationship between staff and tenants/leaseholders</li> <li>○ Partnership working with other local Housing providers through the East of England Resident Involvement Group</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lack of detailed tenant profiling to enable service to be tailored to tenants needs</li> <li>○ Limited scope for development of Housing Section of EFDC website</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ More consultation through development of 'Talkback' panels</li> <li>○ Greater use of ICT systems, particularly the Council's website</li> <li>○ Use of other new technology as appropriate</li> <li>○ Develop partnership working with outside organisations</li> <li>○ Enhance profile of Tenant Participation in conjunction with Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and recognised residents associations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Major changes in legislation</li> <li>○ Transfer of Housing Stock</li> <li>○ Financial restrictions, likely to be severe in future years</li> </ul>

## 11. Action Plan/Continuous Improvement Plan

This plan sets out how the Council intends to improve its Tenant Participation service over the next twelve months

Action	Target Date	Expected Outcome/Impact
Undertake a survey of all tenants and leaseholders to collect and record details of their diversity profile	March 2011	Up to date information on tenants to enable services to be tailored accordingly
Set up further Talkback Panels to provide qualitative feedback on the following housing services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabilities</li> <li>• Allocations</li> <li>• Information</li> </ul>	March 2011	Establishment and operation of panels  Increased customer feedback to aid future service provision
Establish, through recruitment and training, a group of EFDC tenants to undertake future 'mystery shopping exercises on the Council's housing services	Dec 2010	A team of suitably trained mystery shoppers, able to assess how housing officers deal with enquiries and recommend action to improve services where necessary
Set up Estate Level Agreements in areas not represented by residents associations	March 2011	Increased tenant participation and tailoring of services to reflect local needs
Introduction and implementation of Local Housing 'Offers' as set out in the Tenant Services Authority New Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England	October 2010	More empowered and informed tenants leading to increased participation and accountability
Consult on and agree the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2011/12 with Tenants and Leaseholders Federation	March 2011	HRA Business Plan agreed and published More informed and knowledgeable tenants Transparency and accountability
Update and renew the following Housing Directorate Service Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant Participation</li> <li>• Housing Information</li> <li>• Empty Properties</li> <li>• Energy Efficiency</li> <li>• Private Rented Sector</li> <li>• Rent Arrears</li> <li>• Anti-social Behaviour</li> </ul>	March 2011	Strategies agreed following consultation with Tenants and Leaseholders Federation  Tenants aware of Directorates medium - term aims
Introduction of two new Housing Directorate Service Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value For Money</li> <li>• Continuous Improvement</li> </ul>	March 2011	Strategies agreed following consultation with Tenants and Leaseholders Federation Tenants aware of Directorates medium - term aims
Review and Update the Housing Allocations Scheme in consultation with Talkback Panel	October 2010	Updated Allocations Scheme to comply with agreed changes. More efficient use of Housing Stock



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

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Epping Forest District Council  
Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex CM16 4BZ  
Phone: 01992 564000

[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing)

July 2010

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## **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 29 July 2010**

**Portfolio: Housing – Councillor D. Stallan**

**Subject: Housing Directorate's Service Strategy on the Private Rented Sector**



**Officer contact for further information: Lyndsay Swan extension 4146**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins extension 4607**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Housing Scrutiny Panel considers and endorses the Housing Directorate's Service Strategy on the Private Rented Sector, attached as an appendix, and provides any comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder for incorporation.**

### **Report:**

1. The Housing Directorate's Service Strategies were originally produced around 13 years ago in accordance with an agreed standard framework, and have since been updated. The Strategies give more detail than the Council's main Housing Strategy on the various housing services provided. In total, 17 Housing Service Strategies have been produced to date, covering:

Equality and Diversity	House Sales & Leasehold Services
Rent Arrears	Rent Collection and Administration
Homelessness	Under-occupation
Housing Information	Tenant Participation
Private Rented Sector	Housing Management Services
Older Peoples' Housing Services	Housing Allocations
Housing Advice	Empty Properties
Energy Efficiency	Anti-Social Behaviour
Harassment	

2. The Strategies are produced to a common format that set out how individual housing services will be delivered. They have assisted Housing Services in achieving the Charter Mark award for customer service excellence, ISO 9001:2000 Quality Accreditation, and have been important to meeting the minimum requirement for Supporting People funding under the conditions of the contract.

3. The Housing Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider and endorse the updated Housing Directorate's Service Strategy on the Private Rented Sector attached as an appendix to the report and provide any comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder for incorporation.

### **Reason for decision:**

The Housing Scrutiny Panel reviews all Housing Directorate Service Strategies on a three-yearly basis. They have assisted Housing Services in achieving the Charter Mark award for customer service excellence, ISO 9001:2000 Quality Accreditation, and have been important to meeting the minimum requirement for Supporting People funding under the conditions of the contract.

**Options considered and rejected:**

Not to review the Housing Directorate's Strategies.

**Consultation undertaken:**

The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation will be consulted on the Strategy at their meeting on 20 July 2010, their comments received will be reported verbally at the meeting.

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: N/A

Personnel: N/A

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference: N/A

Relevant statutory powers: As set out in Section 3 of the Strategy

Background papers: N/A

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: N/A

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A

**HOUSING DIRECTORATE  
SERVICE STRATEGY  
ON THE  
PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Housing Directorate Service Strategy explains how the Council will work with and encourage private landlords to meet housing need in the District through the private rented sector. The Private Sector Team within the Housing Directorate will promote good tenant/landlord relations and help those in housing need to access and retain privately rented accommodation. The strategy links with the Homelessness Strategy, the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy and Empty Property +Strategy.
- 1.2 The Strategy will be implemented in partnership by both the Housing Options Section and the Private Sector Housing Team within the Housing Directorate.
- 1.3 The Strategy sets out how the service will be delivered and monitored.
- 1.4 The Council's Housing Directorate was accredited with the Investors in People Award in 2001. This was extended to all Council Services in 2002 and renewed in 2005 and 2008. Housing Services was originally accredited for the ISO 9001:2000 quality management system by Lloyds Register Quality Assurance in 2002 and was last renewed and extended to the new Housing Directorate in 2008. Housing Services also achieved Charter Mark status for the first time in 2004 which was renewed in 2007. The Housing Directorate is seeking to achieve accreditation for the successor award to Charter Mark in 2010, being Customer Service Excellence.
- 1.5 This Housing Directorate Service Strategy was formally approved by the Housing Portfolio Holder on xxxxxxx.

**2. Background to the Service**

- 2.1 People are in housing need for many reasons, for example, they may have to leave their current accommodation because of relationship breakdown, or they may need accommodation with fewer stairs for health reasons, or they may be homeless on release from prison.
- 2.2 Many people in housing need may apply for inclusion on the Council's Housing Register but only a proportion will have realistic prospects of securing social housing. This is because demand far outstrips supply. At the time of writing the Strategy, the Council has almost 5,000 applicants on its Housing Register and a housing stock of around 6,600 properties.
- 2.3 The private rented sector plays an important part in meeting housing need. It is estimated that there are around 3,000 privately-rented dwellings in the District, with approximately 2,000 of these tenants receiving Housing Benefit.
- 2.4 There are no landlords with large property portfolios; many private sector landlords own just one, or a very small number of properties that they let.

**3. Coverage**

- 3.1 Private sector landlords may be assisted directly or indirectly through a number of Council services. The Housing Directorate's Homelessness Prevention Team, who

works in the Housing Options Section, will amongst other housing options, assist those faced with homelessness by helping them to secure accommodation in the private sector.

- 3.2 The Private Housing (Technical) Team will use the means at their disposal to maximise the provision of privately-rented properties that are of good quality and meet Statutory requirements.

#### **4. Relationship to other documents**

- 4.1 This Strategy forms part of the Council's overall approach to strategic housing, set out in its Housing Strategy, Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy and Empty Property Strategy.

- 4.3 The Council has adopted a Housing Charter, which sets out in simple, clear and precise terms its general approach to all its housing services.

- 4.4 The Local Plan sets out the Council's intentions to increase the provision of housing in the District whilst retaining its unique character.

- 4.5 This Strategy links in with the Council's Homelessness Strategy and the Service Strategy on Allocations and Homelessness.

- 4.6 The Council follows the requirements of the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice in Rented Housing.

- 4.7 A booklet, Housing for single people, produced by the Housing Directorate to assist single people seeking accommodation gives basic information on, amongst other matters, renting accommodation in the private sector. An information sheet, Private Accommodation, contains advice for the wider population.

- 4.8 The following guides are available from the Housing Directorate produced by the Communities and Local Government (CLG):

- Assured and assured short-hold tenancies – a guide for landlords
- Letting Rooms in your House
- Repairs - a Guide for Landlords and Tenants
- Assured and Shorthold tenancies - a Guide for Landlords
- Notice that You Must Leave
- My landlord wants me out - protection against Harassment

These can be obtained from the CLG web-site at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

- 4.9 The Local Authority Co-ordinator of Regulatory Services (LACORS) has also produced a guide called 'Thinking about Renting out your Home' which can be obtained from LACORS on [www.lacors.gov.uk](http://www.lacors.gov.uk).

- 4.10 Information about services offered by the Housing Directorate can be obtained through the Council's Website: [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing)



## **5. Aims & Objectives**

### **5.1 The aim of this Strategy is;**

“To promote good tenant and landlord relations in private sector housing and to maximise the availability of good quality private rented accommodation in the District for people in housing need”.

### **5.2 This aim will be met by:**

- a) Providing advice and support to private landlords to encourage the retention of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector;
- b) Helping to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants before they escalate into eviction proceedings;
- c) Attracting new landlords into the sector through the Finders Fee scheme;
- d) Liaising with local letting agencies to identify suitable privately rented accommodation for people at risk of becoming homeless;
- e) Arranging access to rent deposit guarantees through the Epping Forest Housing Aid Scheme (EFHAS);
- f) Referring prospective landlords to the Fresh START private leasing scheme which are leased to potentially homeless people in housing need;
- g) Providing up to date information and easily understood guidance relating to providing and obtaining accommodation in the private sector, together with details of agencies who may be able to offer additional help;
- h) Effectively liaising between Council Directorates and external agencies;
- i) Ensuring staff are appropriately trained;
- j) Reviewing and updating the Council’s procedures on an ongoing basis;
- k) Undertaking user surveys on the effectiveness of the service;
- l) Bringing back into use as many empty private sector properties in the District as is possible; and,
- m) Taking action to ensure that the condition of privately-rented accommodation meets the standards required by legislation and good practice.

## **6. Statutory Requirements**

### **6.1 Legislation and regulations relating to this strategy are set out below:**

- a) The Accommodation Agencies Act 1953 regulates the way in which letting agencies operate.
- b) The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 sets out the responsibilities of the Council as an employer in respect of the health and safety of staff.
- c) The Protection from Eviction Act 1977 sets out safeguards to ensure that residential tenants are not unlawfully evicted.

- d) The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 provides private sector tenants with a number of rights and sets out landlords' responsibilities in respect of housing repairs.
- e) The Local Government & Housing Act 1989 sets out the framework for the funding of Council Services.
- f) The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 makes provision for financial grants in certain circumstances, for instance, for adaptations for disabled people.
- g) The Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2004, together with associated regulations, sets out the Council's powers and duties relating to homelessness and housing advice.
- h) Personal information held by the Council is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998.
- i) The Human Rights Act 1998 is most likely to be cited in respect of housing issues in Articles 8 and 14. These relate to private and family life, home and correspondence (confidentiality) and discrimination (equal opportunities).
- j) The Council must be mindful of the requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Code of Practice in Rented Housing.
- k) The Housing Act 2004 requires the Council to keep local housing conditions under review and to take have policies in place to direct resources where they are most needed. It specifies the standards to be used in the assessment of the condition of dwellings (the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, or HHSRS) and a range of enforcement measures to ensure that all private sector residential properties meet the required standard. It also includes the licensing provisions for Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- l) The Housing Act 1985 (as amended) contains the overcrowding standards and powers for Demolition Orders.
- m) The Public Health Act 1936 has various provisions for addressing public health issues that may affect privately rented properties such as; dealing with filthy and verminous premises, leaking and overflowing cesspools, closure of polluted water supply, defective sanitary conveniences and removal of noxious matter.
- n) The Public Health Act 1961 contains powers to deal with blocked drains.
- o) The Building Act 1984 deals with defective premises.
- p) The Environmental Protection Act 1990 covers statutory nuisance (i.e. unreasonable interference with the enjoyment of another person's property).
- q) The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 relates to the control of rats and mice.
- r) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and 1982 includes the provisions for dealing with issues such as drainage and boarding up premises.

## **7. Client Consultation, Information & Involvement**

7.1. Service user surveys are undertaken to measure the effectiveness of the service.

## **8. General Principles**

- 8.1 Property owners occasionally contact the Housing Directorate with a view to leasing their property to the Council. The Council no longer enters into agreements to lease properties directly but works in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL), East Thames Housing Group (ETHG), to operate a three-year leasing scheme. The RSL leases up to 20 properties at any one time and these are then allocated on an Assured Short-hold Tenancy to homeless households nominated by the Council. Rent levels are within local reference rents for Housing Benefit purposes. The project is known as the Fresh START Scheme. The Council pays a small weekly management fee to the East Thames for each property.
- 8.2 When private sector tenants breach their tenancy conditions, the Council may become involved in a number of ways. As part of the Council's homelessness prevention service, the Housing Options Section will contact landlords who are considering evicting their tenant, to identify their reasons for doing so and to offer assistance in resolving problems. For example, in cases of rent arrears, should there be difficulties with housing benefit claims, homelessness prevention officers may consider applying for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) through the Benefit's Division. The Assistant Housing Options Manager (Homelessness) is a member of the DHP Panel.
- 8.3 Where potentially homeless applicants have identified a suitable private property to rent but do not have the means to meet the rent deposit guarantee required by the landlord, the Homelessness Prevention Team will liaise with the Epping Forest Housing Aid Scheme (EFHAS), which is a registered charity supported by the Council, that provides rent deposit guarantees which are issued to the landlord to cover any potential damage, theft and loss of rent. The value of the guarantee is normally equal to one month's rent. In addition, the Council operates a rental loan scheme funded by Government grants where in appropriate cases, applicants can be loaned the first months advance rental payment repayable interest free over a 24-month period. All properties are inspected by Environmental Health Officers to ensure they meet the relevant standards.
- 8.4 In situations where people are at risk of becoming homeless, the homeless prevention team will work with local letting agencies to identify suitable privately-rented accommodation for them.
- 8.5 Where existing private tenants have concerns about their housing conditions, Officers in the Private Housing Teams can advise them on their options and, where appropriate, liaise their landlord to make sure that any necessary remedial work is carried out.
- 8.6 Staff promote good relations between landlords and tenants, facilitating resolutions to difficulties whenever possible and endeavouring to prevent the loss of privately-rented accommodation.
- 8.7 The homelessness prevention team liaise with local lettings agencies in order to identify suitable properties for people at risk of becoming homeless.
- 8.8 Housing staff will work with other Council services to meet the objectives of this Strategy, the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy and the Empty Property Strategy.
- 8.9 The Senior Homelessness Prevention Officer will attend EFHAS meetings to monitor the success of referrals and the Director of Housing will receive quarterly reports from the scheme's secretary, in order to protect the Council's financial interest in the scheme.
- 8.10 Housing advice will be offered as appropriate to the needs of the individual and in accordance with the principles of equal opportunities.

- 8.11 The Council will provide up-to-date information sheets and booklets on renting in the private sector.
- 8.12 The Council will keep procedures under review and ensure staff receive appropriate training.
- 8.13 From time to time the Council will undertake service user surveys to measure the effectiveness of the service.
- 8.14 Any Complaints received will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Corporate Compliments and Complaints Procedure.

## 9. Future Developments

- 9.1 The following analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) forms the foundation for future action:

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weakness</b>
<p>Private Sector Stock Condition Survey and Housing Needs Survey provide solid information.</p> <p>'Homes and neighbourhoods' a corporate priority.</p> <p>Good relationships between Housing Services and ETHG, local letting agencies and EFHAS.</p> <p>Quality homelessness prevention service with well trained staff.</p> <p>'User friendly' housing advice.</p> <p>Performance monitoring.</p>	<p>No large portfolios of privately rented accommodation.</p> <p>Homelessness prevention staff funded by CLG until 2011 but future funding arrangements are uncertain.</p> <p>Available resources do not allow proactive, systematic engagement with private landlords.</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>Empty Properties initiative being undertaken.</p> <p>Continuation of rental loan scheme.</p> <p>Development of Housing Allocations Leasing Scheme (HALS) with Pathmeads.</p> <p>Additional financial support offered to EFHAS.</p>	<p>Alienation of private landlords by possible compulsory leasing of properties empty for more than 6 months.</p> <p>The small number of dwellings leased directly to the Council may no longer be made available.</p> <p>Increase in property values may reduce attractiveness of letting accommodation to tenants on Housing Benefit.</p> <p>Council not able to issue any more rental loans.</p> <p>Payment of Housing Benefit directly to tenants discourages landlords from accepting benefit claimants as tenants.</p>

## 10. Action Plan

Action	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale	Resources
Private Sector Housing and Allocations teams to work in liaison to maximise the advantage of Empty Properties Strategy	Housing Options Manager/ Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Ongoing	Within existing
Promote HALS with Pathmeads	Housing Options Manager	August 2010	Within Housing Benefit allowances
Monitor success of Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme and take action as appropriate	Housing Options Manager	Ongoing	Within existing
Continue to ensure that information provided to the public is up to date and user friendly	Housing Options Manager/ Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Ongoing	Within Existing
Continue to ensure staff are well trained and motivated	Housing Options Manager/ Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Ongoing	Within Existing
Make proposed budget provision against potential loss of government funding for homelessness prevention	Director of Housing	Sept 2010	Within Existing
Ensure the small number of dwellings leased by the Council continue to be available to people in housing need	Director of Housing	Ongoing	Within Existing
Maintain database of private landlords operating in the District.	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Ongoing	Within Existing
Implement initiatives to improve consultation with private landlords.	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Ongoing	Within Existing

## 11. Resourcing the Strategy

11.1 The homelessness prevention service will continue to be funded largely by central government until March 2011.

11.2 Other staff in the Housing Needs Section will be funded from the General Fund in respect of homelessness and the Housing Revenue Account in respect of allocations.

11.3 Staffing resources will be as follows:

<b>Staff Resource Projections.</b>			
	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
<b>Staff to provide the service (FTE p/a)</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>11.3</b>

<b>Staff Resource Breakdown</b>			
<b>Housing Options Manager</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>
<b>Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>
<b>Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>.3</b>
<b>Homelessness Prevention Officers</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Housing Officers</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>
<b>Housing Assistants</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15</b>
<b>Environmental Health Officers</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Private Sector Housing Technical Officers</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>

## **12. Key Targets and Performance Monitoring**

12.1 The Director of Housing chairs quarterly Continuous Improvement meetings attend by the Private Housing Managers and the Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector and Resources) where a range of targets and performance monitoring matters are considered.

12.2 The Housing Options Manager monitors the effectiveness of the Fresh START scheme.

## **13. Reviewing the Strategy**

13.1 This strategy will be reviewed in July 2013.

## **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

**Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan**

**Subject: Housing Customer Perspective Programme  
– Final Action Plan and Progress Report**

**Officer contact for further information:**

**Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 56 4004)**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**



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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Action Plan formulated through the Housing Customer Perspective Programme, and the associated current progress report, be considered, and that any comments on the Action Plan and Progress Report be made to the Director of Housing.**

### **Report:**

1. As a front line service of the Council, the provision of a high quality housing service to our customers that meets their needs, properly informs them of the service being received and provides them with sufficient information to make appropriate choices is essential. The Housing Directorate's "customers" are predominantly (but not exclusively) tenants, leaseholders, housing applicants and landlords.
2. In March 2007, the Director of Housing introduced the Housing Customer Perspective Programme, which has been a major undertaking, but has now been completed. The basis of the Programme has been to consider all aspects of "interfaces" that individual sections of the Housing Directorate have with its customers, whether it be in person – at the Council's offices or elsewhere – by telephone, by e-mail, through the provision of written information or through letters.
3. Over the past three years, in a programmed way, existing housing policies, practices, information, documentation and standard letters - relating to all 9 sections of the Housing Directorate - have been discussed and challenged by a group, chaired by the Director of Housing, comprising Housing staff from all sections and the Chairman of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation. The following written material was circulated to members of the Group around 2 weeks before each meeting:
  - All information leaflets provided to customers
  - All forms completed by customers, including accompanying notes
  - All standard letters sent to customers
  - Hard copies of any pages on the Council's website dedicated to the function being challenged

4. The meetings were attended by the Housing Manager from the section whose function(s) were being challenged, who explained all the various customer interfaces in relation to the Section's work.
5. As a result of this process, the Group has formulated a Customer Perspective Action Plan, listing around 120 improvements to the way the Housing Directorate interfaces with its customers. A copy of the Action Plan, together with a progress report as at 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010 is attached as an Appendix for the Scrutiny Panel's consideration.
6. Although most of the identified actions have been completed, some are still outstanding, particularly those that are more recent or require more work. The outstanding tasks will be transferred to the Housing Continuous Improvement Plan, which will be closely monitored by senior housing officers on a quarterly basis.
7. The Scrutiny Panel is invited to consider the Action Plan and provide any comments to the Director of Housing.
8. The completed Action Plan will also be considered by the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010, and any views the Federation may have will be reported orally at the meeting.

**Reason for decision:**

The Scrutiny Panel is charged with scrutinising the Housing Service, and it is felt appropriate that the Scrutiny Panel should consider the outcome of the Customer Perspective Programme.

**Options considered and rejected:**

To not report the Action Plan the meeting.

**Consultation undertaken:**

None

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: Nil

Personnel: nil

Land: Nil

Corporate Plan reference: Housing

Relevant statutory powers: N/A

Background papers: Documents considered by the Group

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None

Key Decision reference: N/A



## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
<b>Homelessness</b>			
1) Redesign initial Homelessness "Triage" Form to: (a) Make it better visually; (b) Explain the purpose of the form and give an invitation of help to complete the form; and (c) Provide a closing paragraph explaining the next steps	Russell Wallace	31.12.07	<b>Completed</b> – January 2008
2) Request NACRO to amend and reprint its SAFE leaflet, since its needs updating and, currently, photocopies are given out that are not as professional looking as the original leaflets.	Russell Wallace	31.3.08	<b>Completed</b> – March 2008
3) Work with Relate to produce personalised leaflets, jointly branded, since the current leaflet is rather basic	Russell Wallace	31.1.08	<b>Completed</b> – February 2008
4) Combine private rented information and details of private letting agencies in one leaflet, to make it easier for customers to reference the information, and to help ensure that they read the information together	Russell Wallace	31.1.08	<b>Completed</b> – March 2008
5) Provide all leaflets to homeless applicants in an EFDC Housing Information Pack, to look more professional and to enable customers to keep the information in one wallet	Jenny Wilson	30.11.07	<b>Completed</b> – January 2008
6) Re-draft the follow-up homelessness letter that requests further information, to make it less brusque for customers to read	Jenny Wilson	31.12.07	<b>Completed</b> – December 2007

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
7) Revise the standard homelessness decision letter, as follows, to make it more clearer for customers: (a) Combine the priority need criteria into one list (instead of two) (b) Clarify the issue of vulnerability (c) Embolden key points (d) Clarify the arrangements for requesting a review of the decision (e) Amend reference to the next steps for applicants in priority need and unintentionally homeless to make reference to the choice based lettings scheme	Russell Wallace	31.12.07	<b>Completed</b> – December 2007
Investigate cost and implementation issues of portable audio loop systems, for use in the interview rooms and elsewhere, to assist customers with hearing difficulties	Chris Sobey	31.3.08	<b>Completed</b> - 2 portable audio loop systems have been provided in the interview rooms at the Civic Offices and The Broadway
9) Undertake Homelessness Exit Survey, to obtain the views of customers on their experience of their visit to the Civic Offices, including interviews	Russell Wallace	31.3.08	<b>Completed</b> - Undertaken between 3 <sup>rd</sup> March and 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2008
10) Review homelessness information provided on the EFDC website, since it is not as comprehensive as the information provided in leaflets	Chris Sobey / Russell Wallace	31.3.08	<b>Completed</b> – May 2008

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
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### Temporary accommodation (e.g Norway House, B&B)

11) Produce a cardboard “Norway House Information Pack” wallet to hold all information leaflets about Norway House given to new residents, to look more professional and to enable residents to keep the documents together.	Chris Sobey	31.1.08	<b>Completed</b> – March 2008
12) Bring together all the information contained in Norway House leaflets into one glossy brochure, for which residents sign receipt, since residents are given lots of different information sheets – of varying – quality and are asked to sign confirmation of receipt many time	Chris Sobey / Russell Wallace	31.3.08	<b>In progress</b> – A folder has been produced to contain all information. The next stage is to produce a brochure. Russell to liaise with Chris to implement.
13) Include details of charges (eligible and ineligible) within the B & B Placement notification, since customers are not currently advised of this in writing.	Russell Wallace	31.12.08	<b>Completed</b> – December 2008

### Housing Register, allocations, nominations, mobility schemes

14) Produce a leaflet on Jessopp Court for inclusion in the Housing Application Pack given to older people, to promote this extra care scheme that is provig difficult to let.	Chris Sobey	30.6.08	<b>Completed</b> – May 2008
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## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
15) Combine the HomeOption and housing application registration letter into one letter, to avoid customers receiving two separate letters, also explaining <b>how</b> to report changes in circumstances, which the letters do not currently do.	Russell Wallace	28.2.08	<b>Completed</b> – March 2008
16) Provide a sign at HomeOption Freesheet distribution points about the use of the website, to encourage use of the website	Chris Sobey	28.2.08	<b>Completed</b> – April 2008
17) Survey distribution points for HomeOption Freesheets and consider need for redistribution from low to high demand sites, or additional printing, to ensure that there are sufficient copies available at all sites	Russell Wallace	31.1.08	<b>In progress</b> - Tracy Selley will be meeting shortly with other councils in the Herts & Essex Housing Options Consortium where the issue of distribution will be discussed. Note that one Council within the Consortium no longer distributes a Freesheet.
18) Change terminology in Allocations Scheme, leaflets and letters from “Strong” and “Additional Preference” for medical reasons to “Strong” and “Moderate”, for easier understanding by customers	Russell Wallace	31.3.08	<b>In progress</b> – Roger Wilson asked to amend the wording when the Allocations Scheme is next reviewed and revised in September 2010.
19) Change opening paragraph of standard tenancy offer to explain its being made following their successful expression of interest under the Home Option Scheme, to update the letter to reflect choice based lettings.	Russell Wallace	31.1.08	<b>Completed</b> – March 2008
20) Update the paragraph on the standard information given with offers relating to the financial incentive to move to smaller accommodation, to reflect the Cabinet’s recent changes to the incentive scheme	Russell Wallace	31.1.08	<b>Completed</b> – January 2008

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
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### Garage Waiting List and garage allocations

21) Ensure that the garage tenancy conditions included in the garage leaflet are the same as the separate list of garage tenancy conditions, since there are currently some differences	Chris Sobey	31.3.08	<b>Completed</b> – February 2009
22) Include a paragraph in the standard garage offer letter, emphasising that the garage should only be used to store a motor vehicle, since there is an increasing problem with unauthorised uses and customers need to be fully aware of this requirement from the outset, in case subsequent action is taken.	Russell Wallace	29.2.08	<b>Completed</b> – April 2008

### Estate Management

23) Include a highways form with letters to applicants when giving permission for vehicular crossovers, to avoid the customer having to make another contact (with Highways) to obtain a form	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	29.2.08	<b>Not actioned</b> - Essex Highways has advised that they prefer to keep their packs/forms separate for monitoring purposes
24) Embolden the paragraph in the letter that explains the need for covenant approval, which advises the occupier that it is in their interests to seek covenant approval – to emphasise the importance of this advice to the customer.	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	29.2.08	<b>Completed</b> – February 2008

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
25) Advise the Home Ownership Team that, on receipt of applications to purchase housing land, they should always check with Legal from the outset to ascertain whether the Council owns the land and if there are any relevant covenants, to avoid problems or disappointment for the customer at a later stage in the process if the land is not Council-owned	David Barrett	29.2.08	<b>Not applicable</b> – Since this is undertaken within the existing procedure.
26) Include contact details for Planning in the letter to Tenants giving permission for satellite aerials	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	29.2.08	<b>Completed</b> – February 2008
Rent Arrears Management			
27) Delete Christian names from salutation for standard rent arrears letters (eg, “Dear <b>John</b> Smith”)	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	30.6.08	<b>Completed</b> – May 2008
28) Refer to availability of housing benefit within all standard rent arrears letter	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	30.6.08	<b>Not implemented</b> - In view of the number of letters involved. It is felt that there is adequate advice/assistance within the Council’s recovery procedures.
29) Amend standard letter relating to breach of agreement to ensure that all deadlines are the same and clear (currently two separate deadlines in the same letter)	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	30.6.08	<b>Completed</b> – June 2008
30) When referring to the use of “tolerated trespassers” and “mesne profits” in letters, especially for the first time, include an explanation of the effect of being a tolerated trespasser (particularly loss of rights) and what mesne profits are respectively.	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	30.6.08	<b>Completed</b> – June 2008

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
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### Tenancy Management

31) Include item in next Housing News, advising tenants who temporarily leave their property for a length of time to notify their housing management officer	Chris Sobey	30.9.08	<b>Completed</b> – September 2008
32) Include reference in the Assignment procedure, leaflet and letters that, where under-occupation results, occupiers should be encouraged to move to smaller accommodation, with EFDC's assistance	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	31.7.08	<b>Completed</b> – Although there are no leaflets or relevant letters, the Work Instruction has been revised to ensure the assignee is advised.
33) Update the succession procedure, and advise all housing management officers, about the effect of successor tenants providing care and support to the late tenant, before their death	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	30.5.08	<b>Completed</b> – June 2008
34) Reword letter to under-occupying successor tenants about the need to move, in a more compassionate and understanding tone.	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	30.6.08	<b>Not necessary</b> – An alternative letter is already available
35) Update procedure on succession, explaining that homosexual couples are treated to be treated, in law, in the same way as a spouse.	David Barrett / Nich Taylor	30.6.08	<b>Completed</b> – August 2008

### The Broadway

36) Investigate the provision of a publicly accessible PC in the Reception, giving access to the choice based lettings and Homeswapper websites	Roger Wilson	30.9.08	<b>Completed</b> – January 2009
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## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
37) Investigate the feasibility of the Housing Benefits Section providing a “Housing Benefit Surgery” at the office, in order to provide a more localised and responsive housing benefits service.	David Barrett	30.9.08	<b>In Progress</b> – This was also recommended as part of the external Benefits Inspection in 2009. Consideration is being given to the provision of a “one stop shop” as part of the Broadway Regeneration Scheme, which would include a benefits presence.
<b>Limes Farm Housing Office (specific issues)</b>			
38) Investigate the provision of a publicly accessible PC in the Reception, giving access to the choice based lettings and Homeswapper websites	Roger Wilson	30.9.08	<b>Completed</b> – February 2009
39) Investigate the feasibility of the Housing Benefits Section providing a “Housing Benefit Surgery” at the office, in order to provide a more localised and responsive housing benefits service.	David Barrett	30.9.08	<b>Completed</b> – March 2010  It has been agreed that there will be a joint housing management / housing benefits office at the new Limes Farm Community Centre, to be completed by March 2011 and funded by the Council with some external funding.
<b>Council Switchboard Service</b>			
40) Provide telephonists with the two A-Z Guides to Housing	Chris Sobey	30.6.08	<b>Completed</b> – September 2008
41) Ensure that telephonists asks more questions of customers about the “housing query” to ensure that customers are put through to the right section first time	Angelo Stephen	31.7.08	<b>Not actioned</b> - Angelo Stephen has advised this is not possible, due to effect on response times.



### Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
42) Ensure that Housing Managers inform Switchboard when they send out bulk letters and are expecting lots of calls, so that the Switchboard are prepared and can staff up accordingly. This is to ensure that customers do not have to hold on too long.	Alan Hall	31.7.08	<b>Completed</b> - Discussed at Housing Directorate Group meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2008
<b>Council (Epping) Reception Service</b>			
43) Discuss with Russell Wallace arrangements for Reception staff to be notified of homelessness appointments (names, times and officer's name), so that Reception can advise officers direct. This will result in customers being expected at Reception and also not having to report again to another reception (Housing Needs Desk)	Jane Boreham	31.7.08	<b>Completed</b> – July 2008
44) Ask Finance if Epping Cashiers can provide rent account numbers and rent balances to customers, to avoid customers having to report back to the Epping Reception and wait for a Housing Officer to attend	Alan Hall	30.6.08	<b>Not actioned</b> – An e-mail was sent to Rob Pavey – June 2008. A number of difficulties were highlighted in response and it was agreed that it was not worth pursuing any further
45) Request Housing Managers to advise staff that customers with children should bring their children into interview rooms with them, and not leave them in the reception area unaccompanied, for the safety of the children and to avoid other customers being affected by noisy/unruly behaviour	Alan Hall	31.7.08	<b>Completed</b> - Discussed held at Housing Directorate Group meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2008

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
46) Ensure that receptionists obtain sufficient information from visitors, including name, address and nature of enquiry before asking housing officers to attend. This is to ensure that the customer is seen first time by the right person	Jane Boreham	30.6.08	<b>Not necessary</b> - Jane Boreham advised that Information staff already do this. However, there are occasions when tenants do not wish to share this information.
<b>Housing Repairs &amp; Voids</b>			
47) Promote "Repairs Direct" facility on website in the next issue of Housing News, to ensure that customers are aware of this useful facility, that is available 24/7	Chris Sobey	31.7.08	<b>Completed</b> – October 2009
48) Amend repair notification to customers (when next updated) signposting them to the Tenants Handbook to obtain more information about the Right to Repair, to ensure that customers are aware of their repair rights	Barry Lampard (previously Derek Pinner)	30.9.08	<b>No Progress</b> – Due to the restructure of the Housing Repairs Service and lack of managerial staff. New target date is December 2010
49) Promote the Tenants Right to Compensation for Improvements Scheme in the next issue of Housing News, to ensure that tenants are aware of this right	Chris Sobey	31.7.08	<b>Completed</b> - March 2009
50) Check if reference to tenants' eligibility to compensation is included in standard letters giving permission for improvements.	Damian Ghela	30.6.08	<b>Completed</b> – June 2008. Damian Ghela confirms that this information is already included
51) Add results from tenants satisfaction surveys of repairs undertaken by external contractors to the quarterly performance management reports, to ensure that this is properly monitored and can be compared with satisfaction with the Council's own DSO.	Barry Lampard (previously Derek Pinner)	30.9.08	<b>No Progress</b> – Due to the restructure of the Housing Repairs Service and the lack of managerial staff. New target date is July 2010

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
52) Amend the Void Property Tenants Satisfaction Forms to delete reference to accompanied viewings, to avoid confusion amongst customers	Barry Lampard (previously Derek Pinner)	30.9.08	<b>No Progress</b> – Due to the restructure of the Housing Repairs Service and the lack of managerial staff. New target date is July 2010
<b>Planned and cyclical contracts</b>			
53) Delete <i>detailed</i> reference to leaseholder legislation from consultation letters to leaseholders regarding major works, in order to make the letters more reader friendly	Haydn Thorpe	31.3.09	<b>In progress</b> - Haydn Thorpe to produce draft letter and seek advice on layout with Legal Services.
<b>Disabled adaptations</b>			
54) Check the member decision and policy relating to the cost, above which disabled adaptations will not be undertaken for under-occupying tenants. Sample letters currently refer to a £2,000 maximum; the Director of Housing believes that the maximum is £15,000.	Haydn Thorpe	28.2.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe confirmed that the £2,000 maximum referred to in the letter is correct.
55) Discuss with the Housing Options Manager, the possibility of a Housing Options Officer visiting under-occupying tenants who have been refused adaptations because of the cost, in order to discuss options for moving to smaller accommodation	Alan Hall	28.2.09	<b>Completed</b> - Russell Wallace confirms that Housing Options Officers will visit. Will liaise with Haydn Thorpe
56) If, as result of (56) above, a Housing Options Officer can visit under-occupying tenants, make reference to this arrangement in the letter to tenants explaining that adaptations cannot be undertaken	Haydn Thorpe	31.3.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe confirmed that the letters have been amended to reflect the actions. The letters contain the contact details for R. Wallace.

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
57) Revise the standard letter to under-occupying tenants refusing to undertake adaptations, to be more clearer and more friendly, explaining the reasons for the Council's policy	Haydn Thorpe	31.3.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe confirmed that the letters have been amended to reflect the actions.
58) In the letter to tenants explaining that improvements will not be undertaken (e.g. due to rent arrears): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Give the name of the Housing Management Officer and their telephone number;</li> <li>b) Advise that EFDC will do the work when they have cleared the arrears</li> <li>c) Advise the tenant to contact the Housing Assets Section when the arrears are cleared</li> <li>d) Move the location of the officer's telephone number to the correct position.</li> </ul>	Haydn Thorpe	31.3.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe confirmed that the letters have been amended to reflect the actions.
59) In the letter to tenants explaining that their adaptation will not be undertaken until next year, due to lack of budget; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Apologise for not being able to undertake it this year;</li> <li>b) Refer to the high demand for adaptations;</li> <li>c) That we have increased the budget a number of occasions over recent years, but the demand has increased more; and</li> <li>d) Explain we have to do adaptations in date order, to be fair to those who have waited the longest</li> </ul>	Haydn Thorpe	31.3.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe confirmed that the letters have been amended to reflect the actions.

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
60) Meet with OT Manager to request that OTs prioritise disabled adaptations (1 – 3), to ensure that those in most need are dealt with first	Haydn Thorpe	30.4.09	<b>Not required</b> – Haydn advises that All OT recommendations made to the council are already categorised, as a priority ‘A’ adaptation. Further prioritisation, given the length of the waiting list would result in some adaptations not being completed.
<b>Internal decorations for the elderly</b>			
61) Discuss at next HDG Meeting, whether decorations should be undertaken in 2 bed properties	Alan Hall	5.3.09	<b>Completed</b> – Discussed at HDG on 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2009. Agreed that Haydn Thorpe should draft a report recommending that decorations should be extended to older people in 2 bed properties
62) Provide Alan Hall with details of nos. seeking internal decorations for HDG discussion	Haydn Thorpe	28.2.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe emailed details to Alan Hall on the 2 March 2009.
63) Include an item in the next Housing News about internal decorations, in order to raise awareness	Chris Sobey	31.3.09	<b>Completed</b> – October 2009
64) Consider whether a payment of £3 per roll of wallpaper purchased by tenants themselves is now sufficient, in the light of inflation since the figure was first agreed.	Haydn Thorpe	28.2.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe confirmed that the allowance of £3 is currently in the schedule of rates for DSO internal decorating works.
<b>Gas servicing, repairs and installations</b>			
65) Improve the grammar in the letter to tenants from gas contractors providing appointments for 2 <sup>nd</sup> visits	Haydn Thorpe	31.3.09	<b>Completed</b> - Haydn Thorpe tabled the amended letter at Gas Core Group Meeting

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
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### Energy efficiency schemes

None

### Other Housing Maintenance

66) Ensure that recognised tenants associations are informed of proposed works involving leaseholders, in accordance with legislation.

Haydn Thorpe

31.3.09

**In Progress**

67) Ensure that housing management officers can access maintenance programmes on the network, and advise them accordingly, in order for HMOs to be aware of planned works in their area.

Haydn Thorpe

28.2.09

**Completed** - However, it is difficult to view maintenance programmes as programmes are identified by work type and not by property address.  
Haydn Thorpe confirmed that some capital programmes are included on the OHMS system and it is planned to increase this method of programming.

### Sheltered housing

68) Amend sheltered housing leaflet (when reprinted) to explain that an assessment of applicants for sheltered housing will be undertaken for eligibility, to ensure that applicants are aware of the process

Denise Pegler

31.12.10

**No progress yet** – This will be amended and re-printed in 2010/11

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
69) Ensure that all housing offices and information offices has leaflets on sheltered housing, to maximise publicity	Denise Pegler	31.5.09	<b>Completed</b> – June 2009
70) Arrange for Housing Assets Section to have leaflets about sheltered housing and Careline, to give to older people if appropriate when assessing for internal decorations	Denise Pegler	31.5.09	<b>Completed</b> – June 2009
71) Produce poster on sheltered housing, referring to the regular availability of vacancies, and distribute to various locations	Chris Sobey	31.7.09	<b>No progress to date</b>
72) Amend In Depth Assessment Form from asking questions about the current condition to questions about their ability to cope, to enable a better dialogue with applicants on their abilities	Denise Pegler	31.7.09	<b>Completed</b> – July 2009
73) Revise the information on “Duties of a Scheme Manager” and “Housing Management Officer” to be more customer-focussed and less clinical	Denise Pegler	31.7.09	<b>In progress</b> - Both documents have been updated – amended versions to be inserted in the Welcome Pack when updated
74) When reprinted, remove date from the Welcome to Sheltered Housing Information Wallet	Chris Sobey	30.9.09	<b>No progress</b> – To be removed when the Welcome to Sheltered Housing Pack is updated
<b>Careline</b>			
75) Combine the Private and Joint-Funded Careline Application Forms into one form, to avoid confusion for applicants on which one to complete.	Denise Pegler	31.7.09	<b>Completed</b> – August 2009

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
76) Relocate explanation about VAT exemption from the bottom to the top of the form, to give greater prominence to this important information	Denise Pegler	31.7.09	<b>Completed</b> – July 2009
77) Emphasise on the form that the eligibility criteria for VAT exemption is HMRC's and not the Council's	Denise Pegler	31.7.09	<b>Completed</b> – September 2009
78) Provide HMRC's website and telephone contact details on the form, to enable applicants to obtain more information about eligibility if required	Denise Pegler	31.7.09	<b>Completed</b> - July 2009
79) Revise wording for the Terms and Conditions leaflet to provide the information in plainer English, or provide a separate plain English guide, to ensure that vulnerable applicants can understand the terms and conditions	Denise Pegler	30.9.09	<b>Completed</b> - October 2009
80) Revise the Keyholder Agreement, to explain the purpose at the beginning of the document	Denise Pegler	30.9.09	<b>Completed</b> – October 2009
81) Change reference to the "Finance Cabinet Committee" on the charge increase letter to "Council"	Denise Pegler	31.7.09	<b>Completed</b> – August 2009
<b>Housing rents</b>			
82) Circulate details to Area Housing Managers about how text payments can be used to pay rent, so that they can publicise its use	Chris Sobey	31.10.09	<b>Completed</b> – May 2010
83) Add reference to supporting people charges/changes on the "standard" rent change letter, to make the charges clearer to tenants.	Sandy Lindsay	28.2.10	<b>In Progress</b> – Angie Preston to discuss with Roger Wilson the required wording – To be completed by end of July 2010.



## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
84) Increase the font size of rent change and leasehold charges letter to 11 point, to make the letters easier to read, especially those with sight difficulties	Sandy Lindsay	28.2.10	<b>Completed</b> - This was undertaken in February 2010 for the 2010/11 rent increase notifications.
85) Consider whether or not EFDC should provide refunds to people who are not executors, to ensure that deceased tenants' money is distributed to the right person. If such refunds are not made, ensure that a similar approach is taken in both Area Housing Offices, to ensure consistency	Rachel Smith	31.10.09	<b>In Progress</b> - Research was undertaken and completed in August 2009. Subsequent discussions were held with Housing Resources in September 2009. Council Tax has also been consulted who are in the process of rewriting procedures in connection with the way Finance deals with refunds to deceased residents. The aim is that Finance and Housing adopt consistent procedures regarding refunds in respect of the deceased.
<b>Housing invoices</b>			
None			
<b>Right to buy</b>			
86) Delete reference to EFDC not undertaking repairs when RTB applications are submitted, since this is contrary to the Landlord and Tenant Act, but make it clear that no improvements will be undertaken whilst the RTB application is being progressed, to ensure that tenants are fully aware of this EFDC policy	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<b>Completed</b> – In April 2010

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
87) Provide more explanation to RTB applicants about the importance of stating all improvements that they have undertaken themselves on their application form, since it could affect the valuation – to the benefit of the applicant.	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<b>Completed</b> – In April 2010
88) Amend the standard letter to RTB applicants about the required survey, to refer to it being sent out after the offer letter (and not after the purchase), to make it clearer to applicants	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<b>Completed</b> – In September 2009
<b>Small land sales</b>			
89) Amend the letter to applicants seeking to purchase land, by deleting reference to the need to seek the agreement of their ward member and stating that their ward member will be consulted on the proposal, so that the procedure is correctly explained to the applicant	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<b>Completed</b> – In April 2010
<b>Leasehold services</b>			
90) Explain the reason for service charge refunds in service charge refund letters, to make the reason clear to leaseholders.	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<b>Completed</b> – In April 2010
91) Change the contact name to Haydn Thorpe for maintenance queries related to leasehold properties, to ensure that leaseholders speak to the right person on first enquiry.	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<b>Completed</b> – October 2009. Each letter has the name of the appropriate contact officer

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
<p>92) Change into plain English references to the “S20 Consultation Procedure” in letters to leaseholders about the estimated costs for planned works, so that the reasons and procedures relating to the required consultation are more understandable to leaseholders.</p>	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<p><b>Under discussion with Legal</b> – An additional paragraph needs to be added within the letter, according to the work being undertaken, to make it clear. However, there are concerns that changing the wording on the Section 20 letter may result in the Council not complying with legislation.</p> <p>Director of Housing has asked S. Lindsay to discuss further with C. Sobey and A. Mitchell to endeavour to meet with the Group’s suggestion, whilst ensuring that the Council complies with legislative requirements.</p> <p>With C.Sobey to refer to Legal to clarify that the letters meet requirements.  <b>New target date - September 2010</b></p>
<p>93) In response to letters from leaseholders advising EFDC that they will be sub-letting their properties, instead of suggesting that leaseholders should advise EFDC’s Insurance Section, introduce a procedure for leasehold officer to advise the Insurance Section, to provide a “one stop” notification to avoid the leaseholder unnecessary inconvenience.</p>	S. Lindsay	31.10.09	<p><b>Completed</b> – In April 2010</p>
<p>94) Improve the presentation of the “Summary of Rights and Obligations”, to make it clearer to the customer</p>	C. Sobey	31.12.09	<p><b>In progress</b> – The Housing Resources Manager has advised that the Summary of Rights and Obligations cannot be changed . However, Chris Sobey will add headings and improve presentation.  <b>Revised target date – September 2010</b></p>

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
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### Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest (C.A.R.E.) Service

95) Correct references on some documents from “Caring and Repairing in Epping” to “Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest”, to make it clear to customers that the service covers the whole of the Epping Forest District, not just the town of Epping.	P. Duguid	30.6.10	<b>Completed</b> – May 2010
96) Change references from “Environmental Services” to “Housing Directorate” on all C.A.R.E. letterheads, so that it is clear to customers which directorate is responsible for the service.	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>Completed</b> – May 2010 All letters now show ‘Housing Directorate’
97) Arrange for the C.A.R.E. Advisory Panel to consider the current fees of 5% and 10% (dependent on the service provided) to ensure that the fee income is appropriate and sufficient, with any resultant increase being used to make the C.A.R.E. Service more viable, for the benefit of future users.	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>In Progress</b> - The next C.A.R.E. Advisory Panel meeting is programmed for 29 July 2010. This matter will be raised within the agenda.
98) Arrange for the C.A.R.E. Advisory Panel to consider whether or not a charge should be made to unsuccessful grant applicants, to meet C.A.R.E.’s costs for the abortive work, to make the C.A.R.E Service more viable, for the benefit of future users.	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>In Progress</b> - The next C.A.R.E. Advisory Panel meeting is programmed for 29 July 2010. This matter will be raised within the agenda.
99) Ensure that <b>all</b> letter to customers are in both large print and Arial (not Times New) Roman, to assist customers with poor sight	P. Duguid	30.6.10	<b>Completed</b> – May 2010 (and ongoing). An instruction has been made to all Private sector staff regarding correspondence.

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
100) Collect and record equality and diversity information relating to customers, both at the C.A.R.E. application stage and as part of the Client Evaluation Survey, in order to obtain a greater understanding of clients diverse needs.	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>In Progress</b>
101) Check whether or not the Defects Liability Period for contracts supervised by C.A.R.E. should be for 6 months (as currently stated) or for 12 months (as understood by technical members of the Group), to ensure that C.A.R.E. monitors customers' defects for the correct period	P. Duguid	31.5.10	<b>Completed – May 2010</b> 6 months is the minimum period for defects to workmanship and shall be kept for private contracts. Materials, fitted appliances etc carry separate guarantees.
Discretionary Grants for non-Council Occupiers			
102) Check if the a copy of the Initial Assessment Form is available on the Council's website, to ensure maximum accessibility for potential applicants	P. Duguid	31.5.10	<b>No Progress</b>
103) Arrange for the (important) Initial Assessment Form to be re-designed into a more attractive format using desk-top-publishing, to maximise the interest of potential applicants and to give confidence that their grant application will be considered in a professional way.	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>No Progress</b>
104) Before re-designing the Initial Assessment Form (103 above), check to ensure that no changes or updates are required to the form, to ensure that the Council collects are the required information from applicants to efficiently and effectively process their application.	P. Duguid	30.6.10	<b>No Progress</b>

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
105) Include an Equality and Diversity Form with the Initial Assessment Form, in order to collect “baseline” information on equality and diversity, compare with the diversity of successful applicants and ensure that the service is meeting applicants’ diverse needs and there is no direct or indirect discrimination.	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>In Progress</b> – This will be concluded shortly with input from Lyndsay Swan / Barbara Copson who are currently reviewing existing Equality and Diversity.
106) Change references to “Environmental Services” on the Decent Homes leaflet to “Housing Directorate” to ensure that applicants are aware of the directorate responsible	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>No Progress</b> - This will be addressed for the next batch for reprinting.
107) Produce an attractive, cardboard Private Housing Grants Information Folder to enable all the relevant leaflets sent to applicants to be brought together.	P. Duguid	30.9.10	<b>No Progress</b>
108) Re-format the small number of existing A4 size leaflets into an A5 format, so that all leaflets are in the same size, for ease of use by applicants.	P. Duguid	30.9.10	<b>No Progress</b>
109) Housing Assets to produce a leaflet explaining the Decent Homes Standard for Council tenants, in a similar format as the private sector housing leaflet, so that easy-to-read information about the Standard can be provided to Council tenants when required.	H. Thorpe	30.9.10	<b>No Progress</b>
110) Change references to e-mail address of <a href="mailto:information@eppingforestdc.gov.uk">information@eppingforestdc.gov.uk</a> on all literature to the general e-mail address set up for private sector housing, so that applicants’ enquiries are directed straight to private sector housing staff, thereby reducing response times to applicants.	P. Duguid	31.8.10	<b>In Progress</b>

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
111) Delete use of <i>italicised</i> print in all leaflets (when re-printed), in accordance with the Plain English Campaign's guidance, to assist those applicants with reading difficulties and poor sight.	P. Duguid	30.9.10	<b>Completed</b> – May 2010
112) After collecting equality and diversity information at the Initial Assessment Form stage (see 105 above), record this data in relation to enquiries that lead to a formal application and, subsequently, a grant approval, to enable periodic analyses to be undertaken, to ensure that no direct or indirect discrimination occurs.	P. Duguid	30.9.10	<b>In Progress</b> – See 105 above
Private Sector Housing (Technical)			
113) Introduce Customer Satisfaction forms for completion by both tenants and landlords, to obtain feedback on how their issue had been handled, to further improve the service in the future	S. Devine	31.8.10	<b>New Action</b> - Added 6.7.10
114) Introduce a "No Access Card" to be left at residents' homes, asking them to contact the officer that had called, instead of continuing with the current practice of posting a business card through the letter box with a request to make contact.	S. Devine	31.8.10	<b>New Action</b> - Added 6.7.10
115) Improve the private sector housing pages of EFDC's website, to increase significantly the amount of information that users can obtain and download, to improve accessibility to the service.	S. Devine	31.12.10	<b>New Action</b> - Added 6.7.10

## Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan

Action	Responsible Officer	Target	Progress (as at 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2010)
116) Ensure that 11 Point font is generally used for all formal Notices, to ensure that they are easily readable, with 12 Point font used when the recipient is known to be elderly and/or have poor eyesight	S. Devine	31.7.10	<b>New Action</b> - Added 6.7.10
117) Amend reference to “Social Services” within standard letters to “Adult Social Care” to ensure that the current terminology is used.	S. Devine	31.8.10	<b>New Action</b> - Added 6.7.10
118) Revise the section within the HMO Licensing Guidance relating to “households”, to make the explanation clearer	S. Devine	31.8.10	<b>New Action</b> – Added 6.7.10



## Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

**Date of meeting: 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

**Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan**

**Subject: Housing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)  
- 2009/10 Out-turn Report**

**Officer contact for further information:**

**Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 56 4004)**

**Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)**



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### Recommendations/Decisions Required:

**That the Council's performance in 2009/10 in relation to the Housing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), comprising all National Indicators (NIs) and Local Performance Indicators (LPIs), be considered.**

### Report:

1. The Council has adopted a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), comprising all National Indicators (NIs) and Local Performance Indicators (LPIs), which include 4 KPIs and 6 LPIs relating to the Housing Service.
2. Performance against all the Council's KPIs are monitored on a quarterly basis by the Finance and Performance Management (FPM) Scrutiny Panel. However, in past years, the Housing Scrutiny Panel has asked that performance on the Housing KPIs be reported to, and considered by, the Scrutiny Panel, which has now been included within its Annual Work Programme
3. The Performance Report for Housing KPIs in 2009/10 is attached as an appendix, which includes the:
  - Target for 2009/10, set by the FPM Scrutiny Panel;
  - Performance for 2009/10; and
  - Target for 2010/11, set by the FPM Scrutiny Panel.
4. As can be seen, all 4 of the targets for the Nis, and 3 out of the 6 LPI targets for 2009/10 were achieved. Comments on the 3 targets not achieved are as follows:

Rent collected as a proportion of rents owed	Performance of 97.7% was below the target of 98.8%, due to the ending of the "tolerated trespassers" status in law (whose arrears are now included in the figures). In addition, in many cases, the courts have been more lenient in dealing with rent arrears, due to the current economic climate.
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<p>Emergency repairs undertaken within the target time of 24 hours</p>	<p>The performance of 97% of emergency repairs undertaken within the target was very disappointing, since the performance is usually at a consistent 99%, and most emergency repairs are, in fact, completed within 2-3 hours of report. Indeed, performance for the first two quarters of 2009/10 was 99%.</p> <p>The main reason for the lower performance appears to be due to a significant number of long term absences at the managerial and supervisory level in the latter half of the year, which affected the smooth allocation of works orders in a timely fashion.</p> <p>The new managerial structure for the Housing Repairs Service should be in place and filled shortly, and there is every confidence that performance will resume to 99%</p>
<p>Urgent repairs undertaken within the target time of 5 working days</p>	<p>Although the target of 95% was not achieved, the performance of 93% was significantly better than the performance of 86% in the previous year. Again, performance for the first two quarters of 2009/10 was on target at 95%, and again the reason for the lower performance appears to be due to the long term absences at the managerial and supervisory level in the latter half of the year.</p>

**Reason for decision:**

The Housing Scrutiny Panel has previously asked for performance on the Housing KPIs to be reported to, and considered by, the Scrutiny Panel, which has now been included within its Annual Work Programme.

**Options considered and rejected:**

None

**Consultation undertaken:**

None

**Resource implications:**

Budget provision: Nil

Personnel: Nil

Land: Nil

Relevant statutory powers: N/A

Background papers: Nil

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Nil

Key Decision reference: N/A

**National and Local Performance Indicators Out-Turns – 2009/10  
Housing**

<b>National Indicators</b>					
<b>PI. No</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Target (2009/10)</b>	<b>Actual (2009/10)</b>	<b>Target Achieved ?</b>	<b>Target (2010/11)</b>
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered	57	63	<b>YES</b>	70
NI 156	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	100	46	<b>YES</b>	60
NI 158	Percentage of non-decent Council homes	0 %	0 %	<b>YES</b>	0 %
NI 160	Local Authority tenant satisfaction with landlord services	83 %	83 %	<b>YES</b>	85 %
<b>Local Indicators</b>					
LPI 04	Rent collected as a proportion of rents owed on housing revenue account dwellings	98.8 %	97.7 %	<b>NO</b>	97.0 %
LPI 05	Average number of days to re-let Council dwellings	40 days	28 days	<b>YES</b>	30 days
LPI 07	Emergency repairs undertaken within target time (24 hours)	99 %	97 %	<b>NO</b>	99 %
LPI 08	Urgent repairs undertaken within target time (within 5 working days)	95 %	93 %	<b>NO</b>	95 %
LPI 09	Routine repairs undertaken within target time (6 weeks)	90 %	95 %	<b>YES</b>	95 %
LPI 10	Satisfaction with repairs undertaken	98 %	98.5 %	<b>YES</b>	98 %

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