



Epping Forest District Council

CABINET **Monday, 12th September, 2011**

Place: Council Chamber
Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall - The Office of the Chief Executive
Tel: 01992 564470
Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors Mrs L Wagland (Leader of the Council and Legal Portfolio Holder) (Chairman), J Philip (Deputy Leader and Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder) (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby, J Knapman, Mrs M McEwen, G Mohindra, Mrs P Smith and J Wyatt

PLEASE NOTE THE START TIME OF THE MEETING

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

- (a) This meeting is to be webcast;
- (b) Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking; and
- (c) the Chairman will read the following announcement:

"I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the Internet and will be capable of subsequent repeated viewing, with copies of the recording being made available for those that request it.

By being present at this meeting, it is likely that the recording cameras will capture your image and this will result in your image becoming part of the broadcast.

You should be aware that this may infringe your human and data protection rights. If you have any concerns then please speak to the Webcasting Officer.

Please could I also remind Members to activate their microphones before speaking."

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Cabinet held on 18 July 2011 (previously circulated).

5. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

To receive oral reports from Portfolio Holders on current issues concerning their Portfolios, which are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To answer questions asked by members of the public after notice in accordance with the motion passed by the Council at its meeting on 19 February 2008 (minute 102 refers) on any matter in relation to which the Cabinet has powers or duties or which affects the District.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

To consider any matters of concern to the Cabinet arising from the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function.

8. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CABINET COMMITTEE - 1 AUGUST 2011 (Pages 7 - 10)

(Leader of the Council) To consider the minutes from the recent meeting of the Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee held on 1 August 2011 and any recommendations therein.

9. HOUSING STRATEGY KEY ACTION PLAN 2011/12 (Pages 11 - 36)

(Housing Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-014-2011/12).

10. REVIEW OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING TEAM (Pages 37 - 44)

(Housing Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-015-2011/12).

11. REDEVELOPMENT OF TOILETS INTO TAKEAWAY/RESTAURANT - BAKERS LANE (Pages 45 - 48)

(Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-017-2011/12).

12. TRANSFER OF PRIVATE SECTOR SEWERS TO THE WATER & SEWERAGE COMPANIES - IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR DRAINAGE TEAM (Pages 49 - 52)

(Environment Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-018a-2011/12).

13. HIGH LEVEL OPERATIONS PLAN FOR THE WHITE WATER CENTRE - OLYMPIC GAMES 2012 (Pages 53 - 56)

(Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-019-2011/12).

14. STREET NUMBERING AND NAMING CHARGES (Pages 57 - 64)

(Safer, Greener & Highways Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-020-2011/12).

15. REVIEW OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP GRANTS SCHEME (Pages 65 - 68)

(Housing Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-021-2011/12).

16. RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS - HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (Pages 69 - 74)

(Housing Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-022-2011/12).

17. ICT CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS - 2012/13 (Pages 75 - 78)

(Planning & Technology Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-023-2011/12).

18. SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME - JESSOP COURT, WALTHAM ABBEY (Pages 79 - 84)

(Housing Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-024-2011/12).

19. REVIEW OF RECYCLING BRING BANK SCHEMES (Pages 85 - 90)

(Environment Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-025-2011/12).

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs (6) and (24) of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order 6 (non-executive bodies), any item raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Committee concerned and the Chairman of that Committee. Two weeks' notice of non-urgent items is required.

21. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Exclusion

To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business

set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
22	Off-Street Parking Enforcement across the District	3
23	Extension of Waste Contract with Sita UK	5
24	Transfer of Private Sector Sewers – impact upon Private Sector Drainage Team	1, 2 & 3
25	Proposed Pyrles Lane Nursery Development – Acquisition of Adjoining Property	3

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Confidential Items Commencement

Paragraph 9 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00 p.m. at the latest.
- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.
- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers

Paragraph 8 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report and does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the

advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.

22. OFF-STREET PARKING ENFORCEMENT ACROSS THE DISTRICT (Pages 91 - 96)

(Safer, Greener & Highways Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-016-2011/12).

23. EXTENSION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT WITH SITA UK (Pages 97 - 108)

(Environment Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-026-2011/12).

24. TRANSFER OF PRIVATE SECTOR SEWERS TO THE WATER & SEWERAGE COMPANIES - IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR DRAINAGE TEAM (Pages 109 - 112)

(Environment Portfolio Holder) To consider the restricted report (C-018b-2011/12).

25. PROPOSED PYRLES LANE NURSERY DEVELOPMENT - ACQUISITION OF ADJOINING PROPERTY (Pages 113 - 118)

(Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-027-2011/12).

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee **Date:** Monday, 1 August 2011

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 8.25 pm

Members Present: Councillors Mrs L Wagland (Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby, Mrs M McEwen and J Philip

Other Councillors: Councillors K Avey, G Mohindra, Mrs C Pond, D Stallan, G Waller, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

Apologies: J Knapman

Officers Present: J Preston (Director of Planning and Economic Development), A Wintle (Principal Planning Officer), S King (Senior Planning Officer), G Lunnun (Assistant Director (Democratic Services)) and P Seager (Chairman's Secretary)

6. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2011 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Cabinet Committee noted its terms of reference, as agreed by the Council on 17 February 2009 (minute 113(a) refers).

10. STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT

The Principal Planning Officer presented a report seeking approval to revised draft methodology and the site assessment form for the forthcoming Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, following consideration of earlier draft documents by the Cabinet Committee at its last meeting and subsequent discussions with the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee and the Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder.

The Cabinet Committee was reminded that the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment was an essential piece of evidence that would help determine the amount of land that was potentially available for housing purposes.

The Cabinet Committee noted that the most significant changes proposed were:

- (a) to raise the score of the greenfield sites within or adjoining an existing boundary (Stage A, Question 5 on the site assessment form) from “amber” to “amber/red”, i.e., analysing it as even less suitable as a housing site;
- (b) reference to the Council’s recognition of the importance of the character and appearance of the Green Belt, and that it would refer to current Green Belt policy in assessment of potential sites;
- (c) inclusion within the methodology that accessibility distances to shops and services (Stage 3, Questions 14(a) to (h)) were on the basis of an appropriately accessible terrain being in place, such as a pavement and an explanation as to why the range of distances proposed had been chosen; and
- (d) emphasising that the strategic housing land availability assessment process would only be an initial assessment of the potential suitability of sites for future housing and that there would be much further testing of sites in future before they would have any planning standing.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that in addition, the methodology had been altered so that it now accurately reflected the “brownfield/greenfield/settlement location” order of preference for sites, within “Stage A, question 5” of the site appraisal sheet as agreed by the Cabinet Committee at its last meeting.

Members were advised that if the proposed amendments to the draft methodology and site assessment form were agreed, a tender exercise would be commenced to appoint suitable consultants to complete the study, and make the draft methodology available for consultation.

RESOLVED:

That the further minor amendments to the draft methodology and site assessment form, as requested at the Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee meeting held on 13 June 2011, and further discussed with the Chairman of the Committee and the Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder be approved subject to reference in Stage C – Other Constraints of the site assessment form, to distances being on the basis of an appropriately accessible terrain being in place.

11. CORE PLANNING STRATEGY - ISSUES AND OPTIONS

The Principal Planning Officer presented a report on issues and options concerning the Core Planning Strategy.

The Cabinet Committee was advised that the Localism Bill currently being considered by the House of Lords was likely to cause significant further change in the way in which planning policy was developed at the local level, although the extent of further change was not yet clear. Regional Strategies including the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (the East of England Plan) were to be abolished but

until that time, continued to form part of the Development Plan for the District and had to be taken into account in preparing Local Development Frameworks.

Members noted that the Localism Bill also introduced Neighbourhood Plans to be prepared by town/parish councils and whilst there might be an expectation for District Council officers to support those councils in preparing such plans, priority would need to be given to the Core Planning Strategy in order to provide the strategic framework for Neighbourhood Plans.

The Principal Planning Officer reported that a draft single National Planning Policy Framework, replacing all the existing Planning Policy Guidance notes and Planning Policy Statements, had recently been published for consultation and would be submitted for consideration by members shortly.

The Cabinet Committee noted the progress being made on collating a robust evidence base to support the preparation of the Local Development Framework. Attention was drawn to slippage in the timetable for the Local Development Scheme previously presented to the Cabinet Committee due to continued Government changes and staff losses in the Forward Planning Team. Members were also advised that the expected further changes in national policy could have a significant impact on the preparation of the Local Development Framework. In the light of this information, the Cabinet Committee considered whether a revised Local Development Scheme should be submitted to the Secretary of State at this time.

The Cabinet Committee considered initial draft vision, aims and objectives of the Core Planning Strategy drawn up following a public consultation exercise intended to determine what local residents considered to be the most important issues for the District. Six aims and supporting objectives had been drawn up:

- (i) the protection and improvement of green spaces and the Green Belt, and protection of the character of the District;
- (ii) managing growth within the District;
- (iii) supporting the economy within the District;
- (iv) long term provision of housing;
- (v) the social aspects of managing growth; and
- (vi) movement in and around the District.

Members noted that the aims and objectives would be tested through the sustainability appraisal process, to assess whether they would lead to the most sustainable development possible.

The Principal Planning Officer reported that the Council had previously adopted an informal joint working arrangement at officer level with Harlow and East Herts District Councils in order to manage the growth of Harlow proposed in the East of England Plan. The Cabinet Committee considered whether this approach should continue having regard to the forthcoming abolition of the East of England Plan.

The Principal Planning Officer suggested that as the Core Planning Strategy was a complex document, made more so by the continual changes being introduced by Government, it might be helpful to members if a number of informal briefing meetings were held to discuss emerging issues and options.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the national policy position in respect of the Localism Bill and the draft of the National Planning Policy Framework be noted;
- (2) That the evidence completed and that which is still on-going to support the Local Development Framework be noted;
- (3) That no formal Local Development Scheme be submitted to the Secretary of State at this stage but that an informal timetable be published on the Council's website;
- (4) That the draft vision, aims and objectives of the Core Planning Strategy be agreed subject to:
 - (a) deletion of the word "whilst" from Objective 1 of Aim 1;
 - (b) inclusion of open spaces between existing towns and settlements in Objective 2 of Aim 1;
 - (c) rewording of Aim 2 to read "To create and manage sustainable growth in the Epping Forest District";
 - (d) clarification of Objective 1 of Aim 3;
 - (e) the inclusion of an additional objective under Aim 3 to retain expenditure by local residents within the District;
 - (f) rewording of Aim 4 to achieve a balance between all groups requiring accommodation in the District;
 - (g) deletion of Objective 4 in Aim 6 or revision of the wording to reflect discouragement of on-street parking in relation to new developments;
- (5) That informal liaison with Harlow and East Herts District Council officers continue; and
- (6) That informal meetings be held as necessary with the Cabinet Committee and be open to all members of the Council to discuss the emerging Issues and Options consultation document, and that any briefing papers provided be published on the Council's website.

CHAIRMAN

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-014-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing
Planning & Technology

Subject: Housing Strategy 2009-12 - Key Action Plan 2011/12

Responsible Officer: Alan Hall (01992 564004)
John Preston (01992 564111)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That, as recommended by the Housing Scrutiny Panel, the proposed Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2011/12 – attached at Appendix 1 – be adopted.

Executive Summary:

The Housing Scrutiny Panel has considered, and recommends, an updated Housing Strategy Key Action Plan for 2011/12, attached as Appendix 1.

The Housing Scrutiny Panel has also considered in detail a 12-Month Progress Report on last year's Key Action Plan, which is attached as Appendix 2 for information only.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Housing Strategy 2009-2012 includes a Key Action Plan, which the Cabinet has agreed should be updated each year, for the duration of the Housing Strategy.

Other Options for Action:

- To not agree the latest Key Action Plan; or
- To propose different actions.

Report:

1. At its meeting in September 2009, the Cabinet adopted the Housing Strategy 2009-2012. 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.

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

3. 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. Since the adoption of the Housing Strategy, the Housing Scrutiny Panel has received and considered 6-Monthly Progress Reports on the Key Action Plan each March and July, the last being July 2011.

4. 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 was therefore considered in detail by the Housing Scrutiny Panel at its meeting in July 2011, which it now recommends to the Cabinet for adoption. The recommended Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2011/12 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

5. At its meeting in July, the Housing Scrutiny Panel also considered a 12-Month Progress Report on last year's Key Action Plan (20010/11). A copy of which is attached as Appendix 2 for information only.

6. The Housing Strategy will be completely updated during 2012, for adoption by the Cabinet and full Council around September 2012, which will cover a further three-year period, with the Key Action Plan continuing to be updated on an annual basis, with progress continuing to be monitored by the Housing Scrutiny Panel every 6 months.

Resource Implications:

There are various resource implications, but these have been, or will be, reported to the Cabinet and/or Housing Portfolio Holder as appropriate and when required.

Legal and Governance Implications:

All proposals comply with the relevant legislations.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

A number of the proposals will result in safer and/or greener outcomes.

Consultation Undertaken:

There was extensive consultation undertaken prior to the Housing Strategy 2009-2012 being adopted.

The Housing Scrutiny Panel was consulted on this latest Key Action Plan.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

Any risks associated with the proposed actions will be assessed as part of the individual project proposals.

Equality and Diversity

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

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? Yes

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
A Customer (Equality) Impact Assessment has previously been undertaken on the Council's approach to its Housing Strategy generally, which will be updated later this year. Any Impact Assessments required for individual actions will be undertaken when necessary.

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?
N/A.

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Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2011-12

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	(Current Position to be completed for the 6-Monthly Progress Reports only)
1	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)	July 2012	
2	Housing Market	Review the target for the number of new homes to be provided within the District between 2011-2031, and the proposed locations, following the proposed revocation of the East of England Plan	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	July 2012	
3	Housing Market	Progress the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy to the Issues and Options Stage	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	July 2012	
4	Regeneration	Undertake a public consultation on a proposed Development and Design Brief for the St Johns Area of Epping, including market and affordable housing	Director of Corporate Support Services	December 2011	
5	Affordable Housing	Work with housing associations and developers to provide 98 new affordable homes for rent and shared ownership in 2011/12 and around a further 120 new affordable homes by March 2014, at the following sites with detailed planning permission:	Director of Housing	March 2012	

		<p>(a) White Lodge/The Limes, Waltham Abbey</p> <p>(b) Station Approach, Ongar</p> <p>(c) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell</p> <p>(d) Zinc (Gt. Stony), Ongar</p> <p>(e) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell</p> <p>(f) 12-30 Church Hill, Loughton</p> <p>(g) St Johns School, Epping</p>			
6	Affordable Housing	Review the possible re-introduction of the Home Ownership Grant Scheme (enabling existing Council tenants to purchase in the private sector) in 2012/13.	Housing Resources Manager	Sept 2011	
7	Affordable Housing	Complete Phase 1 of the Open Market Home Ownership Scheme with Broxbourne Housing Association (BHA) - to enable first time buyers in the District to purchase a property of their choice from the open market through shared ownership, funded jointly by the Council, BHA and the applicant – and consider whether to undertake Phase 2	Director of Housing	March 2012	
8	Affordable Housing	Investigate the feasibility and viability of the Council building social housing for rent itself, on Council-owned sites, including difficult-to-let garage sites	Director of Housing	March 2012	
9	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	July 2012	

10	Affordable Housing	Undertake a "Planning for Real Exercise" to consider the options for the development/conversion of Council-owned Leader Lodge, North Weald and, if development is agreed, select one of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners through a competitive process to implement the agreed option	Director of Housing	February 2012	
11	Affordable Housing	Work in partnership with one of the Council's Preferred Housing Association 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	July 2012	
12	Affordable Housing	Formulate a specific District-wide Nominations Agreements for shared ownership properties, with each of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners, following consultation with the Partners	Director of Housing	Dec 2011	
13	Affordable Housing	Following the enactment of the Localism and Decentralisation Bill, formulate a Strategic Tenancy Policy, possibly in partnership with the other West Essex Councils	Director of Housing	July 2012	
14	Affordable Housing	Following a competitive exercise, work with one of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners to develop the Council-owned site at Roundhills, Waltham Abbey for an affordable rented housing scheme	Director of Housing	July 2012	

15	Affordable Housing	Following the enactment of the Localism and Decentralisation Bill, consider the possible introduction of "flexible secure" Council tenancies for fixed periods	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Sept 2012	
16	Affordable Housing	Complete and review the Council's Pilot Social Housing Fraud Scheme, and determine whether or not the scheme should continue permanently	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2012	
17	Affordable Housing	Introduce an on-line housing registration system	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2012	
18	Homelessness	Review and revise the Homelessness Strategy for a further three-year period	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	August 2012	
19	Diversity	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2012	
20	Diversity	Review and update the Customer (Equality) Impact Assessments of the Housing Strategy & Development, HomeOption Scheme, Homelessness, and Private Sector Housing functions	Director of Housing	July 2012	
21	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	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)	July 2012	

22	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Following Essex County Council's decision to withdraw 24-hour staffing for the scheme at Jessopp Court, Waltham Abbey for frail older people, work with Essex Adult Social Care to remodel the scheme to a sheltered housing scheme	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Dec 2011	
23	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Following consultation with the CARE Advisory Group, safeguard the future viability of the Caring And Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Service, by increasing project management fees for disabled facilities and other grants to 15%	Private Housing Manager (Grants & CARE)	October 2011	
24	Empty Homes	Bring at least 20 long-term empty properties back into use by Council intervention, including the continued use of the PLACE Scheme	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2012	
25	Empty Homes	Enter into an agreement with Pathmeads Housing Association to manage vacant properties in the District served with an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	October 2011	
26	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	July 2012	
27	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	July 2012	

28	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Complete the 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)	Sept 2011	
29	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)	January 2012	
30	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licences for existing residential park home sites in the District and report progress on implementation to the Council's Housing Scrutiny Panel	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	October 2011	
31	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licence conditions for existing and new holiday park home sites in the District, following consultation with site owners, park home residents association and statutory agencies	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	July 2012	
32	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Establish and support a Park Homes Consultative Group to consult and brief representatives of park home residents on issues of interest	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2012	
33	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce and support a Landlord Accreditation Scheme within the District	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2012	

34	Energy Efficiency	Work with Hastoe Housing Association to obtain planning permission and commence the first affordable housing development by a housing association in the country constructed from straw bales at Millfield, High Ongar, significantly improving energy efficiency	Director of Housing	June 2012	
35	Energy Efficiency	Investigate the use of the Government's Feed-in Tariff Scheme to fund the installation of photo-voltaic (solar) panels on the roofs of Council properties, in order to reduce energy costs for tenants and to produce an income stream for the Council	Asst. Director of Housing (Property)	March 2012	

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**Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2010-11
12-Month Progress Report
(July 2011)**

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Current Position – July 2011
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	Achieved – The Council's consultant's, Levells, have produced the Viability Assessment and it has been adopted by the LDF Cabinet Committee
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	In Progress – Due to the workload and other commitments of the Forward Planning Division, the SHLA has not yet been completed. Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12
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	In Progress – Following a legal challenge, the East of England Plan is in effect once again; however, the Government has announced that it intends to revoke regional spatial strategies through the Decentralisation and Localism Bill. Completion of the Issues and Options Stage of the LDF (see below) is the next stage in agreeing a target for the number of homes to be built in the District. Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12

4	Housing Market	Progress the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy to the Issues and Options Stage	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	April 2011	<p>In Progress - The Council's Forward Planning Division has completed a Community Visioning Exercise, which will inform the Issues and Options Paper for the LDF.</p> <p>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</p>
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	<p>Delayed – Due to the number of parties involved, and the need to undertake further traffic/highways assessments, it has taken longer to finalise the options for consultation. However, it is envisaged that the consultation exercise will be undertaken in Summer 2011.</p> <p>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</p>
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"> (a) Epping Forest College, Loughton (b) St Margarets Hospital, Epping (c) White Lodge/The Limes, Waltham Abbey (d) Ongar Station, Ongar (e) Merlin Way, North Weald (f) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell (g) Acres Avenue, Ongar (h) Theatre Resource, Ongar (i) School Lane, Abbess Roding (j) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell 	Director of Housing	March 2012	<p>On Target and expected to be exceeded – 151 new affordable homes were completed on 6 sites in 2010/11.</p> <p>A further 98 affordable homes are currently on site and are due to be completed in 2011/12, and another 126 affordable homes have planning permission and are expected to complete within the following 2 years, of which 12 are currently on site.</p> <p>Therefore, 354 new affordable homes are expected to be completed over the whole Housing Strategy period, exceeding the target by around 35 homes.</p> <p>In addition to this, developers are known to be currently considering the development of around 215 more affordable homes on 6 sites in the District, including Council-owned sites. However, it is unlikely that all of these will receive planning permission.</p> <p>Update and carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</p>

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	<p>In Progress – The Cabinet agreed to reduce the amount of Home Ownership Grant from £34,000 to £28,000 in 2010/11, but to increase the number of grants available from 5 to 6.</p> <p>Funding for a further 1 grant was carried forward from last year, totalling 7 grants available this year. 26 applications were received and a shortlist of 7 applicants was compiled, in accordance with the agreed criteria, with a further 8 applications placed on a Reserve List.</p> <p>6 grants have been completed. The remaining applicant has identified a property and is awaiting to complete the purchases.</p> <p>The Cabinet agreed to suspend the scheme for one year, and undertake a review in 2011/12 to consider its possible re-introduction in 2012/13, which will be added to the Action Plan for 2011/12.</p>
8	Affordable Housing	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 property of their choice from the open market through shared ownership, funded jointly by the Council, BHA and the applicant	Director of Housing	March 2011	<p>In Progress – The Cabinet has agreed the Scheme and letters have been sent to all Council tenants, in the first instance, to promote the scheme and to invite expressions of interest. Formal applications have also been invited. Housing applicants are now being invited to apply. The legal documentation with BHA is close to completion. It is anticipated that the first purchases will take place by the end of the 2011.</p> <p>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</p>

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> <p>(a) Chequers Rd, Loughton (b) Millfield, High Ongar (c) Thatchers Close, Loughton (d) Kirby Close, Loughton (e) Langley Meadow, Loughton (f) Harveyfields, Waltham Abbey</p>	Director of Housing	March 2011	<p>In Progress – The accounting difficulty that made Council House-building previously unviable will be overcome with the introduction of HRA self-financing in April 2012.</p> <p>The development potential of a number of difficult-to-let Council garage sites is therefore currently in progress.</p> <p>A report on the implementation of the Council's Treasury Strategy is due to be considered by the Cabinet in July 2011, which will identify an indicative borrowing requirement for a Council House-building Programme. A report of the proposed approach to undertaking a House-building Programme will be considered by the Cabinet by the end of 2011.</p> <p><i>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</i></p>
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	<p>In Progress – See (9) above</p> <p><i>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</i></p>
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	<p>In Progress – Management Board has asked the Director of Housing to lead a team of officers from across Directorates to consider and report on the issues involved with taking forward the Development and Design Brief for the Council's land-holdings.</p> <p><i>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</i></p>
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	<p>In Progress – At its meeting in March 2011, the Cabinet agreed to work in partnership with Hastoe Housing Association to undertake a "Planning for Real" exercise for Leader Lodge, with the local community – which will consider a range of options, with the outcome reported to the Cabinet later in the year.</p> <p><i>Update and carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</i></p>

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	<p>Delayed – The charity that owns the freehold is seeking professional planning advice to safeguard its options for the future use of adjacent land in its ownership, which has delayed progress.</p> <p>However, it is still hoped that agreement can be reached with the charity on terms for the assignment of the Council's lease to a housing association to enable the conversion scheme to go ahead.</p>
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> <p>(e) Producing a single housing application form for all HEHOC member authorities, to streamline the application process</p>	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Sept 2011	<p>In Progress – The Consortium has been considering and progressing these issues. EFDC will shortly start charging housing associations for advertisements; the Freesheet has been discontinued; an on-line housing application system is being developed. The other initiatives are at various stages of progress.</p> <p>Further details on progress will be provided in the Annual Report on the Homeoptions Scheme to the Housing Scrutiny Panel at its July meeting.</p> <p>Update and carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</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 two tenancy offers of vacant Council or housing association homes for which they had expressed an interest	Assistant Director of Housing (Operations)	October 2011	Achieved – This change to the Housing Allocations Scheme was agreed by the Cabinet on the recommendation of the Housing Scrutiny Panel, and has now been implemented.
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	<p>Achieved – In the event, the CLG provided more funding to the Council for homelessness prevention than previously, and the Cabinet agreed that all of this un-ringfenced funding should be spent on homelessness prevention.</p> <p>In addition to the continuation of funding the salaries of the Homelessness Prevention Officers, the Cabinet also agreed to provide additional grant funding to Epping Forest Housing Aid's Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme and to increase the amount available for the Council's Rental Loan Scheme.</p>

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	Achieved – Dedicated Council accommodation for vulnerable homeless adults with mental health problems, supported by community psychiatric nurses, is now being provided, in partnership with the North Essex Mental Health Foundation Trust.
18	Diversity	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2011	Achieved – The annual report will be made to the Housing Scrutiny Panel in 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	No Progress – Due to the workload and other commitments of the Principal Housing Officer (Information / Strategy)
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	In Progress – A number of the CIAs are awaiting sign-off, and the remainder are in progress.
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	Limited Progress – Following the lifting of the Ministerial Direction to produce a Development Plan Document on the numbers of pitches to be provided within the District within specific timescales, little work has been undertaken by the Forward Planning Division, due to workload and other commitments. However, the minimum number of pitches required by the East of England Plan have been provided to date, through the provision of planning permission through normal planning processes.

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	Not Undertaken – This was to be jointly-funded by Essex County Council (ECC) to assist with ECC’s bid for PFI funding from the Department of Health (see 23 below). However, due to the DoH deciding not to fund the PFI Bid, ECC withdrew its commitment for joint funding and the Strategic Review will now not be undertaken.
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	Not achieved – Due to the reduction in public spending from the Comprehensive Spending Review, the DoH has recently announced that it will not be funding Essex CC’s PFI funding bid.
24	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	Obtain TSA accreditation for the Council’s Careline Service	Housing Manager (Older People)	April 2011	Achieved – Following a rigorous external assessment, TSA accreditation has been received.
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	Achieved – The scheme was completed and fully occupied in February 2011, with EFDC receiving nomination rights to 8 flats, instead of the 4 previously envisaged.
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	Achieved – The development has been completed, and is due to be let in July 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	In Progress – See (4) above.
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	Achieved – Essex CC re-tendered HIA contracts across Essex, effective from June 2011, with a new specification. However, since EFDC's HIA (CARE) is provided in-house, it has been excluded from the re-tendering exercise. Negotiations with ECC have resulted in a 12% reduction in funding from ECC for CARE in 2011/12.
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	Achieved – Following discussions with the Trust, information on the housing need in the District for people with mental health problems has now been received, which will be incorporated within the Housing Strategy when it is next updated.
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	No Progress – No councils or housing associations have invited tenders for the provision of this service, to the knowledge of EFDC.
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	Deferred – The installation of the new equipment is a requirement if the Council is to have a partnering arrangement with another local authority control centre. However, officers are revising all the available options for business continuity, since a suitable partner has not yet been found. In the meantime, the Council continues to have an effective and tested business continuity arrangement in place, with Tunstall Telecom.

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	Achieved – All of the alarm systems have been upgraded.
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	Achieved - EFDC's Director of Housing chaired the Essex Supporting People Core Strategy Group, which has worked with the Head of Supporting People (SP) to assist with the implementation of reductions to the SP Budget. However, Essex CC cut the SP Budget by around 33% per annum from April 2011 - much more than the 12% envisaged. Significant reductions have been made to the funding of other Council sheltered housing providers in Essex (between 40% - 60%). However, the reduction to EFDC's funding has only been 6%, due to EFDC's efficient working practices.
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	Delayed – Due to the total withdrawal of Essex CC's Administration Grant for Supporting People, the SP Team is being reduced in size. Therefore, it has not had the required staffing resources to take forward this initiative.
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	Achieved – Information on empty properties has been updated on the website.
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	Achieved – 45 empty properties were brought back into use due to intervention by the Council in 2010/11.

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 (EDMO) by the Council	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	October 2011	<p>In Progress – It was originally envisaged that Pathmeads would enter into one standard agreement with the group of councils within the PLACE Scheme. However, was not possible.</p> <p>Nevertheless EFDC officers are currently pursuing the use of the Council's first EDMO in the District, in partnership with Pathmeads, for which a management agreement will be required. This agreement will also be used as a framework for any other EDMOs in the future.</p> <p>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</p>
38	Under-occupation	Write to all under-occupying Council tenants, encouraging them to transfer to smaller accommodation	Housing Options Manager	March 2011	<p>Delayed – Due to workload and other commitments no progress has been made to date.</p>
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	<p>In Progress – Hastoe has been working with a number of parish councils, notably Moreton Bobbingworth & The Lavers, to develop further rural housing schemes in the District.</p> <p>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</p>
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	<p>Achieved – The scheme was completed in February 2011, and was officially opened by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in May 2011.</p>
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	<p>Achieved – Further works have been undertaken to the Council's housing stock to ensure that none became non-decent.</p> <p>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</p>

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	In Progress – Consultants have been appointed to undertake a targeted Private Sector House Condition Survey for the Council, which commenced in June 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	Not yet required – This will be completed after the Survey has been undertaken, and reported to the Housing Scrutiny Panel. Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12
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	Achieved – This was delayed due to significant extra consultation being undertaken. However, following consultation with all residents and site owners, the Cabinet approved the new licence conditions in May 2011. Detailed inspections of all site park home sites are currently underway to identify any non-conformities, following which, new licences will be issued.
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	No Progress – This will dependent on the outcome of the LDF Issues and Options Stage (See (3)and (4) above). Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12
46	Housing Growth	In partnership with Harlow DC, Uttlesford DC and the Homes and Communities Agency, produce a West Essex Local Investment Plan (LIP), setting out the proposed approach and resources required for development and regeneration within the 3 districts	Deputy Chief Executive	Dec 2010	Achieved – The LIP has been produced, which the full Council adopted on 29 th March 2011.

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	Partly Achieved – Although no funding has been secured, a small pilot renewable energy scheme is in progress.
48	Energy Efficiency	Set up a Fuel Poverty Referral System in the District.	Environmental Co-ordinator	Dec 2011	No Progress – Due to workload and other commitments of the Environmental Co-ordinator
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	<p>In Progress – Cabinet has agreed in principle the sale of land at Millfield to Hastoe to develop 4 houses from straw bales.</p> <p>Hastoe has undertaken a consultation exercise with local residents and the Parish Council, and is currently preparing its planning application.</p> <p><i>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</i></p>
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	No Progress – To date.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-015-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing

Subject: Progress Report on the Work of the Temporary Part-Time Technical Officer - Private Sector Housing (Technical) Team

Responsible Officer: Sally Devine (01992 564149)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That, following the Cabinet decision in November 2009, the work carried out by the temporary part-time Technical Officer post in the Private Sector Housing (Technical) Team since July 2010 be noted;
- (2) That, in order to maximise the significant potential income to the Council from the New Homes Bonus through bringing long-term empty properties back into use (estimated to be £210,000 over the next 6 years for 2010/2011) the hours of the Technical Officer post be increased from 28 to 36 hours a week. This will represent an additional cost of approximately £6,500 per annum until April 2013 which will be funded by savings on the salaries budget and approximately £32,610 thereafter to be funded from an addition to the CSB growth list;
- (3) That, in order to sustain the potential high level of income to the Council through the New Homes Bonus, the position be made permanent; and,
- (4) That, in the light of the recent resignation of the current post-holder, agreement is given to advertising the post externally, if an internal appointment cannot be made.

Executive Summary:

In November 2009, Cabinet agreed the addition of a part-time, temporary post in the Private Sector Housing (Technical) team to assist with bringing empty properties back to use and to help with the licensing of the District's park home sites (C-052-2009/10). This was with the proviso that a report was made annually to the Cabinet on the work undertaken by the post, which is the reason for this report.

The Government has recently introduced the New Homes Bonus (NHB) which was paid for the first time in April 2011 and is a means of rewarding local authorities for increasing housing supply. The net gain in housing supply includes empty homes brought back into use through Council intervention. It is estimated that the Council will receive a reward of around £210,000 over 6 years, directly attributable to the number of empty properties brought back into use between just October 2010 and October 2011 alone. Further reward will be received for each year thereafter.

As a significant proportion of the empty properties recorded as having been brought back into

use since 2010 can be directly attributable to the appointment of the Technical Officer, and in order to maximise the NHB received on a continuing basis, it is recommended that the hours of the post are increased from 28 to 36 hours a week and that the current three year contract is made permanent. This will cost approximately £6,500 per annum (including on costs) for the remainder of the existing three year contract (until July 2013), to be met from savings on the Housing Directorate's salaries budget and that an addition is made to the CSB growth list of approximately £32,610 per annum to fund it thereafter.

Furthermore, in the light of the recent resignation of the Officer and the likelihood that it will not be possible to find someone with suitable experience and qualifications within EFDC to continue this work, it is recommended that permission is granted to advertise the post externally if necessary.

The additional income received from sustaining NHB income through these proposals, will be far in excess of the cost of the post.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

Cabinet have requested a report on the work of the new Technical Officer post following a review of the Private Sector Housing Team in November 2009.

The introduction of the New Homes Bonus by Government provides a real financial incentive to councils to target resources into bringing empty properties back into use. In the light of this it is recommended that the hours of the Technical Officer post are increased and the post is made permanent to maximise the reward the Council will receive. In addition, as the post is shortly to become vacant and it is unlikely that a suitable candidate will be found with EFDC to fill it, it is recommended that Officers are given permission to advertise the post externally, if necessary.

Other Options for Action:

- Continue the existing Technical Officer post at 28 hours a week for the remainder of the three year contact that will end in July 2013. However, this will not fully maximise the potential financial gain to the Council through the New Homes Bonus.
- Do not make the post permanent – However, this will not enable the potential income from the New Homes Bonus to be maximised on an ongoing basis.
- Do not advertise externally if necessary – However, this will result in the post not being filled if an internal appointment cannot be made, resulting in a significant loss of potential income from the New Homes Bonus.

Report:

1. In November 2009 the Cabinet considered a Report on the Review of the Private Sector Housing Team. This highlighted the fact that it was not possible for the existing staff within the Private Sector Housing Team to effectively deliver the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy 2007-09 and the Empty Property Strategy 2007-09, particularly with regard to bringing empty properties back into use. This area of work is of increased relevance in the current economic climate when the provision of an adequate supply of suitable housing is of paramount importance.

2. The report also addressed the issue that the Council had not re-issued licences for the mobile home sites in the District for a number of years. The introduction of the

Government's 'Model Standards 2008 for Caravan Sites in England' means that the conditions attached to current licences were out of step with current regulations and this would be an ideal time, therefore, to issue new licences to take into account the new Model Standards. The report highlighted the additional staffing resource that would be required to ensure that new standards are met in the first instance and are then maintained in the long term.

3. The Cabinet agreed that a District Development Fund (DDF) bid should be made to fund the cost of a part-time Technical Officer for 28 hours a week for three years to meet the legislative requirements of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and reduce the number of empty properties in the District. The DDF bid was successful and a Technical Officer was appointed in July 2010. The Cabinet also required that a report be provided to the Cabinet on the work undertaken by the post holder annually. This is given below.

Empty Homes

4. With the introduction of the new Technical Officer post a systematic procedure has been established for dealing with empty properties in the private sector. This begins with tracing and communicating with property owners or other interested parties to establish why the property in question has been left empty. Once communication has been established, the Technical Officer determines how best the Council can assist the owner in bringing the property back into use. This can be time consuming, as a successful outcome is often as a result of gentle but persistent pressure towards letting or selling. The Council can also offer financial incentives under the PLACE (Private Lease Agreements Converting Empties) Scheme or a Council Empty Homes Grant. Both of these provide significant funding to bring properties up to the Decent Homes Standard and, afterwards to provide affordable accommodation for tenants or owner occupiers. As each property is brought back into use, the Council Tax data is updated and the property is removed from the long-term empty property list.

5. The PLACE Scheme is funded by money originally received as a result of a consortium bid to the East of England Regional Assembly. The Scheme runs at no cost to the Council other than the administering process by the Technical Officer. It currently offers high level grants of up to £50,000 to an owner in return for leasing the property for 3 years to the Consortium's preferred partner, Genesis (formerly Pathmeads Housing Association), during which time they receive no rental income. However, the Portfolio Holder for Housing has recently agreed to the PLACE Scheme being extended to offer smaller grants and loans to owners of empty properties. This will allow an owner to take out a smaller grant to renovate their home and then lease it for an agreed period of time, dependant on the amount of grant, but also receiving some rent themselves during the lease period. Interest free loans will be available up to a maximum of £25,000 per unit on either a 'loan-to-sell' or 'loan-to-let' agreement. The loans are repayable and will be recycled back into the PLACE Scheme funds.

6. Where a solution to bring an empty property back into use is not immediately apparent, however, such as where an owner cannot be found or is uncooperative, Officers carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment. This takes into account a number of factors such as how long the property has been empty; issues regarding vermin, rubbish, unsightliness or public health; security and access to squatters. This information is then used to assess the most appropriate action to take and to prioritise each case for action. The action to be taken will range from monitoring the property on a periodic basis to enforcement such as Enforced Sale, Compulsory Purchase (CPO) or making an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO). Officers follow the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy in such cases, seeking Member approval where appropriate.

7. In addition to the PLACE Scheme now being made available to provide financial assistance to owners of empty properties, the Portfolio Holder has also agreed that PLACE funding can be used to support enforcement action where necessary. It is this funding, therefore, that that will be used to meet the initial expenditure in issuing an EDMO. This is a very useful facility newly available to the Technical Officer to tackle problematic empty properties and is expected to act as a real deterrent to uncooperative owners who may not have previously taken the threat of enforcement action seriously.

8. The new Technical Officer has spent half his time, or approximately 14 hours a week, dealing with empty properties for which there is a target in the Private Sector Housing Business Plan 2011-2013 of 30 per annum. The table below indicates the number of long term empty properties that have been brought back into use through Council intervention in recent years, clearly showing the contribution that the post has made towards meeting, and exceeding the Performance Indicator target, since the time it was filled in July 2010:

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/2011	Quarter 1 - 2011/12
Number of empty properties returned to use	0	4	4	3	45	8

9. With an established working procedure in place for dealing with empty properties, together with more versatile financial incentives available to owners and also financial support for enforcement action by Officers when needed, it is anticipated that recent successes in bringing empty properties back to use will be sustained and has the potential to increase if there are sufficient staff resources.

10. It also seems reasonable to assume that, with the increase in empty property work undertaken, there will be a greater awareness by owners of the role the Council can play in helping to bring their property back into use and also the enforcement measures that may be taken if necessary. As a result there may also be an increased demand for the service and, therefore, an additional call on the post to provide this assistance.

New Homes Bonus

11. The New Homes Bonus (NHB) was introduced by the Government in April 2011 to create an effective fiscal incentive to encourage local authorities to facilitate housing growth. However, the NHB also applies to long-term empty properties that are brought back into use, as well as new homes built. For the purposes of the NHB, empty properties are considered to be those that have been empty for 6 months and according to this definition there are currently approximately 800 empty properties in the District. The Bonus is calculated by comparing the number of dwellings for which Council Tax is collected in a local authority area from October in one year to October in the following year and 'rewarding' any net increase. The number of long-term empty properties is deducted from the total number of dwellings on the Council Tax list. This 'netting off' of long-term empty properties means that any reductions in the number has the same effect as building new homes and, conversely, any increases in the number of long-term empty properties will have the effect of reducing the reward that might otherwise have been paid.

12. The NHB was paid for the first time in April 2011 and is based on the difference in numbers of 'new homes' between October 2009 and October 2010. The Bonus is intended to be a permanent feature of the local government finance system. The amount of Bonus

received is based on the national average Council Tax band of the 'new homes' each year and the amount represented is paid in the following six consecutive years. Generally, district councils receive 80% of the NHB (with county councils receiving 20%). On this basis it has been calculated that in April 2012, the Council would receive around £210,000 over the following 6 years, if 30 empty properties are back into use, which is not an unreasonable estimate based on the fact that 45 empty properties were brought back into use in 2010/11. If a further 40 properties can be brought back into use between 2011 and 2012, this would result in an additional income of around £280,000 over the following 6 years, beginning April 2013.

13. While there is no effective ceiling on the number of new homes that may be built in an area, there is likely to be a limit on how many empty homes can be reduced and it may be that this level cannot be sustained after a period of time. However, it will continue to be important to reduce the numbers as far as practical and maintain them at that level, because an increase in the number of long term empty properties will have a direct negative impact on the NHB that might otherwise have been paid on new build properties.

14. In view of the income to be received by the Council through the NHB that is directly attributable to the number of empty properties brought back into use, it is essential that the Council maximises the numbers. It is therefore recommended that that the Technical Officer's hours are increased in order to help maximise the numbers. The Technical Officer post is currently for 28 hours a week, at a cost to the Council of £26,110 per annum including on-costs, with its responsibilities shared equally between empty homes work and park homes licensing (see below). Increasing the weekly hours to 36 hours would allow an additional day (50% more time) to be dedicated to bringing empty properties back to use. Funding a full time Technical Officer post will cost £32,610 per annum including on costs, or an increase of just £6,500 per annum. As it is unlikely that the post will be filled for at least 2-3 months, the cost of this could be funded by the savings represented on the salaries budget. In terms of the NHB, even if the post returns 30 empty properties back to use in one year alone, it will cover the whole cost of the post - for both park homes and empty homes work - for the following 6 years.

15. Regrettably, given the demonstrated successes in bringing empty properties back into use and the significant additional income generated through the NHB as a result, the Officer currently in post has resigned to take up permanent employment elsewhere. One of the reasons for his resignation was the temporary nature of the Technical Officer post, and the insecure nature of the post, with less than 2 years remaining. Under the terms of the recruitment freeze it is currently only possible to advertise the post internally. However, it appears unlikely that existing members of EFDC's work-force will have the necessary experience and/or interest to apply for the post for the remaining 21 months of its term. It is also recommended, therefore, that in order to maximise the amount of NHB the Council receives on an ongoing basis, the post is made permanent and permission is granted to advertise it externally. Even if an appointment can be made, if the post remains temporary, it is highly likely that the new postholder will seek new employment elsewhere before the end of the contract period, which will reduce the number of empty homes that can be brought back into use and therefore reduce the NHB on an ongoing basis.

Park Home Site Licensing

16. It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to issue licences on all their park homes sites and to decide what conditions to attach. In 2008, the Government produced new standards for permanent residential park homes sites, providing a framework upon which councils can base the conditions they attach when re-licensing sites.

17. The existing site licence conditions for park home sites in Epping Forest District had

not been reviewed for many years. New proposed standard park home site licence conditions for permanent residential sites were produced to ensure conditions are relevant, consistent and will adequately protect the health and safety of people residing at, or visiting, sites within the District. These were agreed by Cabinet in April 2011 following a second consultation exercise with residents and site owners (C-069-2010/11).

18. The Technical Officer spends approximately 14 hours a week on park home licensing issues. He was actively involved in the consultation exercise with residents and site owners prior to the Cabinet's decision in April 2011 and is now in the process of carrying out detailed inspections of all the permanent residential sites in the District before issuing new site licences. It is expected that all sites will have been issued with a new site licence by November 2011.

19. The Cabinet's decision also includes a requirement that, following a further consultation exercise, site licence conditions are also agreed for the Gypsy and Traveller sites that have planning permission as permanent residential sites and that holiday caravan sites are also licensed in accordance with the relevant model standards. The Technical Officer will be involved in both these areas of work and it is proposed that the focus is towards ensuring the holiday sites are up to a satisfactory standard in preparation for the likely high demand for camping accommodation during the period of the summer Olympics in 2012.

20. Once the sites have been issued with the appropriate licences, it will be necessary to monitor them to ensure compliance with the site licence conditions and deal with any matters from residents or site owners relating to the licence or management of the site. It is anticipated that this will continue to require two days a week of an Officer's time on an ongoing basis.

Resource Implications:

A difference of approximately £6,500 per annum (including on costs) for the remainder of the existing three year contract (until July 2013), to be met from savings on the Housing Directorate's salaries budget until April 2013 and that an addition is made to the CSB growth list of approximately £32,610 per annum to fund it thereafter.

Financial reward to the Council through the New Homes Bonus, estimated to be £210,000 for 2010/2011 over the next 6 years.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Act 2004
Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Dealing with empty properties removes blight and issues of nuisance and recycles properties providing valuable housing for residents which is in accordance with the Council's 'Safer, Cleaner, Greener' Strategy.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

The New Homes Bonus: Empty Homes Practitioner Briefing: December 2010 :
CLG The New Homes Bonus Final Scheme Design February 2011
The Private Sector Housing Business Plan 2011/13
Epping Forest District Council Empty Property Strategy

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There is a risk that once the 'easy wins' with regard to bringing empty properties back into use have been achieved, the increase in NHB will not be sufficient to meet the additional costs of the Technical Officer's salary going forwards. However, the Technical Officer will play an increasing role in preventing properties becoming long-term empties which will continue to have a positive financial benefit, as this would reduce the NHB received.

Equality and Diversity

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? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? N/A

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

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?
N/A.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-017-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development

Subject: Redevelopment of public toilets in Bakers Lane, Epping into a restaurant/takeaway whilst retaining toilet facilities for public use

Responsible Officer: James Issako Estates and Valuation (01992 564135)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To request the Council to approve a supplementary capital estimate of up to £5,000 to engage consultants to prepare and submit a planning application for the redevelopment of the toilet block in Bakers Lane, Epping for a restaurant/ take away service.

Executive Summary:

The report sets out proposals to convert the toilet block to a restaurant/ takeaway which will retain public use of the toilet facilities and to remove the adjacent Universal Superloo (USL) to Queens Road Buckhurst Hill to replace the Automated Public Convenience (APC). This proposal will reduce the current maintenance and lease costs to the District Council and to Epping Town Council and will result in valuable additional income from the restaurant/take away service.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

- The District Council will save £18,016 in lease charges currently paid to JCDecaux for the APC at Queens Road.
- The redevelopment is estimated to add £10,000-£15,000 p.a. to the District Council's rental income.
- The redevelopment of the traditional toilets would save the Town Council £6,000 p.a. in running and maintenance costs, and remove the liability for dilapidations.
- The public will have toilet facilities maintained to a high standard as required in catering premises. The intention is that the toilets would be open for at least the same hours as at present. However this will have to be negotiated with the ingoing lessee.

Other Options for Action:

- Not to redevelop the toilets, and continue paying rent for the USL in Bakers Lane and possibly the APC in Queens Road and the ongoing maintenance liability.

Report:

1. The District Council is the freehold owner of the land housing the traditional toilets in Bakers Lane near to the rear of Marks and Spencer, Epping High Street. The toilets are let to and maintained by Epping Town Council. The building is traditional brick construction with a pitched and tiled roof and is in need of substantial repair. Whilst a detailed survey has not been undertaken, a professional view is that a refurbishment of the whole block to bring it up to modern day standards would cost in the region of £20,000- £30,000. There is an adjacent USL.
2. The District Council has two separate Agreements with Messrs JCDecaux to provide four USL toilets located at, Bakers Lane, Epping; Quaker Lane, Waltham Abbey; Brook Path, Loughton; The Broadway, Loughton and one APC. The Agreement for the USLs is for 20 years until 2024, the Agreement for the APC in Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill was for 15 years and ends 28 September 2012. Under the terms of this Agreement the Council have to give 18 months notice to terminate and if not the term automatically renews for five years. To protect the District Council we have served notice.
3. The lease cost of the USL in Bakers Lane, Epping is £28,933 per annum and increases annually in line with the Retail Price Index or RPI.
4. The lease for redevelopment as a restaurant/takeaway would require the lessee to provide and maintain toilet facilities for the public free of charge.
5. The existing traditional toilet block would not be of sufficient size to house both public toilets and a small restaurant/takeaway. It is expected that a lessee would extend the building sideways to where the USL toilet is sited. The USL would be relocated to Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill to replace the APC.
6. Preliminary advice from our advisers, Messrs Bidwells, commercial property agents, has been positive about the demand for this type of facility in Epping and interest has all ready been conveyed by at least one major food outlet franchise.

Resource Implications:

A full repairing and insuring lease will provide an income to the District Council and reduce the current management and maintenance liabilities for both the District Council and Town Council and additionally the District Council will save on its costs of its lease of the APC at Queens Road Buckhurst Hill.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The proposal stems as part of an ongoing review of the Council's assets to ensure maximum income is being generated and the use of the assets is achieving best value.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Improved security of use, maintenance and management of restaurant toilets.

Consultation Undertaken:

Meeting with Epping Town Council resulted in a positive response to the proposal, EFDC planners, the Councils Parking Manager and Commercial Property agents.

Background Papers:

Lease agreements with JCDecaux.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

If the toilets are not redeveloped as proposed the District Council could have to deal with dilapidations estimated at between £20,000 - £30,000.

Equality and Diversity:

Queens Road is not fully accessible where as the USL does allow full compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2010.

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? No

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

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

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?
N/A.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-018a-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Environment

Subject: Transfer of Private Sector Sewers to the Water and Sewerage Companies and the impact on the Council's Private Sector Drainage Team

Responsible Officer: Qasim (Kim) Durrani (01992 564055).
Susan Stranders (01992 564197).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To note the transfer of most private sector sewers to Water and Sewerage Companies on 1 October 2011;
- (2) To approve the deletion of post ETD/03, Drainage Technician, from the establishment when the fixed term contract ends in November 2011.

Further recommendations in relation to this matter are set out in a separate report to be considered in the private session as they are likely to disclose exempt business under paragraphs 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 namely, information relating to an individual, likely to reveal the identity of an individual or relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

Executive Summary:

On 1 October 2011, most private sewers and lateral drains in existence immediately before 1 July 2011 that drain into a public sewer will become vested in the appropriate Water and Sewerage Company. There are some drains/sewers that will not transfer or will transfer later. The Council employs two officers whose main duties are to deal with private sector drainage. After the transfer there is a diminished role for local authorities in dealing with the sewerage of their areas and it is considered that there is no longer a need to retain ETD/03, the Drainage Technician's post. Some residual work will remain and due to the personal nature of this matter, an additional confidential report is to be presented in part 2 of this Agenda.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

Regulations to affect the transfer of most private sewers and lateral drains to the water and sewerage companies came into force on 1 July 2011. Because of the transfer, there is no requirement for the Council to retain two private sector drainage officers.

Other Options for Action:

- There are no options available with regard to the transfer or as to what systems transfer.

- The Council could retain the Drainage Technician's post ETD/03 but it is considered that this is not necessary.

Report:

1. Private sewers and lateral drains (i.e. those serving more than one property) are at present the responsibility of property owners and, in some cases, local authorities. The Government is going ahead with the transfer of ownership of most of the private sewers and lateral drains in England and Wales to the Water and Sewerage companies. It will bring about the biggest change in responsibility for sewerage services since 1937. The transfer is due to take place on 1 October 2011 (**Recommendation 1**).

2. Not all private sewers and lateral drains will transfer and local authorities will still have a statutory duty under various pieces of legislation to ensure public health is maintained. Guidance from Government is still pending which will include the definition of a 'sewer'. This is a complex area of law involving ownership of land and boundary issues and it is not possible to go into any further detail for the purpose of this report. However, it should be noted that the pending definition of a 'sewer' could have an potential impact on the number of sewers that remain in private ownership with a corresponding duty upon local authorities to intervene if problems arise and are not rectified by the owners.

3. Whilst is it not possible at this time to quantify the amount of private sector drainage work that will remain following the transfer, there will be a diminished role for local authorities in dealing with the sewerage of their areas.

4. The Council currently offers a private sector drainage service which is in excess of its statutory duty. Statutorily it is only required to ensure that drainage/sewerage issues are resolved by owners, if necessary by the service of statutory notices. This Council goes beyond that by providing a full investigation service plus assisting owners to undertake the required works. This level of service has been provided on the basis that drainage and sewerage is a legally and technically complex issue, and that if the Council is to meet its statutory duty in respect of protecting the public health, it is better to assist in this way rather than just be an enforcing agency. The Council therefore currently employs two officers whose main duties are to deal with private sector drainage/sewerage:

(i) Drainage Technician - ETD/03, who is on a fixed term contract which ends on 15 November 2011; and

(ii) Drainage Co-ordinator - ETD/02, who is a permanent member of staff.

5. As a result of the transfer it is considered that there is no requirement to retain the Drainage Technician ETD/03 post. It is therefore recommended that this post be deleted from the establishment when the contract expires on 15 November 2011 (**Recommendation 2**).

6. Other aspects of this matter related to post EDT/02 are referred to in the report in part 2 of this agenda.

Resource Implications:

The Council will save the salary and on costs associated with the post: ETD/03 - Scale 5/6 - £24,430 plus the cost of essential user car allowance £1,020.

EDT/03 is not entitled to a redundancy payment as they do not have two years continuous service.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council will still retain its statutory duties under the Building Act 1984, the Public Health Acts and the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It remains unclear as to whether these powers will be extended to include an enforcement remit over the water utility companies, who are currently exempt from such action.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

It is essential to address pollution and sewerage issues and maintain good public health in order to keep the residents of the district safe and healthy in accordance with the Council's Safer, Cleaner, Greener Strategy and its statutory responsibilities. It should also be noted that despite these legislative changes, which are predicated on making the situation simpler for residents/owners/landlords to understand, drainage law will remain complex for the ordinary citizen and it is likely that the Council will continue for some time to receive requests for assistance.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

CEF Report 11 November 2009 – Proposals for the revised Private Sector Drainage Team

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

To facilitate the transfer of private sector drainage to the Water and Sewerage Utility Companies is itemised in the Risk Matrix in the Environment and Street Scene's Business Plan 2011/2012. It is currently considered that there is no need to amend the risks associated with this task.

Equality and Diversity:

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? No

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

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

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?
N/A.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-019-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Leisure & Wellbeing

Subject: 2012 Olympic Games, High Level Operations Plan for the White Water Centre and joint working with Broxbourne Borough Council

Responsible Officer: John Gilbert (01992 564062)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To agree to joint working between Epping Forest District Council and Broxbourne Borough Council in respect of street scene issues; and**
- (2) To receive the final version of the City Operations Plan at a future Cabinet meeting along with any financial implications arising from “Look and Feel” and the Torch Relay.**

Executive Summary:

The Olympic venue for the white water canoe and kayak events is situated at the newly constructed Lee Valley White Water Centre located in Broxbourne Borough Council adjacent to this District's border in Waltham Abbey. The transport and taxi hubs are both located wholly within this district. Host authorities have had to draw up a high level operations plan to cover a range of operational and local issues to ensure that the events at the location are successful and contribute fully to the overall success of the Games. Broxbourne Borough Council has also produced a high level plan, and that will ultimately be merged with this Council's to form the overarching operations plan for the venue.

A key component of the delivery of the combined Operations Plan will be joint working between this Council and Broxbourne Borough Council, especially on matters pertaining to street scene.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

With less than 12 months to the Games, it is essential for host authorities to be able to demonstrate to LOCOG and Government that they are well prepared with their plans for delivering successful Games' venues.

Other Options for Action:

The only alternative action is to reject the principle of joint working which will render the Operations Plans for this Council and Broxbourne more difficult to deliver. This cannot be recommended due to the LOCOG requirements associated with Olympic venues.

Report:

1. The Olympic venue for the white water canoe and kayak events is situated at the newly constructed Lee Valley White Water Centre located in Broxbourne Borough Council adjacent to this District's border in Waltham Abbey. The transport and taxi hubs are both located wholly within this district. Host authorities have had to draw up a high level operations plan to cover a range of operational and local issues to ensure that the events at the location are successful and contribute fully to the overall success of the Games. Broxbourne Borough Council has also produced a high level plan, and that will ultimately be merged with this Council's to form the overarching operations plan for the venue.

2. The High Level Plan has to deal with issues such as:

- transportation to and from the venue;
- parking controls;
- safety;
- street trading & licensing issues;
- emergency planning;
- public health;
- street scene; and
- "look and feel".

3. The Plan is not yet complete, with the sections on public health and emergency planning yet to be completed. It will also be necessary to develop the management plans to deal with the identified risks and to also develop working protocols to ensure the delivery of these high level proposals. It is proposed that once the Plan is complete, and merged with the Broxbourne Plan, it is brought back for Cabinet consideration.

4. A clean and pleasant local street scene will be very important during the Games period. There will be a commitment required to additional street cleansing, local grounds maintenance and additional emptying of litter bins etc. In order to ensure that this is effectively and efficiently carried out, it is prudent for the two Councils to work closely together and to enable cleansing teams to operate on both sides of the border. Cabinet is requested to agree this general principle which will then enable officers to discuss how best this can be achieved with colleagues in Broxbourne and Hertfordshire.

Resource Implications:

Every effort will be made to accommodate additional work within existing work schedules and by rescheduling existing work to different times of the day. However, the main issues which may generate additional costs are:

- (a) enhanced street cleansing frequencies;
- (b) enhanced grounds maintenance works adjacent to or on the routes to and from the venue; and
- (c) "look and feel" not covered by the venue specific LOCOG allocation.

At this stage it is considered that the costs associated with (a) and (b) are minimal and officers will continue to try to amend existing schedules to create the additional capacity required. Item (c) will require a further report to Cabinet once the outcome of the LOCOG allocation for the venue is clearly understood. It is suggested that Cabinet may, at a future meeting, wish to consider allocating a budget for "look and feel" to enable towns, villages and communities not near to the venue to also be able to celebrate the Games through

decorations in their areas. This could require local communities to match fund to enable a small budget allocation to go further.

Legal and Governance Implications:

LOCOG require all host authorities to develop an operations plan for venues in their area. They provide a template which venue authorities should follow. Although this Council is not strictly a host authority, the Council is 'hosting' the transport hub, taxi hub and a park and ride facility at North Weald Airfield. Therefore, it seems appropriate for the Council to develop its own operations plan, based upon the LOCOG template, to cover those operational areas. This plan, if agreed, will be merged with the main Broxbourne BC Plan to form the final plan to be submitted to LOCOG.

A degree of joint working between this Council and Broxbourne will be required to enable a sensible use of resources throughout the event. It may also be prudent to look at authorising enforcement officers from both Councils to act on both sides of the border. Should this be considered appropriate, a further report will be brought to the Cabinet.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

It will be essential to ensure that the street scene in the area of the Games and the routes leading to it is in good condition for the duration of the events in Broxbourne. This will, in the main, be achieved through amending existing work schedules in order to keep additional costs to a minimum.

Consultation Undertaken:

Broxbourne BC.
LOCOG.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The Operations Plan has within it a comprehensive risk assessment section although the management plan for those risks has yet to be completed.

Equality and Diversity

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? No

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

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

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?

N/A.

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-020-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Safer, Cleaner and Highways
Subject: Street Numbering and Naming Charges
Responsible Officer: Julie Barnard (01992 564033)
Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To introduce charges for Street Numbering and Naming services (SNN) from the 1 October 2011 as set out in Appendix 2.

Executive Summary:

The street numbering and naming service is currently provided free of charge, with the exception of where a housing development changes after the initial consultation has been carried out. The process can involve a significant amount of resource both in staff time and associated costs, and at present the costs for this service are met by the Council tax payer rather than the developer or the new resident to the District.

The relevant legislation enables the Council to levy charges to cover costs incurred. The charge recommended is £49.00 for an individual property, plus £16.00 for each additional property thereafter. This has been based on the actual time taken to undertake the task and the costs of the required new computer software. It is anticipated that this will generate a net income of around £8,000 per year.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To recover the costs of the service from the developer or new resident in the district rather than being a cost to the council

Other Options for Action:

Take no action at this time and leave the current system of charging for amended schemes only but this does not cover the true costs of the total service

Report:

1. The provision of numbering and naming of streets and buildings is a statutory function and the Council is the only organisation with the authority to name and number new streets within the District.
2. The Council may charge for the provision of such a service, provided the person to whom the service is given has agreed to its provision. This excludes the statutory elements of the Street Numbering and Naming (SNN) function for which there should be no charge, but

allows for charges to be made for the discretionary elements on a “not for profit” basis therefore allowing the Council to recover costs incurred. The discretionary services are those that an authority has the power but not a duty to provide, and for SNN purposes these services include:

- (i) consultation and liaising with other external organisations such as the Royal Mail, Parish and Town Councils and Emergency services;
- (ii) the naming and numbering of new properties;
- (iii) alterations to either a name or numbers for new developments after initial naming and numbering has been undertaken;
- (iv) notifications to relevant organisations;
- (v) confirmation of addresses;
- (vi) challenges to existing official naming/numbering schemes/addresses held within the street naming and numbering records; and
- (vii) obtaining a postcode from the Royal mail.

3. The Council is currently undertaking the above free of charge, including the full postal address and post code. Whilst these are essential items of information for any developer to obtain connection of utility services to its properties, as a discretionary element they could be charged for. Although a developer could approach the Royal mail direct for a postcode, they would not provide one unless the remainder of the SNN process had been completed.

4. There are five types of SNN applications:

- (i) the addition of a house name or renaming of an existing property;
- (ii) a new development on an existing street;
- (iii) a new development to include naming of new streets;
- (iv) changes to a development after initial notification has been carried out; and
- (v) renaming of a street at residents’ request.

5. For developments of five or more properties, the developer is required to submit a letter with suggested names for roads within the development, a site location and layout plan, and where applicable floor layouts for any flats involved. The Parish or Town council will be advised as a matter of courtesy of the names requested by the developer. The Council has a policy of not naming a street after a person, but will allow historical references or location references e.g. Pimlico Way, Marylebone Road – referenced to the Central Line for a development in Ongar.

6. The Royal Mail will provide post codes for properties once they are in receipt of the official naming and numbering scheme from the Council, but the post code is held in “reserve” until they are notified by either the developer or owner that it is occupied or has been built, and only then will they publish the address on their website for access by organisations. Once postcodes have been provided by the Royal Mail, the legal certificates are issued with a covering letter to the developer and other relevant organisations are advised of the postal address.

7. For developments of less than five properties, the same process as described above is used, except that parish and town councils are not consulted.

8. For individual properties the provision of a name or number or the amendment of either, the resident will be required to submit a location plan clearly identifying the property, a letter confirming that they are the owner and where applicable a list of three names to be used. The same process as described for developments is then followed.

9. This process is resource intensive and is undertaken by an Environment & Street Scene Customer Services officer alongside other higher priority activity such as answering telephone enquiries from the public. The provision of a correct postal address is an extremely important issue, with organisations such as the Royal Mail, emergency services, utility companies and the general public all requiring an efficient and accurate means of locating and referencing properties.

10. The National Land and property Gazetteer (NLPG) is the definitive address list that provides unique identification for over 30 million residential and business premises and is now marketed commercially. The NLPG is a continually updated comprehensive database that is created by officers with local knowledge within each local authority, as they have the legal responsibility for street naming and numbering of property. As Local Authorities have the responsibility for addressing information, they are best placed for providing the most up to date information on the NLPG. The SNN process plays a vital role in the ongoing maintenance of both the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and the NLPG. Local Authorities have increasingly invested in creating the NLPG through their own LLPG and are committed to using it for all addressing requirements and services.

Options

11. The Council could consider continuing with a free service for this procedure as it is not intended to deter applicants from applying for address information. However, other Local Authorities who levy a charge have informed us that no significant drop in the level of applications were observed when charges were introduced. Those developers sought to obtain a postcode directly from the Royal Mail were told that no postcode would be allocated until they were in receipt of the official numbering and naming scheme from the Local Authority. As statutory utility companies also now require a post code before services can be connected, this would mean that developers would have to approach the Local Authority for this service

12. Given that it is unreasonable for the local tax payers to meet costs which should be met by developers and/or individual householders, it is suggested that a charging regime be introduced. Any such regime can only recover the actual costs of providing the service; a Council cannot set out to make a profit. An analysis of the time spent on officers dealing with these issues has resulted in the following proposals:

- (a) single property application: £44.00; and
- (b) multiple property application: £44.00 for the first property plus £15.00 per each additional property

13. In order for such a system to be efficiently delivered, the Council would need to acquire updated computer software. It is considered appropriate that the costs of this should be recovered, over a five year period, by those using it, resulting in addition to the above fees of £5.00 and £1.00 increasing them to £45.00 and £16.00 respectively (see appendix 2).

14. The charges for other eastern Local Authorities are shown at appendix 1. These charges would not be subject to VAT as this service is classed as non profit making and non business as there is no competitor available that can provide the service. It is also proposed to simplify the charging regime with just two categories, namely a single property or more than one property.

15. There are some other related activities the suggested charges for which are set out in appendix 2. These all use the same hourly rate and principles as set out earlier.

Resource Implications:

If the recommended fees are implemented, it is estimated that an income in the region of £8,000 per annum will be generated.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council carries out this function under the provisions of Sections 17-19 Public Health Act 1925 (naming of streets and alteration and indication of street names) and Sections 64 and 65 of the Town Improvements Clauses Act 1847.

The Local Government Act 2003 allows the Council to levy a fee for the discretionary elements of this service.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The service enables all streets, houses and buildings to be named and numbered correctly for identification purposes, allowing emergency services and postal deliveries to accurately locate properties.

Consultation Undertaken:

Other Local Authorities – see appendix for comparative charges.

Background Papers:

Local Government Acts
Spreadsheet of charges
Internal budgets
List of relevant other organisations

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There are no inherent risks associated with introducing these charges. Many local authorities have such regimes in place without adverse reaction and the charge levied seeks only to recover the actual costs of the service being provided.

Equality and Diversity:

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?

No

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

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

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?
N/A.

Appendix 1 - Charges made by other Authorities:

Charging for Street Naming and Numbering:

Types of charges	House name added/changed	Naming of a New Street	Development of 1-5 Props	Development of 6-10 plots	Development of 11 - 50 plots	Development of 50+ plots	changes in development after initial notification	Renaming of street at residents request	confirmation of address details
Chorley BC	£25	£100	£25 per plot	£20 per plot	£15 per plot	£10 per plot	£25 per plot	£100 + £25 per house	Not mentioned
Luton Borough Council	Free if primary residence or £36.75 + £6.30 for each add adj Prop (add charge for naming a building ie block of flats £12.60)	£115.50	all developments are charged at	all developments are charged at	all developments are charged at	all developments are charged at		£89.25 + £6.30 per house	not mentioned
			£36.75 + £10.50	£36.75 + £10.50	£36.75 + £10.50	£36.75 + £10.50			
			for each additional adjoining premises	for each additional adjoining premises	for each additional adjoining premises	for each additional adjoining premises			
South Cambs	£25 per house		for 1 Plot £25 2-5 plots £50	6-10 plots £100	11-25 plots £175 26-50 plots £250	51 -100 plots £400 101+ plots £500 + £5 per plot	£100 + £5 per property affected	£250 + £5 per property affected	£25 per property
Great Yarmouth	£40 standard charge	not mentioned	Free	Free	Free	Free	not mentioned	not mentioned	not mentioned
Uttlesford DC	£27		1 plot £37 on existing road 1-10 plots on new road £105	2-10 plots £73.00 on existing road	over 10 plots £73 + £5 per plot on exist road over 10 plots on new road £105			where a Parish/town council initiates a scheme to name and number an existing un named road a charge is levied to the council of £25 + £5.5 per property affected	
St Albans	£50 for adding/changing a name £200 for renumbering a house or building including sub dividing into flats	£130	£140 + street name charge if applicable	5-25 plots £280 includes street name charge if applicable	25 + plots £460			£450	Free
Open DC (Proposed charges)	Change of house name £25 Adding an alias to a numbered property £35 Change of building name (ie block of flats) £35 + £10 per unit Sub div of property or merge of a property £35 + £10 per property	New Street No Charge	New Individual Property No Charge	Redevelop of exist prop £35			£100 + £10 per property	Change of name £200 + £35 per property Street numbering where no numbering exists £200 + £35 per property	£25
North Hants DC	£105 per property	not mentioned	£105 per property	£105 per property	£105 per property	£105 per property	not mentioned	£525 per property	Not mentioned
Chelmsford	£20	No other charges							
East Cambs DC	(address issued/conf when replacement prop built as address may be diff after demolition of original Property £50 per property)	£150.00	£50 = 1 prop £75 = 2 - 5 Div of Properties same as numbering of Props - based on No. of props created	£100	£150 = 11-25 £200 = 26 - 50	£400 = 51-100 £750 = 101+	£100 + £10 per property	£28.00 per hour challenges/requests/revisions to existing street naming and numbering schemes	£25
		£225 if one name plate required							
		£325.00 two name plates required							
		£100 per additional name plate required							
Breckland Council	£25	No other charges							

APPENDIX 2: Proposed Charges to be used by Epping Forest District Council

House Name Change/Addition	Development of 1-5 Properties	Changes in initial development after initial notification	Renaming of street at residents request	Confirmation of postal address details
£49 per property	£49 for first property + £16 per additional property	£49 for first property affected + £16 per additional property affected	£49 for first property + £16 per additional property involved to be split evenly with all residents affected	£2.60 per certificate issued + £16 per property involved (admin charge)

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-021-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing.

Subject: Home Ownership Grants Scheme.

Responsible Officer: Lyndsay Swan (01992 564146)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That the suspension of the Home Ownership Grant Scheme continues in 2012/13, but that the position is reviewed again in twelve months time with a view to resuming the scheme in 2013/14 if the property market conditions have improved.

Executive Summary:

The Council introduced the Home Ownership Grant Scheme in 2008/09, originally offering secure tenants £34,000 to buy another property and vacate their current Council-owned property. It was aimed at first time buyers and allowed the Council to regain properties to let under the Allocations Scheme.

While initially the Scheme proved extremely popular, it became evident that applicants were finding it increasingly difficult to get a mortgage. As a result of this, the Council agreed not to offer any new grants in 2011/12 and to consider whether the Scheme should be resumed in 2012/13. On reviewing the situation again, however, it appears that circumstances in the mortgage market are no better. It is recommended, therefore, to continue with the suspension of the Scheme in 2012/13 but to consider the position again in 2012 with a view to resuming it in 2013/14 if property market conditions have improved.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Scheme was not offered to new applicants in 2011/12 because applicants were finding it increasingly hard to finance the purchase of suitable properties on the open market. As the current financial situation is no better, it is not likely that it would be any easier for applicants to get mortgages of a sufficient size. However, as it is possible that the situation may improve over the next twelve months, consideration should be given to opening the Scheme to new applicants in 2013/14.

Other Options for Action:

- As it is unlikely that enough applicants will be able to get sufficient finance to buy suitable properties, the option to re-open the Scheme in 2012/13 has been discounted.
- There is an option to offer the Scheme under different terms, such as offering fewer grants and (possibly) at a higher rate, however, this has been discounted as it is not felt to be cost-effective in terms of administration. Officers' experience is that when the Scheme is first

advertised, there is initially a lot of interest but the fall-out rate is high as most applicants do not meet the eligibility criteria and many of those that do are unable to borrow enough money to buy the property of their choice.

- The option to discontinue with the Scheme entirely has been discounted because it is felt that, in appropriate market conditions, it is a good scheme that gives Council tenants the opportunity of becoming home-owners and also makes Council properties available for re-letting. It is considered that when the financial situation improves, mortgage lenders will become willing to offer the finance required and the Scheme will be successful again.

Report:

1. The Home Ownership Grant Scheme was piloted in 2008/09 under the cash incentive scheme for first time buyers. The Scheme was offered to secure tenants who met the eligibility criteria agreed by Members, to enable them to purchase a home on the open market and release a Council-owned property for re-letting. Five grants were made available in 2008/09 at £34,000 and, as the Scheme proved very successful, another five were offered in 2009/10.

2. At the Cabinet meeting on 1 February 2010, Members agreed that the Scheme should continue but, in view of the relatively high interest shown by tenants at that time, the amount of individual grants should be reduced from £34,000 to £28,000. This would enable 6 grants to be provided in 2010/11 within the budget of £168,000 (C-074a-2009/10).

3. However, due to the financial climate, applicants began to find it difficult to obtain mortgages and some withdrew their applications. Other applicants on the reserve list were offered the opportunity to proceed and all five grants from the 2009/10 funding were eventually awarded although, because of the difficulty applicants were having in getting mortgages, the final one had to be given to an applicant shortlisted for a grant from funding for 2010/11. Moreover, due to the limited choice of applicants, a number of the vacated properties returned to the Council for re-letting were smaller than the more desirable, larger properties that became available when the scheme was first introduced.

4. In the light of these concerns, at the Cabinet meeting on 6 December 2010, Members agreed to suspend the Home Ownership Grants Scheme for 1 year in 2011/12 and to review the budget provision for Home Ownership Grants annually from 2011/12 (C-043-2010/11), which is the purpose of this report.

5. It is considered that as at present the circumstances in the mortgage market are no better than when the Cabinet last reviewed the scheme, there are no benefits in resuming the Scheme in April 2012. However, as the twin benefits of giving tenants the opportunity to become home-owners and making Council properties available for re-letting are of increasing importance, it is recommended that the situation is reconsidered in twelve months time, if market conditions improve.

Resource Implications:

No budgetary provision has been included within the Capital Programme for the resumption of the scheme in 2012/13.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Act 1985.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

N/A.

Consultation Undertaken:

No consultation undertaken.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There may be insufficient applicants for Home Ownership Grants, however, by suspending the Scheme until there is an observable improvement in the financial markets, this is less likely to happen.

A tenant may obtain a Home Ownership Grant through fraudulent means. However, safeguards are in place to minimise this.

Equality and Diversity

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? No

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

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
None were identified.

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?
None identified.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-022-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing.
Subject: Restrictive Covenants – Houses in Multiple Occupation
Responsible Officer: Roger Wilson (01992 564419).
Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That, subject to (2) below, authority be delegated to the Director of Housing to agree future requests to vary restrictive covenants on former Council houses, in order to grant permission for its use as privately-rented shared accommodation, provided all of the conditions set out in Paragraph 4 of the report are met; and**
- (2) That if any request results in more than 5 houses being used as privately-rented shared accommodation within any 400 metre radius, a report be submitted to the Housing Portfolio Holder for consideration.**

Executive Summary:

The purpose of the report is for the Cabinet to consider agreeing a policy for approving the variation of restrictive covenants placed on any sale of a former Council house, in order to grant permission for its use as privately-rented shared accommodation.

The Director of Housing does not currently have delegated authority to vary the restrictive covenant that prevents houses being used for privately-rented shared accommodation. It is suggested that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Housing to vary this restrictive covenant on request, provided that a number of requirements are met by the owner/freeholder, which are set-out in the report. It is also suggested that should any request result in more than 5 houses being used as privately-rented shared accommodation within any 400 metre radius, a report be submitted to the Housing Portfolio Holder. Furthermore, restricted covenants on leasehold flats would not be released due to legal complications

If the Cabinet decides that covenants should not be varied for this purpose, it is important that it should be aware that any owner/freeholder may apply to the Upper Tribunal who would take into account all of the circumstances. If the Upper Tribunal considered that some agreement should have been reached, then it can order the variation and substantial costs could be incurred by the Council.

Housing Management staff are aware of a large number of former Council houses on estates that appear to be being used as privately-rented shared accommodation without the covenant referred to being varied. If the policy is agreed and delegated authority is granted, then officers will contact the owners of these properties and make arrangements for the covenant to be varied, provided the new policy is being complied with.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

In order that the Council can have a clear policy on when restrictive covenants, preventing a former Council house from being used for privately-rented shared accommodation, will be varied.

Other Options for Action:

- Not to vary restrictive covenants and not to allow former Council houses to be used for privately-rented shared accommodation.
- To vary restrictive covenants preventing the owners/freeholders of former Council houses to use the property for privately-rented shared accommodation under different conditions to those set-out in the report.
- Not to submit a report to the Housing Portfolio Holder on whether the restrictive covenant should be varied should any request result in more than 5 houses being used as privately-rented shared accommodation within any 400 metre radius.

Report:

1. At its meeting on 28 February 2011, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the call-in of the decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder, approving the variation of a restrictive covenant placed on the sale of a former Council house in Waltham Abbey, in order to grant permission for either its current use or as privately-rented shared accommodation. The Committee referred the decision back to the Housing Portfolio Holder requesting that the decision be taken after certain conditions had been met by the owner and that the decision be published in the Council Bulletin. The Housing Portfolio Holder further agreed that a report be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting to consider a policy on the Council's approach in the future, to changes of use under the restrictive covenant, hence the need for this report.

2. The relevant term of the restrictive covenant included in the sale of former Council properties is as follows:

“Not to use the property other than as a private dwelling-house for occupation by a single family, subject nevertheless to the number of persons occupying the property not exceeding the number as specified in the Sixth Schedule of the Housing Act 1957 (now incorporated in the Housing Act 1985).”

3. The Director of Housing does not currently have delegated authority to vary this restrictive covenant on request, which does not allow a property to be used for privately rented shared accommodation. However, it is accepted that, nationally, properties are often used in this way. When a request is received from an owner/freeholder of a former Council property requesting that the Covenant be released, in every case a report currently has to be submitted to the Housing Portfolio Holder for consideration.

4. It is suggested therefore that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Housing to vary restrictive covenants in response to such requests, provided the following requirements are met by the owner:

- (a) That an agreement is entered into between the owner and the Council, varying the restrictive covenant to grant permission for its use as privately rented shared accommodation, rather than releasing the covenant in full, ensuring that the Council

maintains control over any future changes of use to the property.

(b) That the agreement includes conditions to ensure that occupiers do not cause any general management problems including anti-social behaviour, or excessive noise nuisance, or that their occupation does not create excessive parking problems in the area.

(c) That the agreement be terminated if there are any justified complaints from the local community.

(d) That the Council's reasonable legal and management fees relating to the execution of the agreement are met by the owner.

(e) That Planning Permission is granted for the change of use, which would also take into account available parking at the property and the surrounding area.

(f) That the Director of Housing is satisfied that the property complies with the Housing Act 2004 and the Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006

(g) That the Director of Housing has no reasons why the Council should not vary the covenant.

5. It is further suggested that should any request result in more than 5 houses being used as privately-rented shared accommodation within any 400 metre radius, a report be submitted to the Housing Portfolio Holder for a decision on whether the restrictive covenant should be varied.

6. The Cabinet is asked to note that, on 8 August 2011, the Housing Portfolio Holder agreed a report on the introduction of a Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme for students of the East 15 Acting School in Loughton, which is part of the University of Essex. The Scheme is purely voluntary and designed to help students of the University of Essex and their parents to make informed decisions about the quality of private sector accommodation available, and requires landlords to meet a clearly defined set of standards. As the Council has supported this Scheme, effectively encouraging students to be housed in accommodation across the District, including shared housing, it appears inconsistent not to agree to vary covenants for the same purpose (subject to the conditions set out in Paragraph 4) to enable students to live in former Council accommodation.

7. If the Cabinet does not agree a policy on the varying of this restrictive covenant and decides that covenants should not be varied for the purpose, it is important that it should be aware that any owner/freeholder may apply to the Upper Tribunal who would take into account all of the circumstances. If the Upper Tribunal considered that some agreement should have been reached, then it can order the release and substantial costs could be incurred by the Council.

8. The proposed policy on varying the restrictive covenant only applies to former Council houses. Although the same restrictive covenant is applied when flats are sold under a leasehold agreement, due to legal complications with other leaseholders in the block needing to be consulted and having to give their consent, any request would have to be refused. If any leaseholder of a flat applied to the Upper Tribunal, the Council would be able to argue that the property was not suitable for this purpose. No requests have been received from leaseholders for the restrictive covenant to be varied, and officers are not aware of any flats that are being used for this purpose without permission.

9. Housing Management staff are aware of a large number of former Council houses on

estates that appear to be being used as privately rented shared accommodation without the covenant referred to being varied. Many of these properties are around the Epping Forest College site and are used as student accommodation. If the policy is agreed and delegated authority is granted, then officers will contact the owners of these properties and make arrangements for the covenants to be varied, provided the new policy is being complied with.

Resource Implications:

Income of around £70 for each covenant varied, with the owner/freeholder meeting all of the Council's reasonable legal and administrative costs

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Act 1985
Housing Act 2004
Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Conditions in any Agreement varying the restrictive covenant to ensure there are no anti-social behaviour, noise or excessive parking issues

Consultation Undertaken:

The Tenants and Leaseholder's Federation will be consulted on the report at their meeting on 7 September 2011; any comments will be report to the Cabinet orally.

Background Papers:

Report to the Housing Scrutiny Panel 28 February 2011

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The main risk to the Council is if agreement is not given to vary covenants in appropriate cases, and the owner submits a successful application to the Upper Tribunal and is awarded costs against the Council.

There is also a risk that, in some cases where a variation is approved, it results in anti-social behaviour from the occupants. However, this would be overcome by the separate agreement with the owner, which would allow the agreement to vary the covenant to be terminated.

Equality and Diversity:

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? No

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

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

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?
N/A.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-023-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Planning & Technology
Subject: ICT Capital Requirements
Responsible Officer: David Newton (01992 564580).
Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To agree the proposed projects for the financial year 2012/13 and;
- (2) To include £170,000 in the Capital programme for ICT projects for the financial year 2012/13.

Executive Summary:

Historically, ICT were allocated £300,000 per annum (pa) in the Capital programme for the updating and maintenance of the core technical infrastructure. Modernisation of the infrastructure has now been completed. Following the revision of the Capital programme, this allocation has been removed and now all proposed ICT projects will be considered on an annual basis.

Estimated project costs for the following financial year 2012/13 are highlighted below.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The projects detailed below are necessary to maintain the current ICT infrastructure, improve business continuity within the Council and allow staff to fully utilise the benefits available from ICT systems.

Other Options for Action:

- To not approve one or more of the proposed projects, but continued reliability in the ICT infrastructure could suffer and the Council would be vulnerable in the event of a Disaster Recovery (DR) situation.

Report:

Telephony

1. Currently telephony is provided by four Private Automated Branch Exchange (PABX) switches. Although reliable, these ageing switches are expensive to maintain (£12,000pa) and spare parts are becoming increasingly difficult to source.
2. During this financial year, it was intended to introduce a pilot Voice Over Internet

Protocol (VOIP) switch for approximately 20 staff. This technology uses the Local Area Network (LAN) instead of separate telephony cabling. It will reduce both the connection charges to remote sites and the high annual maintenance charge for the switches.

3. Recent concerns regarding telephony were highlighted during the recent DR exercise and have raised the priority of this project. A pilot scheme is no longer considered adequate.

4. Another potential solution has been identified which would not use physical switches but would use the internet connection to provide a Cloud based (out hosted) solution. This appears to offer a superior alternative from a DR perspective, although it may have a higher long term impact on revenue expenditure. This is a relatively new technology and further analysis is on-going.

5. Whichever solution is selected, the budget allocation for the initial pilot project will be insufficient for a more comprehensive implementation.

6. The estimated cost of this work is £40,000.

7. The Voicemail system is also nearing end of life and the current supplier has presented an initial quotation of £19,000 to upgrade. However, it is anticipated that either of the telephony options detailed above, would also incorporate a voicemail system, thus removing this additional cost.

8. Over the last 12 months, over 45% of all calls made by the Council were to mobile phones, which cost £16,000PA. The introduction of a Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) Gateway will allow cheaper calls to mobile phones.

9. The integration of Short Message System (SMS texts) into Outlook is also being investigated.

10. The estimated cost of this further work is £5,000.

Disaster Recovery

11. The initial scope of the DR project has changed as this complex project has evolved. The original intention was to only have data stored at a remote site. Therefore, the Capital setup costs within the existing allocated budget will not be sufficient to implement a full 'hot' failover solution. The project can be implemented in stages, starting with the initial scope using the existing allocated budget, but additional funding will be required in the following financial years. A phased approach to implementation is preferable from both a financial and ICT resource perspective.

12. The estimated cost of this work is £80,000.

Email Archiving

13. Email is an essential tool for all staff and is increasingly being used as a filing repository for important messages and document attachments. This has led to capacity and backup issues with the servers concerned. An archiving solution is urgently required to resolve these problems and also to allow staff more self-service options.

14. The estimated cost of this work is £15,000.

Document Management:

15. The next phase of the Information at Work (I@W) project will involve the purchase of additional hardware for the Council Tax section.

16. The estimated cost of this is £30,000.

Resource Implications:

At this early stage it is not possible to calculate exact costings for these projects. However, it seems prudent to allow an amount of £170,000 for the financial year 2012/13. It is likely that revenue savings will be generated by these projects and further reports will be made on individual projects as they progress.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There is a risk to the Council should the whole Civic Offices site be lost in a major DR incident. The loss of accommodation, at least partial, has been identified as a major concern. In addition, any disruption to the ICT infrastructure will have a significant impact on staff's ability to carry out their duties.

Equality and Diversity

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? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? N/A

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
None.

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?
N/A.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-024-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing
Subject: Sheltered Housing Scheme - Jessopp Court, Waltham Abbey
Responsible Officer: Roger Wilson (01992 564419).
Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That, following Essex County Council's decision to cease the provision of on-site 24 hour staffing at Jessopp Court, Waltham Abbey, the scheme be re-modelled to a sheltered housing scheme and an additional post of 1 FTE Scheme Manager be added to the Council's Establishment;**
- (2) That additional income of around £9,000 per annum received from Essex County Council's Supporting People Team for the provision of housing-related support services at Jessopp Court, be used to part-fund the new Scheme Manager post, which (when taking into account the additional income from self-funding tenants of around £2,600 per annum) leaves a remaining amount of around £9,830 to be met from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA);**
- (3) That the Day Centre provision at Jessopp Court continues, with the Council entering into an agreement with Essex County Council for the use of the lounge and the provision of associated cleaning services;**
- (4) That the transfer of the two cleaning staff employed by Essex County Council under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) arrangements be noted and that the net cost of £10,500 for the cleaning service be funded by the HRA; and**
- (5) That, subject to legal advice regarding the contractual rights of staff, a review of the cleaning service at Jessopp Court be undertaken to ensure that the full cost of the cleaning service is met from income received from tenants' cleaning charges and the charge made for this service under the Day Centre Agreement in the future.**

Executive Summary:

Jessopp Court, Waltham Abbey was built to meet the needs of older people who required a higher level of support than that provided in sheltered accommodation. The scheme was described as being "very sheltered housing", or "housing for frail elderly people", and comprises 39 flats.

The Council entered into an agreement with Essex County Council, with the Council being responsible for the landlord functions and the County Council providing twenty-four hour

waking cover, including personal care to tenants. The County Council also operates a Day Centre at the scheme. Essex County Council has advised the Council that the scheme does not meet with the new Extra Care Standards and there is no scope for adapting the premises. Therefore, the County Council is intending to phase out the provision of an on-site twenty-four hour Care service, which will leave little alternative but for the scheme to become sheltered housing in the future.

Social Care will be undertaking assessments of residents' care needs. Following these assessments, officers will be meeting with Social Care to discuss the level of care services that will be provided at the scheme.

The Council will need to appoint a full-time Scheme Manager at Jessopp Court. Supporting People funding will be granted by the County Council for the Scheme Manager Service at Jessopp Court. This will result in £9,000 per annum being received, which (when taking into account some additional income from self-funding tenants of around £2,600 per annum) leaves a remaining amount of £9,830 per annum to be met from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

It is also recommended that the Council enters into an agreement with Essex County Council for the continuation of the Day Centre.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

Following the County Council's decision, the Council has little alternative but to provide a Scheme Manager Service at Jessopp Court, in order to deliver housing-related support and monitor the well-being of the residents living there. In addition, it is suggested that the well-attended Day Centre provision continues.

Other Options for Action:

- Not to provide a Scheme Manager service.
- To only agree the appointment of a part-time Scheme Manager with the remaining hours being met from existing resources, with a detrimental and reduced service to existing residents at other schemes as a result - with the associated increased risk to both residents and the Council.
- To provide the Scheme Manager service from existing resources, again with a detrimental and reduced service to existing residents at other schemes as a result – and again with the associated increased risk to both residents and the Council.
- Not to continue to provide a Day Centre at Jessopp Court.

Report:

1. Jessopp Court, Waltham Abbey was opened in January 1992 as a joint initiative with Essex County Council's Adult Social Care, and was built to meet the needs of older people who required a higher level of support than that provided in sheltered accommodation. The scheme was described as being "very sheltered housing", or "housing for frail elderly people", and comprises 39 flats with all occupants being secure Council tenants.

2. In April 1993, the Council entered into an agreement with Essex County Council which set out the obligations of each party. In simple terms, this agreement can only be terminated on four months' prior written notice by either party. Under the agreement, the

Council is responsible for the landlord function and therefore undertakes repairs and maintenance of the building, and ensures that tenants meet their Conditions of Tenancy. The County Council is responsible for providing twenty-four hour waking cover, including personal care to tenants, responding to emergency alarm calls on a twenty-four hour basis and cleaning communal areas.

3. Under the agreement, Essex County Council also operates a Day Centre in one of the communal lounges at the scheme 5 days each week, which is very well attended by older people in the community and includes some Jessopp Court residents. The County Council is responsible for providing personal care to all those attending the Day Centre.

Transition of Jessopp Court to Sheltered Housing

4. Essex County Council has advised the Council that Jessopp Court does not meet with the new Extra Care Standards and that there is no scope for adapting the premises to make it fit for purpose as an Extra Care Scheme. Extra Care Housing has many of the traditional features of sheltered housing but also provides personal and domiciliary care and support and is designed for people with limited mobility. Residents' flats have wheelchair access and level access shower rooms, none of which are available at Jessopp Court.

5. Therefore, Essex County Council has served notice to terminate the contract with the Council on 28 November 2011 and is intending to phase out the provision of an on-site twenty-four hour Care Service. This will result in allocations in the future being made only to residents who have a sheltered housing need, a lower level of need than currently accommodated at Jessopp Court. Social Care will then provide the same standard of care services as are being delivered at other sheltered housing schemes and in the community. As a result, there is no real alternative but for the scheme to become sheltered housing in the future.

6. As part of the transition, Social Care staff are undertaking assessments of all Jessopp Court residents' care needs. Following these assessments, officers will be meeting with Social Care to discuss the level of care services that will be provided at the scheme.

7. Those remaining residents with care needs will continue to have this service provided by Essex County Council, although this will almost certainly be delivered by visiting care workers rather, than on-site staff. The decision on whether there is a need for a County Council-funded night care assistant for a period of time will be based on the level of care required by the remaining residents.

Appointment of a Full-time Scheme Manager at Jessopp Court

8. Due to the County Council's decision, the Council will need to appoint a full-time Scheme Manager at Jessopp Court to provide housing-related support to the residents, including the management of the transition. Officers have explored the possibility of providing all or part of the new full-time post from existing resources, but this is not possible without resulting in a detrimental and reduced service to existing residents at other schemes, with the associated increased risk to both residents and the Council.

9. This is because all the existing Scheme Managers are already covering large numbers of properties in both sheltered housing schemes and on housing estates. In addition to the housing-related support they provide, they also have responsibilities for visiting all sheltered scheme residents on each duty day, visiting residents on housing estates according to their need, organising social activities, receiving alarm calls from sheltered housing residents whilst on-site, testing alarm systems and completion of Resident Support Plans for more vulnerable residents.

10. The Government's "Supporting People" programme has been in place since April 2003. Under this regime, the costs of housing-related support services in respect of Council tenants have, until recently, not been met from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), but from the County Council's Supporting People budget.

11. However, following the Government's cuts to local government grants from April 2011, Essex County Council has reduced its Supporting People budget by around 30% (approximately £10m per annum across the County), which is having a significant effect on supported housing provision.

12. Due to the Council historically providing a cost-effective sheltered housing service, it has been established that this Council's Scheme Managers support more tenants than any other local authority provider in Essex. The Council's reduction in Supporting People funding in this area has only been 6% (£14,000 within the HRA per annum) from 2011/2012, compared to other local authority housing providers in Essex, who are reporting funding reductions of around 40%-50% for sheltered housing. This is mainly due to their high historical costs and the fact that fewer older tenants in other districts are being supported by Scheme Managers, compared to those in the Epping Forest District.

13. This demonstrates that this Council's Scheme Managers' workload is already higher than any other authority in Essex, which validates the view that the new Jessopp Court duties cannot be covered from existing resources, without substantially reducing the level of service to older residents in other schemes.

14. Following the transition to sheltered housing, it is proposed that the new Scheme Manager at Jessopp Court will be given additional responsibilities, including giving some much needed support to the Council's Careline Centre, including the testing of hard-wired and dispersed alarms in the community.

Funding of the new Scheme Manager Post

15. Essex County Council has agreed that Supporting People funding will be provided to the Council for the new Scheme Manager service at Jessopp Court at the same levels as for the Council's other sheltered housing schemes. This will result in an income to the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) of around £9,000 per annum. Further income will be received from self-funding tenants (as explained in Paragraph 16) which will result in additional income of around £2,600 per annum. Therefore, the net cost of an additional full-time Scheme Manager for Jessopp Court would be £9,830 per annum including on-costs, funded from the HRA. Due to staff savings on the salaries budget as a result of the external recruitment freeze, this additional cost can be funded from the existing salaries budget, with no supplementary estimate being required.

Tenants' Service Charges

16. All tenants living at Jessopp Court currently pay Essex County Council for the provision of on-site support staff. However, when this service is withdrawn, residents will only pay for the care provided under their agreed Care Plan, dependent upon need. Therefore, the amount they pay to Essex County Council in many cases is likely to reduce, although this is dependent upon the level of their care plans. When the scheme becomes sheltered accommodation, residents will pay the same Scheme Manager charge that is paid by residents at other Council schemes, although all of those who receive housing benefit will have this charge met through housing benefit. Income from those who pay themselves (self-funders) will be additional income to the Council and will contribute towards the costs of the new Scheme Manager. At the time of writing, there are 6 self-funders living at the Scheme,

which will result in additional income of around £2,600 per annum.

Jessopp Court Day Centre

17. It is intended that the provision of the Day Care facility at Jessopp Court continues, although there will need to be an agreement in place between the Council and the County Council, with the County Council paying an annual fee for the use of the communal lounge to cover wear and tear on furnishings etc. and will include the additional cleaning hours provided by the Council's cleaner.

Cleaning Service

18. The cleaning service at the scheme is currently the responsibility of Essex County Council and is provided by two part-time cleaners working a total of 55 hours per week. As they are employed by Essex County Council's contractor "Essex Cares", which provides the Care Service, they must be transferred under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) arrangements. Under TUPE, the Council has no alternative but to accept the staff on their current terms and conditions. The total cost of employing the two members of staff is £23,500 per annum including on-costs.

19. As explained in Paragraph 17, the Council will receive income towards the cost the cleaning staff under the Day Centre Agreement for provision of a cleaning service for the Centre. In addition, all tenants will pay their cleaning charge (which forms part of their service charges) to the Council rather than Essex County Council. It is anticipated that this income will reduce the Council's costs for the cleaning service by around £13,000 per annum, to around £10,500 per annum.

20. Following the transition to sheltered accommodation, it is intended to review the cleaning service subject to legal advice regarding the contractual rights of those employees transferred. This is due to the cleaning hours currently being delivered being considered to be higher than will be needed to be provided when Jessopp Court becomes sheltered accommodation. Furthermore, the Council should not continue to subsidise the cleaning service particularly as, at other sheltered schemes, tenants' cleaning charges generally cover the full cost of the service.

Resource Implications:

Funding of an additional full-time Scheme Manager post at a cost of £21,430 including on-costs with £9,000 being met from additional Supporting People funding, £2,600 being met from resident charges and around £9,830 per annum from the HRA.

Funding of the cleaning service at a cost of around £23,500 per annum, which when taking into account charges to tenants will result in around £10,500 per annum being met from the HRA.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Act 1985.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None identified.

Consultation Undertaken:

A residents meeting was held in May 2011, in order to explain the position and was attended by many of the residents and some of their family members. The meeting was led by Social Care, with Council officers present who explained the concept of sheltered housing. In addition, Social Care are holding "drop-in" sessions at the scheme where residents and their families can obtain any further advice they need. An Advocacy Worker has also been made available to assist residents.

Residents and their families raised concerns about the changes and have contacted the national press and forwarded a petition to Essex County Council.

Ward Members and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation have been advised of the matter.

Background Papers:

Minutes of meeting with Social Care.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The main identified risks are as follows:

(i) If an attempt is made to fund the new post from existing resources, this would result in a detrimental and reduced service to existing residents at other schemes. This increases the risk to residents of the Council being unable to respond to them sufficiently quickly in the event of an emergency, and the risk to the Council of any resultant action.

(ii) The Council will be taking on responsibility for staffing at Jessopp Ct, and the associated provision of support, which has the same risks as for all of the Council's other sheltered housing schemes.

Equality and Diversity:

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? No

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

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

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?
N/A

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-025-2011/12
Date of meeting: 12 September 2011



Portfolio: Environment

Subject: Review of Recycling Bring Schemes (Recycling Banks)

Responsible Officer: Qasim Durrani (01992 564055)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That in view of the success of the kerbside recycling scheme and the costs of bank maintenance, collection and processing, all bring schemes relating to the collection of cans, aerosols, and plastics be discontinued; and**
- (2) That, subject to recommendation (1) above, tenders be sought for the provision of bring schemes for the collection of paper, textile, glass and tetrapacks (cartons) with only those sites which generate a surplus for the Council being retained and with the responsibility for the acquisition and maintenance of bring banks resting with the bring bank provider.**

Executive Summary:

The Council has a total of 23 recycling bring schemes (also called bring banks) across the District. These schemes have been introduced over a number of years when only a limited kerbside recycling collection service was offered to residents.

The Council now provides a comprehensive kerbside recycling collection service. All of the materials accepted at the recycling bring schemes are now collected directly from residents' properties. Residents can also dispose of all normal recyclables and heavy or bulky objects such as metal or large electrical items via the Council's chargeable bulky waste collection service or at County Council Household Waste Recycling Centres. Many retailers will also recycle old electrical equipment when new goods are purchased.

It is therefore not surprising that the usage of some of the bring schemes is in decline. The need to upgrade and modernise the recycling bring schemes offers an opportunity to review the viability of these sites. This report therefore reviews all the sites and suggests that only those which generate net income for the council, either directly or through recycling credit, should be retained. Furthermore, given the investment that would be required to re-provide the containers at some of these sites, it is suggested that the Council transfers responsibility for the containers to the recycling processors through a tendering exercise.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure that only recycling bring schemes which generate income for the Council are retained and that responsibility for acquisition and future maintenance are transferred to the recycling processor(s).

Other Options for Action:

The alternatives are:

- continue as present incurring expenditure of between £30,000 and £50,000 for the upgrading of facilities;
- cease all bring schemes irrespective of viability on the basis that they contribute only minimally to the Council's overall recycling performance. This would also result in some well used sites becoming unavailable for residents as well as foregoing some income (c.£38,000 per annum)

Report:

1. Since the last change to the Council's kerbside recycling arrangements, the range of materials collected directly from residents' homes now includes paper, card, glass, plastic bottles, food containers, tins and aerosol cans and (on appointment) textiles. This is of course in addition to garden and kitchen waste collection. This has resulted in the use of the Council's bring schemes (recycling banks) diminishing.

2. The amount of recycling material collected varies considerably depending on the location of the scheme. Given that the overall amount of recyclable materials collected within the district remains around the same, it could be argued that residents are preferring to use the more convenient kerbside collections than make journeys to the Council's bring schemes, even as part of other visits e.g. to supermarkets. Details of the Council's sites and materials collected are set out as an appendix to this report.

3. The Council is not charged for collection at the eighteen textile and twelve paper locations where they are collected as these materials have a relatively high resale value. Instead, the collection costs are absorbed by the contractor who then pays the Council an amount per tonne. The level of income received is dependent on the market value of the recyclables. The contractor provides the containers for all of the textile and paper collection schemes and carries out all the statutory safety checks and inspections.

4. The situation with the other materials is different in that collection costs exceed the value of the materials collected. With the exception of glass, other materials currently generate a net cost to the Council even after taking recycling credit into account. Whilst glass does cost the Council money to collect, because of its weight the recycling credit received from the County Council results in a net benefit to the Council. The table in the resources section of this report sets out the relevant detail.

5. Bring schemes make only a modest contribution to the Council's overall recycling performance. Glass, cans and plastics make up around 0.7% of the total, and paper and textiles around 0.44% to make a total of around 1.44% of the Council's recycling performance for 2010/11 of just over 59%. However, they do generate an overall surplus to the Council of around £38,000 per annum, although this very much depends upon usage and the value of the material collected at any given point in time, and commodity prices do vary considerably over time.

6. The majority of the recycling banks owned by the Council are now very old and are at the end of their useful lives. If they are to continue to be used then they must be either replaced or completely refurbished at significant expenditure. As an owner of recycling banks, the Council is responsible for their safe operation including their lifting equipment. In addition there are statutory inspections and checks that the Council has to carry out. This is an onerous responsibility which must be taken seriously due to the harm that could be caused if a recycling bank were to fall whilst being lifted and emptied. As the paper and textile banks are provided by the contractor these responsibilities are covered by them as part of the service provision.

7. Given the above usage and the need for expenditure on the Council owned banks, the following course of action is suggested:

- (a) in view of the success of the kerbside recycling scheme and the costs of collection and processing, all bring schemes relating to the collection of cans, aerosols, and plastics be discontinued (**Recommendation 1**);
- (b) tenders be sought for the provision of bring schemes for the collection of paper, textiles, and glass only (**Recommendation 2**); and
- (c) the responsibility for the acquisition and maintenance of bring banks be transferred to the bring bank provider(s) through the tender process (**Recommendation 2**).

8. Once tenders are received an analysis will be undertaken to determine which sites remain financially viable for the Council and only those which generate income either direct or through the receipt of recycling credit will be recommended for retention.

Resource Implications:

At the present time only paper and textiles generate surplus income for the Council direct (i.e. without factoring in recycling credit). All other materials generate a loss although at some sites the tonnages of glass are such that when recycling credit is factored in, a surplus is generated. Tetrapacks banks are collected free of charge generate very low tonnages from which the Council receives a very slight gain through recycling credit payments. . The table below, which excludes tetrapacks, sets out the data for 2010/11:

Material	Tonnage collected	Cost of collection	Income from resale	Recycling credit income	Total surplus or deficit
Aluminium	2.88	£1,008		£155	-£853
Steel	12.85	£4,498		£693	-£3,805
Glass	327.36	£3,261		£17,648	£14,387
Plastic	10.21	£4,596		£550	-£4,046
Paper	154.46		£695	£8,327	£9,022
Textiles	65.39		£19,618	£3,525	£23,143
Net income					£37,848.00

If the suggestion of only collecting those materials which provide a surplus is accepted, total income to the Council, based upon 2010/11 collection costs and recycling credit levels, would be £46,552, an increase of around £8,700 per annum.

The recommendation is that all banks should be provided and maintained by contractors. The costs of this are reflected in the amounts per tonne received by the Council. If the Council wishes to retain any of its current banks then, due to their condition, a significant capital investment (c. £30,000) will be required or they will need to be rented or leased. Both these options will impact upon the revenue budget.

Legal and Governance Implications:

A tendering exercise for the management of the bring schemes was undertaken during 2010, but due to the need for wider consideration of the schemes and a rapidly changing market place, the tender outcomes were not taken before Cabinet and the outcomes are no longer valid. A new tender exercise is recommended.

The Council is not obliged to provide bring schemes as part of its overall waste management responsibilities.

Any changes in the bring schemes will require a modification to the service plan which forms part of the Essex Waste Inter Authority Agreement. This will trigger an individual review so as to ensure that any action by this Council does not adversely impact upon the County (as the waste disposal authority) and other districts/boroughs (as waste collection authorities).

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Although only making a modest contribution to the Council's overall recycling performance, the bring schemes do provide a useful service in enabling residents to recycle materials when, for example, they have gathered a lot of material but the next collection is some time away. That said, there are additionally a number of recycling centres operated directly by supermarket chains and materials can also be recycled at the County's Household Waste Recycling Centres.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

Essex Waste Inter Authority Agreement.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There are no fundamental risks associated with the recommendations. Removing the responsibility for the maintenance and checking of bring banks will reduce the current risks to the Council of an incident involving an old and/or poorly maintained bank.

Equality and Diversity

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

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

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

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?
N/A.

Appendix 1 – Details of sites and materials collected

C = Banks provided & maintained by contractor

EF = Banks provided & maintained by EFDC

	Town	Location	Material collected					
			Glass	Cans & Aerosols	News & Pamphlets	Textiles	Plastics	Cartons
1.	Buckhurst Hill	Roding Valley Station	C			C		
2.	Buckhurst Hill	Queens Road (station) car park	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
3.	Chigwell	Limes Avenue shops	EF	EF		C	EF	
4.	Chigwell	Roding Lane (opp. David Lloyd)	C			C		
5.	Daws Hill	Gilwell Park	EF	EF				
6.	Debden	Service Road adj. to College	C	EF		C	EF	
7.	Epping	Cottis Lane car park	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
8.	Loughton	Oakwood Hill	C			C		
9.	Loughton	Plume of Feathers PH	C	EF		C	EF	
10.	Loughton	Sainsbury's supermarket	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
11.	Loughton	Traps Hill car park	C	EF	C	C	EF	
12.	Loughton	Loughton Way shops	C			C		
13.	Nazeing	LV car park, Dobbs Weir Road	EF	EF				
14.	North Weald	Hurricane Way	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
15.	Ongar	Short stay car park	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
16.	Roydon	Beaumont Drive car park	EF	EF	C	C		
17.	Theydon bois	Station Approach	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
18.	Thornwood	Village Hall	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
19.	Waltham Abbey	Hill House shops, Ninefields	C					
20.	Waltham Abbey	Quaker Lane car park	EF	EF	C	C		
21.	Waltham Abbey	Waltham Abbey swimming pool	EF	EF	C	C	EF	
22.	Waltham Abbey	Tesco supermarket	EF	EF	C	C	EF	C
23.	Willingale	Village Hall	C			C		

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