

Scrutiny Standing Panel Agenda



Housing Scrutiny Standing Panel Tuesday, 19th July, 2011

Place: Combined Committee Rooms 1 & 2 - Civic Offices

Time: 5.30 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Mark Jenkins (The Office of the Chief Executive)
Tel: 01992 564607 Email:
democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors S Murray (Chairman), A Mitchell MBE (Vice-Chairman), Ms R Brookes, K Chana, Mrs A Grigg, Ms J Hart, Mrs S Jones, W Pryor, D Stallan, H Ulkun and Mrs J H Whitehouse

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

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

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

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

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

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

4. NOTES OF THE LAST PANEL MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)

To agree the notes of the last Panel meeting held on 24 March 2011 (attached).

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 11 - 16)

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

6. PRESENTATION BY MEARS ON PROPOSED APPROACH TO REPAIRS MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

In-sourcing the Housing Repairs Service - Now that Mears have commenced in their role as the Repairs Management Contractor, Mike Gammack, who is the nominated Housing Repairs Manager from Mears, will be attending the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel to introduce himself and to give Members an insight into "In-sourcing" and how Mears can help the Council's Housing Repairs Service to improve its performance over the next 3-years.

7. HOUSING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - 2010/11 OUT-TURN (TENANT - SELECTED & KPIS) (Pages 17 - 20)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached.

8. PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS IN 2010/11 AND REVIEW (Pages 21 - 56)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached.

9. HOUSEMARK BENCHMARKING REPORT OF HOUSING SERVICES (Pages 57 - 60)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached.

10. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE HOME OPTION CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME (Pages 61 - 68)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached.

11. ANNUAL ETHNIC MONITORING REVIEW OF HOUSING APPLICANTS (Pages 69 - 72)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached.

12. 12-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT ON HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2010/11 AND HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2011/12 (Pages 73 - 96)

(Director of Housing) To consider the attached.

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

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

14. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next programmed meeting of the Panel will be held on Tuesday 25 October 2011 at 5.30p.m. in Committee Room 1, and then on:

Tuesday 31 January 2012 at 5.30p.m.; and
Tuesday 31 March 2012 at 5.30p.m.

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**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF HOUSING SCRUTINY STANDING PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 24 MARCH 2011
IN COMBINED COMMITTEE ROOMS 1 & 2 - CIVIC OFFICES
AT 5.30 - 8.30 PM**

Members Present:	Mrs R Gadsby (Vice-Chairman), R Barrett, D Dodeja, Ms J Hart, Ms J Hedges, Mrs S Jones and L Leonard
Other members present:	K Angold-Stephens, W Breare-Hall, Ms R Brookes, K Chana, Mrs D Collins, J Philip, D Stallan, C Whitbread and D Wixley
Apologies for Absence:	Mrs A Grigg, Mrs J Lea, A Lion and Mrs J H Whitehouse
Officers Present	A Hall (Director of Housing), P Pledger (Assistant Director (Property and Resources)) and M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant)

52. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was noted that Councillors K Chana and J Philip were substituting for Councillors A Lion and Mrs J Lea respectively.

53. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

54. NOTES OF THE LAST TWO MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the last two meetings of the Panel held on 11 and 27 January 2011 be agreed.

55. TERMS OF REFERENCE/WORK PROGRAMME

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

56. PRESENTATION ON THE KEY TERMS OF APPOINTMENT FOR THE PRIVATE REPAIRS MANAGEMENT CONTRACTOR

The Panel received a presentation from Mr P Pledger, Assistant Director of Housing (Property) regarding the Housing Repairs Service.

The presentation covered:

Repairs Refresh Programme

- Downsizing the Building Maintenance Works Unit and combining with the Housing Repairs Section to provide the new Housing Repairs Service.
- Intention to retain high Tenant Satisfaction and for the average number of days to complete repairs to reach top quartile.

Repairs Advisory Group

- Provided advice and feedback to officers and Housing Portfolio Holder on the specification for the Repairs Management Contract.

Restructure of the Repairs Service

- Savings of around £61,000 pa (10.6% of the budget).
- No redundancies were required.

Repairs Management Contractor

- In-Sourcing – Combined an innovative approach, low risk and well developed IT systems
- Appointment of procurement consultant
- Stage 1 – Developing the Procurement Strategy
- Stage 2 – Pre-Qualification Stage
- Stage 3 – Tender Activity
- Stage 4 – Appointment of Repairs Management Contractor
- Repairs Management Contractor was appointed and the contract would commence in May 2011.

RESOLVED:

That the Presentation regarding the Key Terms of Appointment for the Private Repairs Management Contractor be noted.

57. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN (2010/11) - TWELVE MONTH PROGRESS REPORT

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and Key Action Plan (2010/11) – 12 Month Progress Report.

In March 2010, the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan for 2010/11 was produced, incorporating the Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan. The document set out the Council's objectives, strategies and plans as landlord, in relation to the management and maintenance of its own housing stock.

An important section of the HRA Business Plan was the Key Action Plan. This set out the proposed actions the Council would be taking, primarily, over the following year. Having included the Key Action Plan within the Business Plan, it was good practice that the progress made with the stated actions was monitored.

A Six Month Progress Report in the actions contained within the Key Action Plan 2010/11 was reported to the Panel in October 2010. The report was updated. The Panel was being asked to consider the Progress Report and feed back to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Director of Housing.

RESOLVED:

That the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Key Action Plan (2010/11) 12 Month Progress Report be noted.

58. HRA BUSINESS PLAN

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2011-12.

The Government's Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) required all local authorities to produce annual Business Plans for their Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs). The CLG's intention was to ensure that local authority housing was used and maintained to maximum effect. HRA Business Plans dealt with council's plans and performance for the delivery and quality of its housing services to tenants.

HRA Business Plan 2011/12

The Council's Audit and Governance Committee required that all of the Council's Business Plans were completed and published by 31 March each year. Therefore the most up to date information related to 2008/09. The plan included:

- Updated summary of key activities and achievements in 2010/11;
- Information on the effects of Essex County Council's significant reductions in Supporting People funding for local authorities in Essex;
- Information on the Housing Directorate's Customer Service Excellence Award;
- Information on the Government's introduction of HRA Self-Financing; and
- An updated Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan.

Financial Plan 2011/12

The Government had announced that it would completely change the way that Council housing was funded, replacing the Housing Subsidy System. Under this system the Government had assessed each year how much each Council needed to spend on its housing service over the next year. It then calculated how much each council would receive from rents. If this resulted in a deficit, it paid a subsidy to the council. If it resulted in a surplus, the Government required a payment from the Council, called a negative subsidy. Next year, the Council would pay around £11.3 million to the Government, funded from tenants' rents.

The Government had stated that, from April 2012, it would introduce a new funding system called "self-financing." The Government assessed how much financial support each Council needed to run its housing service over the next 30 years, which was the difference between the assumed cost of running the housing service and the expected income from rents. The Government then compared this amount to how much housing debt each Council had accrued. The Government then added together the amount of financial support each Council needed to the amount of debt that each Council may have accrued. The Government would then pay this amount to those councils it thought needed financial help.

For the Council, the Government had assessed that there would be a surplus of income from tenants' rents over the next 30 years, after taking into account the assumed costs of running the Council's housing service. In addition, the Council did not currently have any housing debt. Therefore the Council must make a payment of around £180 million to the Government in April 2012.

Because of these changes, the Financial Plan Chapter had been completely re-written, with the assistance of the Council's Business Plan consultants CIHConsult. However, the Financial Plan was provided for illustration purposes only at this stage, since the detailed consideration of the Council's treasury management of the HRA over the next 12 months was likely to have a major effect on the actual cash flow, over the life of the Financial Plan.

Repairs and Maintenance Business Plan 2011/12

An important part of the HRA Business Plan related to the Council's objectives, strategies and plans relating to the repair and maintenance of the Council's housing stock over the next 30 years. This included the Council's plans ensuring that the Council continued to meet the Government's decent homes standard, and the proposals for the appointment of a private repairs management contractor.

RESOLVED:

That the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2011/12 be noted.

59. HOUSING STRATEGY 2009 - 2012 SIX-MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT ON KEY ACTION PLAN 2010/11

The Panel received a report from Mr A Hall, Director of Housing, regarding the Housing Strategy 2009-2012, 6-Monthly Progress Report on Key Action Plan 2010/11.

At its meeting in September 2009, the Council's Cabinet adopted the Housing Strategy 2009-2012. The Housing Strategy assessed 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 set out the Council's approach to meeting those needs.

The Strategy also included a Key Action Plan, setting 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. The Cabinet had agreed that progress with the Key Action Plan should be monitored on a 6 monthly basis by the Panel.

RESOLVED:

That the Housing Strategy 2009-2012 Key Action Plan 2010/11 6-Monthly Progress report be noted.

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

It was noted that there would be a verbal update given at the forthcoming meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Panel Chairman or Vice Chairman.

61. FUTURE MEETINGS

This was the last meeting of the Panel for the this Council year. The Housing Portfolio Holder, Councillor David Stallan, thanked the Panel members and the officers for their work over the last year.

The Panel meetings for next year were as follows:

19 July 2011;
25 October;
31 January 2012; and
13 March

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TERMS OF REFERENCE - STANDING PANEL

Title: Housing

Status: Standing Panel

Terms of Reference:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chairman: Cllr Stephen Murray

Housing Scrutiny Standing Panel – 2011/2012

Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Scheduled Date	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Presentation by Mears on proposed approach to Repairs Management Contract	Low	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting –	19 th July 2011 25 th October 2011 31 st January 2012 13 th March 2012
(2) Annual Report on the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme	Low	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting –	
(3) HouseMark Benchmarking Report of Housing Services	Low	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting -	
(4) Annual Ethnic Monitoring Review of Housing Applicants	Medium	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting -	
(5) Housing Performance Indicators - 2010/11 Out-turn (Tenant-Selected & KPIs)	Low	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting -	
(6) 12-Month Progress Report on Housing Strategy Action Plan 2010/11	Low	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting -	
(7) Housing Strategy Action Plan 2011/12	High	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting -	
(8) Performance against Housing Service Standards and Review	Medium	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting -	
(9) Feed-in Tariff Scheme for Council Housing Stock	High	July 2011	Due to be considered at July Meeting -	

(10) HRA Self-financing – Financial Plan	High	October 2011	Not yet due
(11) Annual Review of the Housing Allocations Scheme	High	October 2011	Not yet due
(12) Housing Service Strategy on Empty Properties (Review and update)	Medium	October 2011	Not yet due
(13) Six-monthly Progress Report on Housing Business Plan Action Plan	Low	October 2011	Not yet due
(14) Housing Service Strategy on Repairs and Maintenance (New)	Medium	October 2011	Not yet due
(15) Housing Service Strategy on Energy Efficiency (Review and update)	Medium	October 2011	Not yet due
(16) Approach to future Council House-building Programme	High	October 2011	Not yet due
(17) HRA 30-Year Financial Plan in Preparation for HRA Self-financing	High	October 2011	Not yet due
(18) Review of Private Sector Housing Strategy	High	January 2012	Not yet due
(19) Briefing on the proposed Council rent increase for 2010/11	Low	January 2012	Not yet due

(20) Six-monthly Progress report on Housing Strategy Action Plan 2011/12	Low	January 2012	Not yet due	
(21) Housing Service Strategy on Home Ownership (Review and update)	Medium	January 2012	Not yet due	
(22) Housing Service Strategy on Housing and Estate Management (Review and update)	Medium	March 2012	Not yet due	
(23) Housing Service Strategy on Rent Administration (Review and update)	Medium	March 2012	Not yet due	
(24) 12-monthly Progress report on Housing Business Plan Action Plan	Low	March 2012	Not yet due	
(25) Housing Service Strategy on Older Peoples Housing (Review and update)	Medium	March 2012	Not yet due	
(26) HRA Business Plan 2012/13	High	March 2012	Not yet due	
Items added after the original Work Programme was agreed				
None				

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Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 19th July 2011

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr M. McEwen

**Subject: Housing Performance Indicators
(Tenant-Selected and KPIs)
Out-turn – 2010/11**



Officer contact for further information:

Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)

Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Council's performance in 2010/11 in relation to the Housing Performance Indicators, comprising all the Tenant-Selected Indicators (TSIs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), be considered.

Report:

1. The Council has adopted a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which include 9 KPIs relating to the Housing Service. Performance against all of the Council's KPIs are monitored on a quarterly basis by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel.
2. In addition, the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation has selected 21 "Tenant-Selected Indicators", as being areas of performance considered particularly important to tenants, which the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation monitor on a quarterly basis, and are reported to all tenants in the Annual Report to Tenants.
3. Consideration of the Council's performance in relation to these Housing Performance Indicators is included within the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme.
4. The Out-turn Report for these Housing Performance Indicators in 2010/11 is attached as an Appendix, which includes:
 - The Target for 2010/11;
 - The Out-turn Performance for 2010/11; and
 - Whether or not the target has been achieved.
5. As can be seen, 18 (82 %) of the 22 Housing Performance Indicators with targets have been achieved.
6. Three of the four indicators that were not achieved relate to the percentage of repairs completed within target times. However, it is anticipated that this performance will improve significantly in 2011/12, now that Mears has been appointed as the Council's new Repairs Management Contractor. Through the contract, Mears has been set the following targets which, as can be seen, are all far more challenging than both the Council's current targets

and the Council's current performance – whilst maintaining the current high levels (98 %) of tenant satisfaction:

Emergency Repairs	99% within 4 hours (compared to 99% within 24 hours)
Urgent Repairs	98% within 3 working days (compared to 95% within 5 working days)
Routine Repairs	98% within 2 weeks (compared to 95% within 6 weeks)

7. The fourth performance indicator that did not achieve the target was in respect of the average overall void period (excluding difficult-to-let properties). However, the following should be noted:

- (a) The target was only missed by 1 day (31 days against a target of 30 days);
- (b) The target time was reduced from 40 days to 30 days at the beginning of year – if the previous year's target had been retained, the target would have been easily achieved; and
- (c) The performance of 31 days was still an improvement on the previous year's performance of 33 days.

Housing Performance Indicators (Tenant-Selected and KPIs)				
Out-turn 2010/11				
Service	Definition	Target (2010/11)	Out-turn (2010/11)	Target Achieved ?
Tenant-Selected Indicators (Including Key Performance Indicators - KPIs)				
Careline	% of Careline calls responded to within 1 min (excl. routine calls from scheme managers & test calls)	99 %	99.6 %	√
Careline	Average (seconds) to respond to alarm calls	10 seconds	6.4 seconds	√
Rent Arrears	Rent collected as a proportion of rent owed (Also a KPI)	97 %	98.1 %	√
Estate Management	No. of estate inspections completed	82	94	√
Repairs	% of appointments kept	95 %	98 %	√
Repairs	Average time to complete urgent repairs	5 working days	5 working days	√
Repairs	Average time to complete non-urgent repairs	42 days (6 weeks)	18 days	√
Repairs	% Emergency repairs completed within target time of 24 hours (Also a KPI)	99 %	98 %	X
Repairs	% Priority repairs completed within target time of 3 working days	95 %	98 %	√
Repairs	% Urgent repairs completed within target time of 5 working days (Also a KPI)	95 %	69 %	X
Repairs	% Routine repairs completed within target time of 6 weeks (Also a KPI)	95 %	92 %	X

Repairs	% Satisfaction (good or satisfactory) with general standard of repairs (Also a KPI)	98 %	99 %	√
Repairs	Expressions of dissatisfaction: (a) Total no. (b) % of total repair requests (c) Poor satisfaction upheld	(a) < 10 (b) 0 % (c) 0	(a) 7 (b) 0.28 % (c) 0	√
Voids	Average overall void period (excluding difficult to let properties) (Also a KPI)	30 days	31 days	X
Adaptations (Minor)	Time taken from decision to completion of work	28 days	21.5 days	√
Adaptations (General)	Time taken from decision to completion of work	90 days	69 days	√
Gas Servicing	Tenant satisfaction: (a) % "Excellent" or "Good": (i) Gracelands (ii) Kinetics (b) % "Poor": (i) Gracelands (ii) Kinetics	(a) 96 % (b) < 5 %	(i) 99 % (ii) 97 % (i) 0 % (ii) 1 %	√ √
Gas Servicing	No. of CP12 (annual safety certificates) lapsed - SNAPSHOT	-	28	N/A
Kitchen & Bathroom Programme	Overall satisfaction	96 %	100 %	√
Decent Homes	No. of homes that are non-decent (of total housing stock) (Also a KPI)	0	0	√
Key Performance Indicators (not within TSI Set above)				
Affordable Housing	No. of affordable homes delivered	70	151	√
Homelessness	No. of households living in temporary accommodation	60	47	√

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 19TH July 2011

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr M. McEwen

Subject: Performance against Housing Service Standards in 2010/11 and Review

Officer contact for further information:

Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)

Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That performance against the previously-agreed Housing Service Standards in 2010/11 (where measured), as set out in Appendix 1, be noted; and**
- (2) That no changes to either the Housing Service Standards or the Housing Charter be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder this year.**

Background

1. Since 2007, following consultation with the Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, a range of Housing Service Standards covering all of the Housing Directorate's main areas of activity were formulated. An updated Housing Charter was also agreed, which sets out the Council's approach and ethos to the delivery of its housing service to customers.
2. At the same time as agreeing the Service Standards, it was also agreed that the Housing Directorate's performance against the Housing Service Standards (where possible and appropriate) should be considered annually.
3. Since that time, performance against the Housing Service Standards has been reported to the Housing Scrutiny Panel and Tenants and Leaseholders Federation annually; as a result, a number of changes have been made to the Service Standards and the Housing Charter each year by the Housing Portfolio Holder, on the recommendation of the Housing Scrutiny Panel.
4. The Housing Service Standards and Housing Charter form two of the three components of the Council's "Local Offer" to tenants, as required by the Tenant Services Authority's Regulatory Framework for Housing. The other component is an annual Tenant-Agreed Action Plan.

Performance against the Housing Service Standards in 2010/11

5. Appendix 1 provides details of the Housing Service Standards and – where measurable and appropriate – the Housing Directorate's performance in meeting the standards in 2010/11. As a comparison, Appendix 1 also provides details on the

performance in 2009/10 and 2008/9.

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

Proposed Changes and New Service Standards

7. The Director of Housing has reviewed the Housing Service Standards and Housing Charter, having regard to performance in 2010/11 and changes in legislation and Council policy. As a result of this review, and bearing in mind that the Housing Service Standards have been developed and updated over a number of years, no changes are proposed this year. This is the first year that no changes have been recommended, following a number of changes made last year. One of the benefits of not amending the Service Standards is the saving in re-printing the leaflet that sets out the standards for housing clients.

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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We aim to....

GENERAL

(G1) Report on our performance against these Service Standards to your Tenants and Leaseholders Federation every year, and review the Standards in the light of performance	Director of Housing		Yes	Yes	Yes	Reported to, and reviewed by Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Federation – July 2010 and 2011
(G2) Generally satisfy at least 80% of our tenants with the overall housing service provided	Director of Housing	Level of tenant satisfaction	83%	83%	83%	Taken from 2008 Tri-Annual STATUS Survey. A further Satisfaction Survey will be undertaken later in 2011
(G3) Respond to your letters within 10 working days on routine matters, or acknowledge within 5 working days and then provide you with a full response within 28 days on more complex issues	Director of Housing	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
(G4) Give you an opportunity to appeal within 3 months to a senior officer about any decision made about your housing that affects you, and then (for certain specified types of appeals) ^(a) give you a further opportunity within a further 3 months to appeal to the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors ^(a)	Director of Housing	(a) Senior Officer appeals	16	Not measured	Not measured	Information on appeals determined by senior offices has only been collected from April 2010, following the revised approach to housing appeals and reviews, agreed by the full Council towards the end of 2009/10.
		(b) Panel Appeals / reviews heard	9	10	6	
(G5) Give you an opportunity to complain about anything you are unhappy about, fully investigate your complaint, and inform you of the outcome of your complaint within the Council's published timescales.	Director of Housing	(a) No. of Step 2 complaints (to Director of Housing) received	18	9	20	
		(b) No. of Step 3 complaints (to Chief Executive, investigated by Complaints Officer) received	9	12	14	
(G6) If you are unhappy about the way your complaint has been dealt with by housing officers, arrange to have your complaint heard by a panel of district councillors	Director of Housing	No. of Step 4 complaints received	0	0	0	

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(G7) Deliver a copy of the Council's "Housing News" to your home (giving useful information about your housing) at least three times each year	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	No. of copies of Housing News produced	1	2	1	This Standard has not been met due to long-term staffing shortages within the Housing Strategy & Information Section. However, an issue was produced in June 2011 and it is planned to provide two further issues in 2011/12.
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HOMELESSNESS

(H1) Give you an interview with a Homelessness Prevention Officer within 7 days of initial contact, or on the same day if an emergency	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(H2) If necessary, provide you with suitable temporary accommodation, whilst we investigate your homelessness application, until we provide you with a written decision	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	Total no. of applicants in temporary accommodation at end of year	47	46	80	
(H3) If requested by you, review a homelessness decision that you are unhappy with (by either a senior officer or the Housing Appeals and Review Panel of district councillors) within 8 weeks ^(b)	Director of Housing	% Within target time (unless with the permission of the applicant to extend period)	100%	100%	100%	All internal reviews were dealt with in the statutory timescale or by extended period if agreed by both parties.

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(H4) Advise you of your right of appeal to the County Court within 21 days on a point of law if you are unhappy with the homelessness decision after it has been reviewed <i>(Statutory right and timescale)</i>	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	% of applicants notified of their right	100%	100%	100%	
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(H5) Keep you in temporary accommodation for at least 3 months after providing you with our written decision, before making you an offer of suitable permanent accommodation, unless provided with accommodation through our Fresh Start Scheme, in which case permanent accommodation will be provided after no more than 3 years	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Homelessness)	Average period in temporary accommodation	25 weeks	21 Weeks	Not measured	
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HOUSING REGISTER AND ALLOCATIONS

(HR1) Register your housing application or garage application, and advise you of the level of priority (band) given, within 10 working days of receipt of all the information we need from you and other people.	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	(a) Average time to register	3-4 days	3-4 days	3-4 days	
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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
		(b) No. of applications awaiting registration at end of year	10	0	0	
(HR2) Notify you in writing of any change in your priority banding, within 7 days of the change being made	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although performance is not formally measured, notifications of banding changes have been made within 7 days throughout 2010/11
(HR3) Write to you at least every year if you have not expressed any interest in vacant properties under the Home Options Scheme, and ask if you wish to remain on the Housing Register	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(HR4) Give you at least 5 calendar days notice between offering you a tenancy and the tenancy commencement date	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(HR5) Unless you are a homeless applicant ^(c) , allow you to choose the vacant Council or housing association home you would like to be offered (through our Home Option Scheme), subject to the interest expressed by other applicants with higher priority	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(HR6) If you are not a Council tenant already, offer you an Introductory Tenancy initially, followed by a Secure Tenancy automatically after 1 year, if you have not caused any anti-social behaviour, have had any significant rent arrears or broken any other Conditions of Tenancy.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	
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(HR7) Give you a decision on your request for a mutual exchange within 5 working days of receiving an application from you and the other party/parties, with all the required information provided.	Asst. Housing Options Manager (Allocations)	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	
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HOUSING MANAGEMENT

(HM1) If you are a new tenant, visit you at home within 10 weeks of your tenancy commencing, to introduce you to your local housing officer and to discuss the main conditions of your tenancy and any queries you may have	Area Housing Managers	(a) No. of new tenant visits undertaken,	158	202	Not measured	
		(b) No. of visits undertaken within 10 weeks	148 (94%)	182 (90%)	Not measured	Visits after 10 weeks are usually due to tenants being unable to provide access within the required period.

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
<p>(HM2) Provide you with the following options to pay your rent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At one of the Council's Cash Offices • At any post office • At any "PayPoint" access point • By direct debit • By text • By standing order • Through the internet • By telephone • By salary deduction (if you work for the Council) 	Housing Resources Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<p>(HM3) Give you a choice of three dates in the month to pay your rent by direct debit.</p>	Housing Resources Manager	No. of direct debit payment dates available as at end of year	3	3	3	
<p>(HM4) Provide you with written confirmation of the balance on your rent account in April/May each year (unless your account is clear or only in credit or arrears by less than £1)</p>	Area Housing Managers	Whether or not balance confirmations are sent out by end of May	Yes	Yes	Yes	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
(HM5) Provide you with a detailed statement of your rent account for the previous 12 months on request or automatically every three months if you are in arrears by more than £1	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Under the Pre-Court Rent Arrears Protocol, the Council must have provided a quarterly rent statement before legal action can be taken.
(HM6) Make every effort to enter into an agreement with you to clear any rent arrears that you have through reasonable instalments, before we take any legal action to recover the arrears	Area Housing Managers	Not measured.	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(HM7) Make every effort to meet with you to discuss any rent arrears before any court hearing takes place	Area Housing Managers	(a) No. of visits to tenants' homes to discuss rent arrears	600	865	655	
		(b) No. of office interviews held to discuss rent arrears	1,277	1,320	1,407	
(HM8) If you are an Introductory Tenant or a Demoted Tenant ^(d) , give you an opportunity to appeal to a senior officer against any proposed legal action within 2 weeks of you being advised of the proposed legal action.	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	(a) No of reviews held for introductory tenants	12	6	9	
		(b) No. of reviews held for demoted tenants	0	0	1	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
(HM9) Remove abandoned vehicles from housing estates (after making enquiries of the DVLA on ownership and contacting the owner) within 5 weeks of receiving a complaint	Area Housing Managers	% of abandoned vehicles removed within 5 weeks of EFDC completing enquiries of the DVLA	100%	Not measured	Not measured	This information has only been collected since 2010/11
(HM10) Remove clearly abandoned and potentially dangerous vehicles from housing estates within 5 working days of receiving a complaint	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(HM11) If you live in a flat with more than four flats in the block, clean the communal area weekly and re-charge you the cost to the Council.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Time sheets are provided by Mobile Cleaners on a weekly basis, confirming locations cleaned. Notice boards in each block advise tenants and leaseholders which day they can expect their block to be cleaned. Attendance is also monitored by Housing Managers via Vehicle Trackers.
(HM12) Where we clean communal areas of blocks or flats, inspect the standard of cleaning at least twice a year	Area Housing Managers	Whether or not blocks of flats have been inspected at least twice a year	Yes	Yes	Not measured	Inspection records are kept

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(HM13) Undertake a formal inspection of your estate by a housing officer with a representative of any recognised tenant association covering your area and make a note of any required work at least once every year.	Area Housing Managers	No. of estate inspections undertaken	91	73	54	
(HM14) Give you a decision on your request for permission to carry out improvements to your Council home (or former Council home) within 2 weeks of us receiving your request and all the required information.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although performance is not formally measured, decisions are usually given within 2 weeks
(HM15) When you vacate your Council home, inform you of your right to compensation for certain improvements you have undertaken within 7 days of you informing us of your vacation and give you a decision on your request for compensation to your Council home within 2 weeks of us receiving your application and all the required information.	Area Housing Managers	No. of compensation claims agreed	5	4	7	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
(HM16) If you are unable to succeed ^(e) to a tenancy because there has already been one succession, we will offer you a new tenancy of the property in which you are currently living or, if you are not a spouse and are under-occupying the property, the tenancy of another property.	Area Housing Managers	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(HM17) Comply with the Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management in dealing with anti-social behaviour on housing estates	Area Housing Managers	Date of self-certification for compliance with the Standard	June 2007	June 2007	June 2007	
REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS						
(R1) Continue to ensure that your home meets the Government's Decent Home Standard	Housing Assets Manager	% of non- decent homes at the end of the financial year	0	0	1.48	With a handful of exceptions (due to tenants not allowing access), all of the Council's properties met the Decent Homes Standard by the 1 st April 2010, and programmes of work are being undertaken to ensure that no homes become non-decent in the future.

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(R2) Carry out emergency repairs within 24 hours of you reporting the defect.	Housing Repairs Manager	% emergency repairs completed within target time	98%	98%	99%	
(R3) Carry out urgent repairs within 5 working days of you reporting the defect.	Housing Repairs Manager	(a) Average time to complete urgent repairs	5 days	4 days	6 days	
		(b) % urgent repairs completed within target time	69%	94%	86%	
(R4) Carry out routine repairs within 6 weeks of you reporting the defect.	Housing Repairs Manager	(a) Average time to complete routine repairs	18 days	27 days	30 days	
		(b) % routine repairs completed within target time	92%	95%	86%	Prior to 2009/10, the target time was 8 weeks.
(R5) Confirm in writing to you the details of any repairs you report, and give you a target date for completion on the day you report the repair (or the next day if reported after Noon)	Housing Repairs Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(R6) Keep any appointments that we make for tradesmen to carry out repairs to your home.	Housing Repairs Manager	% appointments kept	98%	97%	95%	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(R7) Satisfy at least 97% of tenants with the general standard of the repairs service we provide ^(f) .	Housing Repairs Manager	% tenant satisfaction	99%	98%	98%	
(R8) If a repair needs to be inspected first, give you an appointment for a Housing Inspector to visit your home for a morning or afternoon within 10 working days of your request.	Housing Repairs Manager	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(R9) Arrange for Repairs Inspectors to randomly inspect the quality of work of a sample of repairs carried out by our Housing Repairs Service and contractors	Housing Repairs Manager	Average number of properties visited per week to inspect repairs	20	36	0	Post repair inspections were ceased from the end of 2006/7. However, as part of the Repairs Refresh Programme they were recommenced from July 2009
(R10) If you are dissatisfied with a repair, arrange for a Supervisor to telephone or visit you within 5 working days of you telling us of your dissatisfaction.	Housing Repairs Manager	(a) No. of repair requests completed	12,854	17,062	18,664	
		(b) No. of dissatisfied tenants	7 (0.05%)	28 (0.16%)	62 (0.33%)	
		(c) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered justifiable	0	4 (14%)	16 (26%)	

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		(d) No. of dissatisfied tenants considered due to minor problem	7 (100%)	11 (39%)	20 (32%)	
		(f) No. of cases where dissatisfaction was considered to be not due to the Repairs Service	0	2 (7%)	9 (14%)	
		(g) No. unable to gain access	0	5 (18%)	7 (11%)	
(R11) If we do not complete certain specified repairs within specific timescales, arrange for another repairs contractor to carry out the repair within the same timescale on request ^(g) <i>(Statutory requirement)</i>	Housing Repairs Manager	No. of tenants exercising their "Right to Repair"	0	0	0	
(R12) If a second contractor does not complete certain specified repairs within specific timescales, pay you compensation of £10 + £2 per day until the repair is carried out (upto a maximum of £50) ^(g) <i>(Statutory requirement and amounts)</i>	Housing Repairs Manager	Amount of compensation paid	£ Nil	£ Nil	£ Nil	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
(R13) Service all the gas appliances in your home (or undertake a safety check if you have installed the appliance yourself), and provide you with a copy of the associated safety certificate, once a year	Housing Assets Manager	% of properties where servicing not undertaken within 12 months (due to no access provided)	North – 0.38%	North - 0.19%	North – 1.27%	
			South – 0.57%	South - 1.25%	South - 3.08%	
(R14) Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home to attend to a gas appliance that is required as an emergency (e.g. a water/gas leak) within 2 hours	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 2 hours	North – 100%	North - 100%	North – 100%	
			South – 100%	South - 100%	South - 86.5%	
		% attended within 1 hour	North – 100%	North - 99%	North – 100%	
			South – 91.3%	South - 100%	South – 86.5%	
(R15) Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home and carry out a non- emergency repair to your heating or hot water system (if no part is required):	Housing Assets Manager	% attended within 24 hours (or on the following Monday (if not an older person and reported over the weekend))	North – 100%	North – 100%	North- 100%	
			South – 100%	South – 100%	South - 86 %	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
<p>(a) Within 24 hours (if during the week, or if you are an older person); or</p> <p>(b) On the following Monday (if reported over the weekend and you are not an older person)</p>						
<p>(R16) Arrange for a gas contractor to visit your home to repair a gas appliance within 5 working days (when a part is required)</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>% attended within 5 working days</p>	<p>North – 100%</p>	<p>North - 100%</p>	<p>North – 100%</p>	
			<p>South 99.9%</p>	<p>South - 100%</p>	<p>South – 96.5%</p>	
<p>(R17) If you are over 60 years of age and live in a 1 or 2 bed property, redecorate 1 room in your home, on request, every 5 years and within 13 weeks of your request</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>(a) No. of internal decorations completed</p>	<p>96</p>	<p>102</p>	<p>53</p>	
		<p>(b) Average time from request to completion</p>	<p>3.9 weeks</p>	<p>5.4 weeks</p>	<p>6.5 weeks</p>	
		<p>(c) No. of internal decorations outstanding at end of year, not completed within target timescale</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>	

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DISABLED ADAPTATIONS

(D1) Advise you in writing about whether or not you are eligible for specific adaptations to your Council home within one week of us receiving a request from the Occupational Therapy Service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Minor adaptations	1.2 days	1.3 days	1.3 days	
		(b) Major adaptations	1.6 days	1.7 days	1.9 days	
(D2) Carry out minor adaptations to your home within 4 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Average time from decision to completion of work	21 days	22 days	22 days	
		(b) No. of minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time	0	0	8	
(D3) Carry out non-minor adaptations to your home within 13 weeks of receiving details of the required work from the Occupational Therapy Service	Housing Assets Manager	(a) Average time from decision to completion of work	9.8 weeks	35 weeks	32 weeks	
		(b) No. of non-minor adaptations at end of the year not completed within the target time	2	16	66	

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SHELTERED HOUSING & CARELINE

(S1) Test your Careline alarm in sheltered accommodation every 3 months and in non-sheltered accommodation every 6 months	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Compliance with the requirement for tests is monitored, but statistics are not kept on numbers
(S2) Install: (a) 90% of urgent basic telecare packages within 2 working days and 100% within 5 working days; and (b) 100% of non-urgent telecare packages within 15 working days <i>(Telecare Services Association Standards)</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	(a) % of urgent basic telecare packages installed within 2 working days	88.9%	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	
		(b) % of urgent basic telecare packages installed within 5 working days	100%	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	
		(c) Average time to install a telecare package	7.6 days	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	
		(d) % of non-urgent basic telecare packages installed within 15 working days	94.6%	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	

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(S3) Renew mains batteries in individual (dispersed) alarms every 5 years	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	The requirement for battery renewals is monitored, but statistics are not kept on numbers.
(S4) Treat all your alarm calls to Careline as potential emergencies, until proved otherwise	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(S5) Answer your alarm calls to Careline, on average, within 10 seconds	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average time to respond to calls (including non urgent, routine calls from scheme managers and test calls)	6.4 seconds	7.7 seconds	6.6 seconds	
(S6) Answer 98.5 % of all alarm calls to Careline within 60 seconds <i>(Telecare Services Association Standard)</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	% of calls answered within 30 seconds	99.6%	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	
(S7) Liaise with other agencies and nominated contacts to ensure the wellbeing of our Careline customers <i>(Telecare Services Association Standard)</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	

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(S8) Record and monitor all alarm calls to Careline, to help train our staff and look at how we can improve our service	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Whether all calls have been recorded and monitored	Yes	Yes	Yes	
(S9) Repair: (a) 90% of critical faults to telecare equipment within 2 working days, and 100% within 4 working days (b) Repair 100% of non-urgent faults to telecare equipment within 15 working days <i>(Telecare Services Association Standards)</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	(a) No. of critical repairs completed within 2 days	96.7%	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	
		(b) No. of critical repairs undertaken in 4 days	100%	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	
		(c) No. of non-critical repairs undertaken within 10 working days	100%	Not available (New target)	Not available (New target)	
(S10) Visit you annually to test the back-up batteries in your Careline alarm and to review your personal details held on our records	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Records for individual visits are kept, but statistics on overall numbers are not kept
(S11) Record, maintain and update your Careline records in a confidential and secure manner <i>(Telecare Services Association Standard)</i>	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
(S12) Train all our Careline staff to a high standard	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	All new staff receive a minimum of 8 wks induction training and periodic training thereafter.
(S13) If you live in sheltered accommodation, ensure that your Scheme Manager gives you a home visit (or accounts for you) every day (Monday to Friday – subject to holidays and sickness)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Visiting schedules are kept but numbers visited are not measured.
(S14) If you live in sheltered accommodation and your Scheme Manager is on holiday or sick, arrange for another Scheme Manager to visit you 3 times a week	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Whether or not 3 visits per week have been arranged for absent scheme managers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Records of visits are kept on file
(S15) If you do not live in sheltered accommodation, but are visited by a Scheme Manager, ensure that you receive a visit every week, fortnight or month, as appropriate (as determined by a risk assessment)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Average no. of visits per week	246	250	255	

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(S16) If you live in sheltered or non-sheltered accommodation for older people, provide you with a Tenant Support Plan – explaining the type and level of support that we will give you - and review the Tenant Support Plan every 12 months (or sooner if requested by you)	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	From 2011, the ECC Supporting People Team only require tenants with high support needs to have a Tenant Support Plan
(S17) Carry out fire drills at sheltered accommodation every 3 months	Housing Manager (Older Peoples Services)	No of schemes where fire drills have not been undertaken within 3 months	0	0	0	
HOUSE SALES						
(HS1) Confirm whether or not you are eligible for the Right to Buy within 2 weeks of receiving a properly completed application from you <i>(Statutory requirement, but the statutory timescale is 4 weeks)</i>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average periods	F/hold – 3.7 days L/hold 4.3 days	F/hold - 3.2 days L/hold 5.7 days	F/hold – 4.7 days L/hold – 2.7 days	
		(b) % within statutory timescale (4 weeks)	F/hold – 100% L/hold – 100%	F/hold – 100% L/hold – 100%	F/hold – 100% L/hold – 100%	

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<p>(HS2) Advise you of the valuation, discount and purchase price for the property you wish to purchase within 8 weeks of us confirming the Right to Buy if your property is a house or bungalow or 12 weeks if your property is a flat or maisonette</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescales)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	(a) Average time to provide information	F/hold – 4.1 weeks L/hold – 4.3 weeks	F/hold – 4.8 weeks L/hold – 4.9 weeks	F/hold – 7.4 weeks L/hold – 5.5 weeks	
		(b) % within statutory timescale	F/hold – 100% L/hold – 100%	F/hold – 92% L/hold - 100%	F/hold – 60% L/hold - 100%	
<p>(HS3) Give you an opportunity to appeal against our valuation of your home, and to obtain an independent valuation (free of charge) from the District Valuer, within 3 months of you receiving our valuation</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No of appeals to DV	0	4	0	
<p>(HS4) Complete the purchase of your property within 10 weeks of you confirming that you wish to proceed, provided that you and your solicitor deal with all required matters promptly</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Average time taken to complete a purchase	29 wks (9 sales)	15 wks (8 sales)	17 wks (7 sales)	The actual timescale often depends on how quickly the applicant's solicitor takes to complete. The Housing Directorate has no control over this performance.

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<p>(HS5) If you do not proceed with your purchase, give you two formal notices of 8 weeks each before cancelling your Right to Buy application</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although overall statistics are not kept, cases are monitored to check how long applicants are taking to proceed, so that formal notices are issued at appropriate times.
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LEASEHOLD SERVICES

<p>(L1) Provide you with a detailed breakdown of your <u>estimated</u> annual service charge at least 2 weeks before the beginning of the financial year</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of weeks before the beginning of the reference year when all estimated service charge accounts were issued for the reference year	4 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	
<p>(L2) Provide you with a detailed breakdown of your <u>actual</u> annual service charge within 6 months after the end of the financial year</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	No. of months after the end of the reference year when all actual service charge accounts were issued for the reference year	6 months	6 months	6 months	

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Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
<p>(L3) If you fall into arrears with your actual service charge, give you an appropriate amount of time to clear the arrear in accordance with the Council's Sundry Income and Dept Policy ^(h)</p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Formal action to recover service charges is only taken on <u>actual</u> service charge arrears (not estimated charges). However, arrears against estimated charges are also pursued.
<p>(L4) Consult you on proposed major repairs and improvements (over £250) and give you the opportunity to nominate a contractor to provide a tender for the work at least 30 days before seeking tenders</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although overall statistics are not kept, records of individual consultations are kept.
<p>(L5) Consult you on the estimated cost of major repairs and improvements and advise you of the selected contractor before commencing the work, and give you at least 30 days to provide any comments you may have, which we will take into account</p> <p><i>(Statutory requirement and timescale)</i></p>	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Although statistics are not kept, records of individual consultations are kept.

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(L6) Provide you, on request, with a copy of your current service charge account and other relevant information (perhaps if you wish to sell on the leasehold), for a fee, within 2 weeks of your request	Principal Housing Officer (Sales/Leases)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	
(L7) Support a District-wide Leaseholders Association and ensure that it meets at least 4 times each year	Tenant Participation Officer	No. of meetings held	3	3	4	The quarterly meeting scheduled for Nov 2009 was postponed at the request of the Leaseholders Association

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING

(PS1) Visit 95% of applicants for our Caring And Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Service within 3 weeks of the initial enquiry	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	% of visits undertaken within 3 weeks	99 %	100 %	100 %	
(PS2) Undertake jobs through our Handyperson Service within 2 weeks of request	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time for jobs to be completed	15 days	13 days	14 days	
(PS3) Generally satisfy at least 95% of our customers for both CARE's core service and Handyperson Service	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	% satisfied with CARE's core service and the Handyperson Service	100 %	100 %	100 %	

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
(PS4) Respond to applicants for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) within 10 working days of receiving a referral from an occupational therapist (OT)	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to respond to referrals	8 days	10 days	10 days	
(PS5) Issue a decision on a formal application for a DFG within 5 working days of receipt	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to issue a decision	2 days	4 days	4 days	
(PS6) Respond to applicants for other private sector grants within 5 working days of receiving a request	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to respond to requests	5 days	6 days	2 days	
(PS7) Issue a decision on a formal application for other private sector grants within 5 working days of receipt	Private Housing Manager (CARE & Grants)	Average time to issue a decision	5 days	4 days	3.5 days	
(PS8) Respond to requests for assistance from private tenants allegedly being harassed by landlords within 24 hours	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	% of responses within 24 hours	100 %	100 %	100 %	
(PS9) Respond to initial enquiries for other private sector housing services (e.g nuisance, filthy / verminous properties, mobile homes, HMOs) within 5 working days	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	% of responses within 5 working days	100 %	99 %	99 %	

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(PS10) Issue licences for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) within 6 months of receiving a properly completed application	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	% of licences issued within 6 months	100%	100%	100%	
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TENANT PARTICIPATION

(TP1) Consult you on any significant matters relating to your tenancy and take your views into account when making decisions	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	No. of major consultations undertaken, that affect all tenants	0	0	0	
(TP2) Consult you on major issues that affect your estate (such as improvement schemes) and offer individual choices where appropriate.	PHO (Information/ Strategy)	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
(TP3) Agree our approach to tenant involvement with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and maintain a written Tenant Participation Agreement which we review every 3 years.	Tenant Participation Officer	Whether or not the Agreement was reviewed	Yes	Not required	Not required	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(TP4) Invite 2 representatives of all the recognised tenants associations in the District to become members of the Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, which will have a written constitution explaining how it will operate.	Tenant Participation Officer	Whether or not 2 representatives from recognised tenants associations have been invited	Yes	Yes	Yes	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
(TP5) Consult the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation on proposed new, or changed, housing plans, strategies and policies, and take their views into account before making decisions.	Director of Housing	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
(TP6) Look for opportunities to form new tenants associations, and support these groups by providing practical or financial support.	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
(TP7) Provide start-up funding of £100 to any recognised steering group wishing to form a recognised tenants association, and a further grant of £200 when formally recognised.	Tenant Participation Officer	(a) No. of new groups provided with start-up funding	0	Not measured	Not measured	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
		(b) No. of new groups provided with further grant	0	Not measured	Not measured	

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(TP8) Make premises available for meetings of tenants groups or meet any reasonable costs of hall bookings.	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
(TP9) Consider the training requirements of tenants and leaseholders who are members of the Federation or other tenants associations, and assist in arranging suitable training.	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
(TP10) Provide a variety of ways to involve residents, for those that prefer not to attend meetings, including surveys, panels and public events.	Tenant Participation Officer	Not measured	N/A	N/A	N/A	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11
(TP11) Review the success of the Council's Tenant Participation Strategy through consultation with the Federation and by conducting a survey once every three years.	Tenant Participation Officer	% of tenants that feel that their views are taken into account by the landlord as recorded by the tri-annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey	62%	62%	62%	Service Standard introduced in 2010/11

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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Notes:

(a) The Housing Appeals and Review Panel will consider appeals on the following issues:

- (1) All homelessness reviews, with the exception of the following types of reviews that are already only undertaken by officers;
 - (i) whether or not single applicants are “homeless” or have a “priority need”;
 - (ii) whether or not an allocation of either temporary or permanent accommodation is suitable for the applicant and his/her family; and
 - (iii) whether or not a homeless applicant should be referred to another local authority, due to their local connection with that local authority;
- (2) Housing succession cases, where the successor is under-occupying Council accommodation, and has been required to transfer to smaller accommodation;
- (3) Exclusion of housing applicants from the Housing Register;
- (4) Non-provision of discretionary home improvement grants;
- (5) Refusal of requests for disabled adaptations to Council properties requested by the tenant;
- (6) Refusal to sell Council owned-land under 50 square metres to occupiers for garden use;
- (7) Refusal of requests from housing applicants for “priority moves” (i.e. those very urgent and rare cases, dealt with outside of the usual Allocations Scheme);
- (8) disagreements with tenants and former tenants on the level or liability for current or former rent arrears; and
- (9) The banding of an applicant, in accordance with the Housing Allocations Scheme in being at the time of the decision.

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

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

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

**Epping Forest District Council
Housing Directorate**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST HOUSING SERVICE STANDARDS 2010/11

Service Standard	Officer Responsible	Performance Measure	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	Comments
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(e) Succession takes place when someone legally takes over the tenancy from their spouse or another family member, following the previous tenant's death. In law, there can only be one succession. A person (spouse or family member) who would otherwise be a successor tenant, but cannot in law because there has already been one succession, will be offered a new tenancy of either the property they are living in or another one, depending on whether or not they under-occupy the property.

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

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

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

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

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

Produced – June 2011

Epping Forest District Council

HOUSING CHARTER

In the provision of housing services^(*), the Council will:

- Treat you courteously, politely and with respect - in person and on the telephone (and will expect the same in return)
- Treat you fairly and in accordance with your needs and wishes
- Investigate complaints thoroughly and respond wherever possible within 10 working days or send you an acknowledgement and then respond to you fully as soon as possible
- Explain and give advice promptly on any housing matters
- Consult you on matters that significantly affect you
- Seek to provide high standards of service to you
- Take into account your needs and the needs of others when considering individual housing cases, and the effect decisions will have.
- Keep you informed of housing issues
- Manage the use of your rent payments prudently
- Make provision for any special needs you may have when communicating with you
- Treat you equally, irrespective of your, race, disability, gender, faith, belief, age or sexual orientation and comply with the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Race Relations Code of Practice Related to Rented Housing and the Good Practice Standards for Social Landlords on Tackling Harassment

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

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

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SCRUTINY

 Epping Forest District Council

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 19th July 2011

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr M. McEwen

Subject: HouseMark Benchmarking Report on Value for Money of Housing Services (2009/10)

Officer contact for further information:

Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)

Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That the HouseMark Summary Benchmarking Report on Value for Money of Housing Services (2009/10) be considered, and that the Housing Scrutiny Panel provides any comments on the Benchmarking Report to the Housing Portfolio Holder; and**
- (2) That the decision to only undertake benchmarking through Housemark bi-annually in future, unless Housemark can provide a quality-only (and not cost) benchmarking service, be endorsed.**

Report:

1. The Housing Directorate places great importance on benchmarking its housing performance and costs against other housing providers. Indeed, it is a requirement of the Tenant Services Authority's (TSA's) Housing Regulatory Framework.

2. The Housing Directorate has been a member of "Housemark" for a number of years. Housemark is a national housing benchmarking organisation, which enables housing organisations to submit detailed information on their performance and costs, and then to compare these with other housing organisations nationally.

3. Housemark enables member organisations to compare themselves with user-defined data sets. For example, the Council can compare itself with: all housing organisations nationally; all district councils; all local authorities; or all housing associations. Housemark can also define the locations (by regions) of those organisations to be included within the comparison, and can restrict the comparison to housing organisations of more or less than a defined number of properties.

4. Each year, Housemark produces a detailed Benchmarking Report for the Council, comparing the Council's performance with 47 other local authorities across the country. For this Council's Housing Directorate, the detailed benchmarking information is discussed at quarterly Continuous Improvement Meetings held between the Director of Housing, individual Housing Managers and the relevant Assisting Director of Housing.

5. In addition to the detailed benchmarking information, Housemark also provides a helpful Value for Money (VFM) Summary. The VFM Summary is organised in a way to illustrate how the Council's housing performance – in terms of cost and quality - compares

with other local authorities, in respect of the four specific service areas of the TSA's National Standards, covering:

- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment
- Home
- Tenancy (including allocations, rents and tenure)
- Neighbourhood and Community

6. The VFM Summary places the Council's performance within one of the four quartiles, as follows:

- Best quartile Within the best 25% of councils
- 2nd Best Quartile Within the best 50% of councils
- 2nd Worst Quartile Within the worst 50% of councils
- Worst Quartile Within the worst 25% of councils

7. Housemark's VFM Summary is provided as an Appendix. **It is emphasised that the data relates to 2009/10 and not 2010/11.** The quartile performance, in respect of those cost and quality indicators for which the Council had data, is summarised below:

Summary of EFDC's Quartile Placement KPIs - Cost & Quality		
Quartile	Cost KPIs	Quality KPIs
Best	3	3
2nd Best	-	5
2nd Worst	1	-
Worst	2	1

8. The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider the HouseMark Summary Benchmarking Report on Value for Money of Housing Services (2009/10), and provide any comments on the Benchmarking Report to the Housing Portfolio Holder.

Future Housemark Benchmarking

9. Although Housemark provides an excellent and consistent benchmarking facility, and the benchmarking itself is very informative, the process is expensive and time-consuming - in terms of the Housemark subscription and officer time. Each year, officers from Housing and Finance have to extract and calculate all the relevant cost and quality data, and upload the required information to the Housemark website. The provision of cost data is the most onerous in terms of officer time. The data extraction, collection and calculation process takes officers in Housing and Finance around 10 person-days each year.

10. The annual subscription to Housemark is around £7,000 per annum, but it should be noted that the Council receives other benefits, including free training sessions on current housing policy and practice.

11. In view of the Council's current financial position and the amount of staff time involved, it has been decided to only subscribe to Housmark, and undertake the benchmarking, every two years – although discussions are due to be held with Housemark to ascertain if the Council can subscribe for just the less onerous quality benchmarking service, in which case it may be considered appropriate to undertake quality benchmarking annually.

**HouseMark Value for Money Benchmarking Summary – 2009/10
(Produced March 2011)**

TSA Standard	Cost KPI	EFDC's Cost KPI Quartile	Quality KPI	EFDC's Quality KPI Quartile
Tenant Involvement and Empowerment	Direct cost per property of Resident Involvement	Best Quartile	Percentage of tenants satisfied that views are being taken into account	2nd Best Quartile
			Percentage of respondents who felt staff were able to deal with their problem	Best Quartile
			Percentage of tenants satisfied with complaints handling	No Data
Home	Direct cost per property of Responsive Repairs & Void Works	Best Quartile	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service	Best Quartile
			Repairs completed 'right first time'	No Data
	Direct cost per property of Major Works & Cyclical Maintenance	2nd Worst Quartile	Percentage of tenants satisfied with overall quality of home	2nd Best Quartile
			Percentage of dwellings failing to meet the Decent Home Standard	Best Quartile
Tenancy (Including Allocations, Rents & Tenure)	Direct cost per property of Housing Management	Best Quartile	Average time in days to re-let empty properties	Worst Quartile
			Percentage of tenants satisfied with overall service provided	2nd Best Quartile
			Current tenant rent arrears as % of rent due	2nd Best Quartile
Neighbourhood and Community	Direct costs per property of Estate Services	Worst Quartile	Percentage of tenants satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	2nd Best Quartile
	Direct costs per case of Anti-Social behaviour	Worst Quartile	Percentage of respondents satisfied with anti-social behaviour case handling	No Data

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Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 19 July 2011

Portfolio: Housing – Councillor Mrs M McEwen

Subject: HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme – Progress Report

Officer contact for further information: Roger Wilson extension 4419

Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins extension 4607



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Housing Scrutiny Panel reviews progress made on the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme, and considers the Housing Register Activity Report, both for the period December 2010 to May 2011.

Report:

1. As part of its Work Programme, the Panel considers an annual report on the “HomeOption” Choice Based Lettings scheme.
2. The Choice Based Lettings Scheme was introduced in November 2007, which was necessary to meet the requirements of Government that such a scheme be in place by 2010 at the latest. The scheme is administered by the external Choice Based Lettings agency Locata Housing Services (LHS). Under the scheme, all vacant social rented properties are advertised to applicants on the website, a two-weekly publication and other media giving details of location, type, rent, service charge, council tax band and landlord of the available accommodation. Applicants apply for a property by “expressing an interest” in up to a maximum of three properties for which they have an assessed need, either in person, by post, telephone, text, email or Internet.
3. At the end of the two weekly cycle, the Council analyses the “expressions of interests” received and allocates each property following a prioritisation and selection process in accordance with its own Allocations Scheme. In general terms, the property is offered to the applicant in the highest band, who has been registered the longest, who had “expressed an interest” for the specific vacancy. The results of the “expressions of interest” on each property advertised is then published on the website and the next periodic publication, setting out the number received on each property, as well as the Band and registration date of the successful applicant. This helps applicants to see how long the successful applicant has been waiting and gives greater transparency in the allocation of accommodation, as each applicant would be able to clearly understand how the scheme works.

4. The Council is a member of the Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium (HEHOC) which jointly operates the Choice Based Lettings Scheme and consists of following six authorities:

- Brentwood Borough Council
- Chelmsford Borough Council
- Broxbourne District Council
- Epping Forest District Council
- Uttlesford District Council
- East Herts District Council

HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Information Bulletin

5. As the LHS computer system only stores information for a six month period, it is only possible to report statistics for a six-month period at this time. However, this will be resolved in future years when a full 12 months performance will be reported. The HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Information Bulletin for the period 28 November 2010 to 28 May 2011 is attached as an appendix to the report.

6. As can be seen, 214 properties (including Housing Association lets) have been allocated during the period. Some properties have been advertised on more than one occasion as they are difficult to let (particularly those designated for older persons' use) which has resulted in 282 advertisements being placed on the Website and in the Free-sheets. With 21,038 expressions of interest being made, this is an average of around 75 expressions of interest each time a property is advertised. Most properties, apart from the difficult to let older person's properties referred to; attract in excess of 200 expressions of interest. Almost 93% of applicants expressing an interest in properties did so over the Internet.

7. Around 70% of applicants registered on the Housing Register have participated in the scheme during the six-month period. LHS confirm that, nationally, this is a high participation rate. Some applicants may not participate for a variety of reasons including:

- Joining the Register to accumulate time on the list, should they want Council accommodation in the future.
- Homeless applicants who are under a deferment period of three months following notification of the Council's homelessness decision. The three-month deferment is in place to balance the needs of homeless applicants against those on the Housing Register
- Applicants who wish to move to smaller accommodation and may be biding their time until a property becomes available that meets all of their aspirations.

Housing Register Activity Report

8. The Housing Register Activity Report for the same period, which is also attached, shows the number of expressions of interest made by all applicants, the number of lets and refusals (excluding Housing Association properties) and number of applicants in each of the six priority Bands. As at 30 June 2011 there were 5,514 applicants on the Housing Register.

Surveys of Applicants - May 2011

9. In May of this year a survey of all housing applicants was undertaken in order to seek their views on the Choice Based Lettings Scheme. It was considered important to seek the views of applicants who were either participating or not participating in the scheme.

Applicants not Participating in Choice Based Lettings

10. One of the surveys was of those who were not participating in the Scheme. The main reason for undertaking a separate survey of those not participating was to explore if there were any vulnerable people who may be having difficulty using the Scheme. Overall 360 forms were returned from those not participating. The table below shows the questions asked and responses received:

Question	Yes	No	No Response
Are you aware of HomeOption, our choice based lettings scheme?	263 (73%)	81 (23%)	16 (4%)
Have you received and kept your HomeOption Scheme User Guide?	204 (57%)	143 (40%)	13 (3%)
Do you know your housing application registration number?	198 (55)	153 (43%)	9 (2%)
Have you looked at the HomeOption Website?	125 (35%)	229 (64%)	6 (1%)
Do you want your application to stay on the Housing Register?	336 (93%)	17 (5%)	7 (2%)

11. Applicants were also asked why they had not participated and invited to tell us what help they need. All those applicants not participating, will be sent a letter explaining again about the Scheme, and will be contacted to offer assistance if it is felt appropriate.

Applicants who are Participating in Choice Based Lettings

12. The other survey was of those who have participated in the scheme. Overall 421 responses were received from those participating. The table below shows the questions asked and responses received:

Question	Yes	No	No Response
Did you find the Scheme User Guide easy to follow?	399 (95%)	19 (4%)	3 (1%)
Did you get enough information about the Scheme	375 (89%)	34 (8%)	12 (3%)
Was the Website easy to use?	310 (74%)	21 (5%)	90 (21%)
Did the Website give enough feedback on properties that had been already let?	263 (62%)	45 (11%)	113 (27%)
Did you ask a member of our staff for help?	84 (20%)	225 (53%)	112 (27%)

13. Applicants who had participated were asked generally how satisfied they were with the service, 408 responded to this question. The level of satisfaction was as follows:

Very Satisfied 152 (37%)
 Quite satisfied 152 (37%)
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 64 (16%)
 Quite unsatisfied 19 (5%)
 Very unsatisfied 21 (5%)

14. All applicants who stated that they were either quite or very unsatisfied and can be identified, will be contacted and offered further assistance if it is felt appropriate.

15. A total of 5,438 forms were sent out to all Housing Register applicants. 781 were returned representing a response rate of 14.4%.

Support Currently Provided to Vulnerable Applicants

16. The Allocations Team within the Housing Options Section offers a great deal of support to vulnerable applicants including:

- A list of all vulnerable applicants is maintained. The list is compiled by referrals made by Scheme Managers, other Housing Directorate staff and external agencies.
- All Scheme Managers are given lists of older tenants they visit who are on the Housing Register. When visiting these residents, they are ensuring the residents fully understand how to participate in the Choice Based Lettings Scheme.
- When any new applicant joins the Housing Register, they are given an Information Pack which gives details of the scheme and how assistance can be obtained.

- Articles are included in the tenants' magazine, "Housing News", on how the scheme operates, explaining that applicants can seek assistance from staff.
- A letter is sent to all those who are not participating in the scheme for more than 6 months asking them if they wish to remain on the Housing Register, but more importantly, asking if they require any assistance in participating in the Scheme.
- Computer access to the Scheme is currently provided in receptions at the Area Housing Office (South) at The Broadway, Loughton and at the Limes Farm Office in Chigwell. In the near future, new Kiosks are being installed at these offices and also the Civic Offices, Epping which will give access to Choice Based Lettings and a range of other Council services
- Staff are able to refer applicants to Supporting People's support provider "In Touch Support" for assistance with a range of housing-related support matters, including participating in the HomeOption scheme.
- All Housing Options staff are trained in providing support to vulnerable applicants.

Development of the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme

17. During 2010/2011, a number of improvements have been achieved as follows:

- HEHOC agreed to discontinue the distribution of the Free-sheet which has resulted in a substantial reduction in costs. The saving to the Council alone is in the region of £18,000 per annum. The Free-sheet has been replaced with a new smaller Property List which is printed off locally and made available at a number of locations in the District
- A consultation section has been added to the HomeOption Website in order to seek the views of users on the Scheme
- Progress has been made with investigating the provision of a housing application form on-line
- The Consortium's Equality Impact Assessment in accordance with the new "toolkit" is currently being updated
- The HomeSwapper national mutual exchange scheme with which the Council participates has been added to the HomeOption website
- The HomeOption website now explains to applicants the Council's recently introduced penalties, for refusals of offers of suitable accommodation
- Charging partner Housing Associations a fee for including their properties on the Scheme is being considered with a consultation exercise being undertaken in the coming months

18. The Housing Scrutiny Panel is asked to review progress made on the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

Reason for decision:

To submit a report on progress with the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings in accordance with the Housing Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme.

Options considered and rejected:

Not to submit a report on progress with the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

Consultation undertaken:

The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation will consider the report at its meeting.

Resource implications:

Budget provision: N/A

Personnel: N/A

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference: N/A

Relevant statutory powers: Housing Act 1996

Background papers: None

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

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A

APPENDIX ONE

HomeOption – Information Bulletin (6 Months)

(28 November 2010 – 28 May 2011)

Number of properties let (including Housing Association nominations)	214
Number of advertisements	282
Advertisements by property type	Flat 187 House 51 Maisonette 18 Bungalow 26
Number of expressions of interest during the period	21,038
Number of applicants on the Housing Register (May 2011)	5,514
Number of applicants not participating in the scheme	1,703 (31%)
Method of expressing an interest	Internet 92.9% Coupon 1.22% Phone 3.67% Text 0.72% Staff Help 1.49%

Housing Register Activity – 28 November 2010 – 28 May 2011				
Band	Expressions of Interest	Number of Lets (Excl RSL)	Number of Refusals (Excl RSL)	Number of Applicants At June 2011
One	334	39	14	126
Two	0	Nil	Nil	2
Three	4,483	68	65	515
Four	7,911	39	57	1,847
Five	4,570	13	22	1,377
Six	3,740	Nil	4	1,647
Total	21,038	159	162	5,514



SCRUTINY



Report to the Housing Scrutiny Panel **Date of meeting: 19 July 2011**

Portfolio: Housing – Councillor Mrs M McEwen

Subject: Ethnic Monitoring

Officer contact for further information: Roger Wilson (01992 56 4419)
Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

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

Report:

1. The Council has a Policy Statement for Equal Opportunities in the Provision of Housing Services. The Policy Statement includes a requirement for an annual review of the ethnicity of applicants on the Housing Register, compared with the ethnicity of those allocated accommodation. When undertaking a Customer Impact Assessment of Older Peoples' Housing Services it was identified that the ethnicity of applicants allocated sheltered accommodation should be monitored separately and is therefore included in this report.

2. The reason for the review is to identify whether or not there are any indications to suggest the Council may be discriminating against any one ethnic group. The review is undertaken by the Housing Scrutiny Panel, in consultation with the Tenants and Leaseholder's Federation.

3. It should be noted that in the current and future years, in addition to the percentage of applicants, the number of applicants is also included in the statistics as requested by the Panel when the report was considered last year:

4. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register for both 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 is set out in the following table.

Ethnic Group	2009/10 (%)	2010/11
White British/Irish	79	3956 (77.3%)
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0.7	42 (0.8%)
African/Caribbean	3.2	167 (3.3%)
Mixed Race	1.2	62 (1.2%)

Other	4.4	254 (5%)
Not Stated	11.5	637 (12.4%)

5. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of all Housing Register applicants allocated Council accommodation in 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 is set out in the following table:

Ethnic Group	2009/2010 (%)	2010/11
White British/Irish	76.4	290 (81.2%)
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0.9	0
African/Caribbean	2.2	8 (2.2%)
Mixed Race	0.6	8 (2.2%)
Other	4.6	13 (3.6%)
Not Stated	15.3	38 (10.6%)

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

7. The following table shows the breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register awaiting sheltered accommodation in both 2009/2010 and 2010/11.

Ethnic Group	2009/10 (%)	2010/11
White British/Irish	83	460 (83%)
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0	0
African/Caribbean	0.2	3 (0.5%)
Mixed Race	0	0
Other	1.3	8 (1.5%)

Not Stated	15.5	83 (15%)
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8. The breakdown of the ethnic origin of Housing Register applicants allocated sheltered accommodation during both 2009/2010 and 2010/11 is set out in the following table:

Ethnic Group	2009/10 (%)	2010/11
White British/Irish	83.8	96 (82.7%)
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	0	0
African/Caribbean	2.6	0
Mixed Race	0	0
Other	2.6	4 (3.5%)
Not Stated	11	16 (13.8%)

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

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

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	92.41
Bangladesh/Pakistan/India	2.14
African/Caribbean	0.78
Mixed Race	1.04
Other	3.63

Statement in support of recommended action:

11. Although a large number of housing applicants do not disclose their ethnicity, it is evident from the analyses shown in the report that the ethnic make up of the Housing Register mirrors the allocation of vacancies sufficiently for the Council to be confident that its

Allocations Scheme does not racially discriminate, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, no adjustments to the Allocations Scheme are recommended.

Consultation undertaken:

12. The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation will be updated on the report at their next meeting on 6 July 2011, any comments they may have will be reported orally.

Resource implications:

Budget provision: None

Personnel: None

Land: None

Community Plan/BVPP reference: Social inclusion

Relevant statutory powers: Housing Act 1996, as amended

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

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

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 19th July 2011

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr Mrs M. McEwen

Subject: Housing Strategy 2009-2012:

- (a) 12-Month Progress Report on Key Action Plan 2010/11**
- (b) New Key Action Plan 2011/12**



Officer contact for further information:

Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)

Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That the 12-Month Progress Report on the Housing Strategy’s Key Action Plan 2010/11 – attached as Appendix 1 – be considered, with any comments passed to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Director of Housing accordingly; and**
- (2) That the proposed new Key Action Plan 2011/12 – attached as Appendix 2 – be recommended to the Cabinet for adoption.**

Report:

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

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

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

4. Last year, the Cabinet adopted the second Key Action Plan for the Housing Strategy, on the recommendation of the Housing Scrutiny Panel. The first 6-Month Progress Report on this Key Action Plan was considered by the Scrutiny Panel in March 2011, and the 12-Month Progress Report is attached as Appendix 1, which the Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider, and to provide any comments to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Director of Housing.

5. It is now necessary for the Cabinet to adopt a Key Action Plan for the forthcoming year, which is the last year before the Housing Strategy is fully updated in 2012. An updated Key Action Plan is therefore attached at Appendix 2, which the Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider and recommend to the Cabinet for adoption in September 2011. In order to assist members, new and amended actions within the latest Key Action Plan are shown in ***bold italics***.

**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	In Progress – Cabinet has agreed in principle the sale of land at Millfield to Hastoe to develop 4 houses from straw bales. Hastoe has undertaken a consultation exercise with local residents and the Parish Council, and is currently preparing its planning application. <i>Carry forward to Action Plan 2011/12</i>
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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Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2011-12

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Current Position
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, following the 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	Asst. Director of Planning & Economic Development	December 2011	
5	Affordable Housing	<i>Work with housing associations and developers to provide 98 new affordable homes for rent and shared ownership in 2011/12 and around a further 125 new affordable homes by March 2014, at the following sites with detailed planning</i>	Director of Housing	March 2012	

		<p>permission:</p> <p>(a) White Lodge/The Limes, Waltham Abbey (b) Station Approach, Ongar (c) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell (d) Zinc (Gt. Stony), Ongar (e) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell (f) 12-30 Church Hill, Loughton (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 – <i>and consider whether to undertake Phase 2</i>	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	Investigate the residential development potential of the Council's Nursery at Pyrles Lane, Loughton, including the provision of at least 40% affordable housing, for when the Nursery relocates to alternative premises	Principal Valuer and Estates and Surveyor	Dec 2011	

18	Affordable Housing	Introduce an on-line housing registration system	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2012	
19	Homelessness	Review and revise the Homelessness Strategy for a further three-year period	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	August 2012	
20	Diversity	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2012	
21	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	
22	Gypsies & Travellers	As part of the LDF Core Strategy , 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	March 2012	
23	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)	July 2012	

24	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	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	
25	Supported Housing – Older People & Other Vulnerables	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	
26	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	
27	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	
28	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	

29	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	
30	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	
31	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	
32	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licences for existing residential park home sites in the District	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	October 2011	
33	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	
34	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	

35	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce and support a Landlord Accreditation Scheme within the District	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2012	
36	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	July 2012	
37	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	
38	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	