

**Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2012-13
6-Month Progress Report – January 2013**

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Report (as at 1 st January 2013)
1	General	Review the Housing Strategy 2009-2012 and produce an updated Housing Strategy for 2013-2016, following a consultation exercise on a Draft Housing Strategy	Director of Housing	Sept 2013	Not yet due
2	Housing Market	Undertake an extensive Public Consultation Exercise on the Issues and Options Paper for the Council's Local Plan, to assist with the production of the new Local Plan	Asst. Director of Planning (Policy & Conservation)	October 2012	Achieved – October 2012
3	Housing Market	Undertake a review and refresh of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), to inform the Draft Local Plan and the target number of new homes required for the District to 2031	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	Sept 2012 Jan 2013	In Progress – A draft report has been received from the consultants undertaking the SHMA and the comments of EFDC officers on the draft have been provided
4	Housing Market	Produce a Draft Local Plan, taking account of the responses to the Issues and Options Paper, including a proposed target for the delivery of new homes to 2031.	Asst. Director of Planning (Policy & Conservation)	May 2013	In Progress – The responses received to the Issues and Options consultation are currently being recorded and assessed, which will inform the Draft Local Plan
5	Housing Market	Undertake a Consultation Exercise on the Draft Local Plan and process the responses	Asst. Director of Planning (Policy & Conservation)	August 2013	Not yet due

6	Housing Market	Submit the final version of the Local Plan for an Examination in Public	Asst. Director of Planning (Policy & Conservation)	March 2014	Not yet due
7	Regeneration	Adopt a Design and Development Brief for the St Johns Area of Epping, including the provision of market and affordable housing, following analysis of the results of the public consultation exercise completed in July 2012	Director of Corporate Support Services	Sept 2012	Achieved – October 2012
8	Regeneration	Produce and agree an Action Plan for the regeneration of the Council's assets at The Broadway, Loughton, in accordance with the approved Development and Design Brief, including the provision of significant levels of affordable housing	Director of Housing	Sept 2012	Achieved – September 2012
9	Affordable Housing	<p>Work with housing associations and developers to provide 76 new affordable homes for rent and shared ownership in 2013/14 and around a further 69 new affordable homes by March 2015, at the following sites with planning permission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey – 67 new homes (b) 12-30 Church Hill, Loughton – 5 new homes (c) Millfield, High Ongar – 4 new homes (d) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell – 52 new homes (e) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell – 17 new homes 	Director of Housing	<p>March 2013</p> <p>March 2014</p>	<p>In Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey – Completed (b) 12-30 Church Hill, Loughton – On site, but completion delayed until May 2013, due to two of the properties being built close to the access way to the site, which have to be completed last on the site, due to allowing lorries into the site without height restriction. (c) Millfield, High Ongar – On site, (with completion due March 2013) (d) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell – Detailed planning permission granted (December 2012) (e) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell – Revised planning application refused planning permission (December 2012). The housing association is currently revising the design

10	Affordable Housing	Review the possible re-introduction of the Home Ownership Grant Scheme (enabling existing Council tenants to purchase in the private sector) in 2013/14.	Housing Resources Manager	Sept 2012	Achieved – September 2012 On review, the Cabinet agreed to discontinue the Scheme permanently.
11	Affordable Housing	Complete Phase 1 of the Open Market Home Ownership Scheme with Broxbourne Housing Association (BHA) - to enable first time buyers in the District to purchase a property of their choice from the open market through shared ownership, funded jointly by the Council, BHA and the applicant – and consider whether to undertake Phase 2	Director of Housing	Sept 2012 Feb 2013	Nearly Achieved – Most of the accepted applications have been completed and the outstanding applications are in chains, awaiting property completions. The Housing Portfolio Holder made a decision to implement Phase 2 in October 2012.
12	Affordable Housing	Seek and obtain planning permission for residential development at the Council's Pyrles Lane Nursery site, Loughton, including the provision of at least 40% affordable housing	Chief Estates Officer	Nov 2012 Feb 2013	In Progress – An outline planning application was submitted last year, but an amended application (with revised Design and Access Statement, Transport Statement and Ecological Assessment) was received in January 2013
13	Affordable Housing	Ensure commencement of the residential housing element of the development of the St Johns School site, Epping, in accordance with the signed Section 106 (Planning) Agreement, including the provision of affordable housing	Director of Housing	Oct 2013	Not yet due – The new school needs to be completed first (estimated to be Summer 2013).
14	Council Housebuilding Programme	Appoint a Development Agent to manage and deliver the Council's Housebuilding Programme, including the provision of all building consultants and the procurement of works contractors	Director of Housing	Jan 2013	Nearly Achieved – The Cabinet has agreed to appoint East Thames Group following a robust, EU-compliant tender exercise. The contract is due to be signed in January 2013

15	Council Housebuilding Programme	Formulate and adopt a Development Strategy for the Council Housebuilding Programme	Director of Housing	April 2013	Not yet due – This will be one of the first tasks of the Development Agent, once in contract.
16	Council Housebuilding Programme	Undertake initial development assessments for a further list of small garage sites and garage sites with vacancies and no waiting list, and recommend to the Cabinet that detailed Development and Financial Appraisals be undertaken for those sites that have development potential	Director of Housing	Dec 2013	Alternative approach agreed – These initial assessments will now be undertaken by the appointed Development Agent.
17	Council Housebuilding Programme	Seek Development Partner status for the Council with the Homes and Communities Agency, to enable the Council to bid for HCA funding and charge affordable rents for its new developments, instead of social rents	Director of Housing	Sept 2013	Not yet due – This will be undertaken by the Development Agent, once in contract.
18	Council Housebuilding Programme	Complete the first batch of Development and Financial Appraisals for potential development sites, for consideration by the Cabinet	Director of Housing	June 2013	Not yet due – These will be undertaken by the Development Agent, once in contract. The Leader of Council has made a Decision to establish a new Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee to consider the completed Development and Financial Appraisals, instead of the Cabinet
19	Council Housebuilding Programme	Obtain planning permissions for the first sites under the Council Housebuilding Programme	Director of Housing	Nov 2013	Not yet due – These will be sought by the Development Agent, once the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee has agreed which sites should be progressed for development.
20	Affordable Housing	Work with Trust for London and Chigwell Parish Council to agree an appropriate way forward for the development or conversion of the 20	Director of Housing	Oct 2012 Feb 2013	In Progress – A report is due to be considered by the Cabinet in February 2013, recommending that the Council undertakes the proposed conversion scheme itself, funded from the HRA's Housing Improvements

		unpopular bedsits for older people at Marden Close, Chigwell Row to provide good quality, self-contained rented accommodation for Housing Register applicants			and Service Enhancements Budget
21	Affordable Housing	Update the existing District-wide Nominations Agreements with each of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners for new rented housing developments - to take account of the new Affordable Rents Framework - and formulate new District-wide Nominations Agreements for shared ownership properties with the same partners.	Director of Housing	Dec 2012 May 2013	No Progress - Due to other workload commitment.
22	Affordable Housing	Adopt a West Essex Tenancy Strategy to meet the requirements of the Localism Act, setting out the Council's requirements for the forms of tenure offered to new tenants, to which the Council and housing associations must have regard.	Director of Housing	Oct 2012	Achieved – The Cabinet adopted the West Essex Tenancy Strategy in October 2012.
23	Affordable Housing	Formulate a Tenancy Policy, setting out the form(s) of tenure that the Council will provide in the future, including the possible use of flexible (fixed term) tenancies in appropriate cases, for detailed consideration by the Housing Scrutiny Panel and subsequent adoption by the Cabinet.	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	April 2013	In Progress – The Housing Scrutiny Panel agreed a Draft Tenancy Policy in December 2012 and a consultation exercise on the draft is currently in progress. The Draft Tenancy Policy and the response from the consultation exercise will be reported to the Cabinet in April 2013 for adoption.
24	Affordable Housing	Undertake a major review of the Council's Allocations Scheme, in the light of the flexibilities offered by the Localism Act, and adopt a revised Allocations Scheme by the Council by	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	April 2013	In Progress – The Housing Scrutiny Panel agreed a new Draft Housing Allocations Scheme in December 2012 and a consultation exercise on the draft is currently in progress.

		the Cabinet – including a local Eligibility Criteria – following detailed consideration by the Housing Scrutiny Panel and consultation with stakeholders and housing applicants.			The new Draft Allocations Scheme and the response from the consultation exercise will be reported to the Cabinet in April 2013 for adoption.
25	Affordable Housing	Undertake a review of the success of the Council's expanded Social Housing Fraud Scheme, around 1 year after the appointment to the new post of Senior Housing Officer (Social Housing Fraud)	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	July 2013	Achieved – The Housing Scrutiny Panel reviewed the success of the Scheme in July 2013.
26	Affordable Housing	Recruit to the new post of Housing Underoccupation Officer and formulate an action plan to reduce the amount of under-occupation within the Council's housing stock and to assist older people with practical support to move to smaller accommodation.	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Oct 2012 Mar 2013	In Progress – The appointment was delayed due to a suspension of the Council's Job Evaluation Scheme. However, the job evaluation for the post has been undertaken and the post will be advertised in January 2013.
27	Affordable Housing	Produce and submit to the Housing Scrutiny Panel a progress report on the success of the new Housing Underoccupation Officer post, around 12 months after appointment	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Oct 2013 Jan 2014	Not yet due
28	Affordable Housing	Consider the findings of the Chartered Institute of Housing's study (commissioned by the Council with full funding from Improvement East) on the implications of the welfare reforms - in relation to the introduction of universal credit, under-occupation, increased rent arrears and increased transaction costs - and identify and implement an appropriate package of measures to mitigate the effects	Director of Housing	Mar 2013 Nov 2013	In Progress – The CIH's Study was presented to all members in October 2012. The Cabinet agreed a resultant Welfare Reform Mitigation Action Plan in October 2012. The first Quarterly Progress Report on the Action Plan will be considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel at its meeting in January 2013.

29	Affordable Housing	Introduce an on-line housing registration system	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	April 2013	<p>In Progress – The Housing Portfolio Holder has agreed to a “hosting arrangement” for the Council’s Housing Register by Locata Housing Services, the Council’s choice based lettings agency.</p> <p>Part of this arrangement includes the provision of an on-line housing registration system.</p> <p>The new Draft Housing Allocations Scheme proposes that all applicants must register on-line for housing, including existing applicants. Assistance will be provided to those without internet access or who have difficulties.</p>
30	Homelessness	Adopt a revised Homelessness Strategy for a further three-year period, following review by the Housing Scrutiny Panel and consultation exercise with stakeholders	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Sept 2012	<p>Achieved – The Housing Portfolio Holder adopted the revised Homelessness Strategy in September 2012, following detailed consideration by the Housing Scrutiny Panel in July 2012.</p>
31	Homelessness	Decide whether or not to use the flexibilities offered by the Localism Act to place homeless families in private rented accommodation without their agreement	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Oct 2012 Apr 2013	<p>In Progress – The Housing Scrutiny Panel agreed a proposed provision to place homeless families with less than three years’ residence in the District within the new Draft Housing Allocations Scheme in December 2012.</p> <p>A consultation exercise on the proposal, as part of the new draft Housing Allocations Scheme is currently in progress.</p> <p>The proposals as part of the proposed new Allocations Scheme and the response from the consultation exercise will be reported to the Cabinet in April 2013 for adoption.</p>

32	Homelessness	Consider the findings of the Chartered Institute of Housing's study on the implications of the welfare reforms, in relation to homelessness, and implement an appropriate package of measures to mitigate the effects	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2013 Nov 2013	In Progress – See Action (28)
33	Homelessness	Complete the programme of conversion works to provide designated bathrooms for each room at Norway House, the Council's Homeless Persons Hostel	Housing Options Manager	March 2013	In Progress – Most rooms now have designated bathrooms
34	Diversity	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2013	Not yet due
35	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 2013	Not yet due
36	Diversity	Implement the Council's new Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance for appropriate housing services	Director of Housing	Mar 2013	In Progress – The Cabinet agreed the new policy and guidance in December 2012.
37	Diversity	Complete an Accommodation Assessment for Gypsy Roma and Travellers (GRT), in order to inform the Local Plan in respect of the accommodation requirements for the GRT community	Asst. Director of Planning (Policy & Conservation)	Nov 2012 Sept 2013	Delayed – The Essex Planning Officers Association is currently considering the proposed methodology for undertaking the Accommodation Assessment.
38	Diversity	Undertake an audit of the Council's compliance with the Human Right's Commission's Code of Practice in	Assistant Director of Housing	July 2013	Not yet due

		Rented Housing and undertake any required actions as a result	(Private Sector and Resources)		
39	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Following the Issues and Options Exercise, include a requirement in the Draft Local Plan that all new housing developments in the District should meet the Lifetime Homes Standard	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	May 2013	In Progress – This is currently being considered by planning officers, as part of the formulation of the Draft Local Plan
40	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Agree the Council's approach for the delivery of its Careline Service, following the County Council's proposed introduction of a new county-wide Telecare Contract from April 2013	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	June 2013	<p>In Progress – In November 2012, the Essex County Council Housing Related Support (HRS) Team confirmed its intention to tender a contract for the county-wide provision of telecare services.</p> <p>Following a meeting of Essex local authority control centre providers, a meeting was held between local authority representatives and the County Council's Head of HRS, proposing a negotiated arrangement for existing Essex local authority control centre providers to continue to provide the service to a common specification, charges and HRS funding across Essex.</p> <p>Essex CC officers are currently considering the proposal.</p>
41	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Introduce a new, in-house, free Handyperson Scheme for all the Council's sheltered housing schemes, and commission a similar free Handyperson Scheme for other older Council tenants from Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF)	Asst. Director of Housing (Property)	Oct 2012	Achieved – November 2012
42	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Review the success of the in-house Handyperson Scheme and VAEF Handyperson Scheme around 12 months after their introduction	Asst. Director of Housing (Property)	Oct 2013	Not yet due

43	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Provide a grant of £10,000 to the proposed Home2Home Furniture Recycling Scheme, provided that there is surety and evidence that the Scheme will become operational.	Director of Housing	Oct 2012 Feb 2013	Not yet paid – The Scheme is now called Epping Forest Re-use and is working in partnership with the Lighthouse Furniture Project, which is close to leasing a warehouse in Epping. The Scheme is due to be launched in Feb 2012, after which a request to release the grant is expected.
44	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Install key safes outside all properties within the Council sheltered housing schemes, free of charge	Housing Manager (Older People's Services)	Dec 2012	Achieved – December 2012
45	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 2013	In Progress – However, 40 long term empty properties had been brought back into use in the first 6 months of 2012/13 alone.
46	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 2013	In Progress – In particular, the Council has been working with Hastoe and the Parish Council to provide a rural housing scheme in Moreton, Bobbingworth and/or The Lavers.
47	Decent Homes – Public Sector	Undertake programmes of work to ensure that all the Council's homes continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard and also meet a full, modern maintenance standard, utilising the additional funding available as a result of HRA self financing	Housing Assets Manager	July 2013	In Progress – The Council continues to have no non-decent homes. The additional posts within the Housing Assets Section have almost all be filled and commenced and programmes of work are being put into place to meet the full modern maintenance standard.
48	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Produce for the Housing Scrutiny Panel a Progress Report on the new Private Sector Housing Strategy, around 1 year after adoption, to identify if any refinements are required	Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector and Resources)	July 2013	Not yet due

49	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licences for existing residential park home sites in the District	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	Dec 2012	Achieved – All new licences, with the agreed new licence conditions, were issued by December 2012 - together with a list of tolerated and unauthorised contraventions of the new conditions
50	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)	Dec 2013	Not yet due – However, it is likely that new licence conditions for gypsy and traveller sites will be formulated and issued before holiday park home sites, completion of this action may be delayed beyond December 2013.
51	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Prepare the Council's CARE Service for the retendering of the Essex Home Improvement Agency contract(s), due to be introduced in July 2013.	Private Housing Manager (Grants & CARE)	April 2013	No longer required – Following consultation with Essex local authorities and HIA providers, Essex CC will be extending the existing HIA tenders for at least one year, possibly two years.
52	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Report to the Housing Portfolio Holder on a proposal to increase CARE's project management fees for non-Disabled Facilities Grant work to 15%, in line with the fees now charged for Disabled Facilities Grant work	Private Housing Manager (Grants & CARE)	Dec 2012	Achieved – The Housing Portfolio Holder agreed the increased fees in October 2012, following consideration by the CARE Advisory Panel.
53	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Review the charging policy for the CARE Handyperson Service, including a consultation exercise with service users	Private Housing Manager (Grants & CARE)	Dec 2012 Mar 2013	In Progress – A Discussion Paper on a proposed new charging policy is due to be considered by the CARE Advisory Panel in January 2013, following which the Housing Portfolio Holder will make a decision.
54	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Seek to introduce a Hospital to Home Scheme for West Essex, in partnership with the Papworth Housing Trust	Private Housing Manager (Grants & CARE)	Mar 2013	In Progress – The new scheme is due to commence in January 2013.
55	Energy Efficiency	Work with Hastoe Housing Association to complete the first affordable housing development by a housing association in the country constructed from straw bales at	Director of Housing	Mar 2013	In Progress – The development is on site and due for completion in March 2013.

		Millfield, High Ongar, significantly improving energy efficiency			
56	Energy Efficiency	Identify and implement the role that the Council can play with the roll-out of the Green Deal, once the final arrangements have been confirmed by the Government	Environmental Co-ordinator	Mar 2013	<p>In Progress – The Management Board has considered the issue and has tasked the Green Working Group, chaired by the Director of Planning and Economic Development, to consider the Council's response.</p> <p>Separately, the Housing Directorate has established its own officer Project Team, chaired by the Asst. Director of Housing, to consider and oversee the detailed housing response.</p>