




## STRATEGIC HOUSING INSPECTION - ACTION PLAN Updated on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007 for July 2007 PMB & GMB

KEY RECOMMENDATION R1						
Develop a specific, measurable, achievable, resources and time bound (SMART) action plan to address all weaknesses identified in the inspection report and ensure that progress is regularly monitored and reported corporately.						
<p>Proposed Outcome –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing improvement and progress against all weaknesses identified.</li> </ul> <p>Outcomes being improved for local residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As detailed under each of the following key recommendations.</li> </ul>						
CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments <sup>1</sup>
R1.1 Develop and approve an action plan to address all weaknesses, corporate and service specific.	05 Aug 06	Agreed by Cabinet.	P. Street	BDHT	CMT	Action Plan completed  Green
R1.2 AC & PS to examine all weaknesses and key recommendations.	Aug 06	Agree action plan by Cabinet Aug 06	P. Street			Action completed  Green
R1.3 Develop a quarterly performance report on the action plan to Performance Management Board.	17 Nov 06	Reported to PMB.	P. Street	BDHT	Housing Team	Action completed  Green
R1.4 From the corporate weaknesses identified, cascade down to each Head of Service and manager a standardised approach to ensure that the weaknesses are addressed within each service area business plan.	30 Jun 06	New draft improvement plan agreed	H. Bennett	WMBC	CMT	2.8.06 Cabinet approval of Corp Improvement Plan incorporating Strat Hsg actions.

						 Green
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R1.5</b> Deliver on the strategic Housing actions set out below.	May 07	Meeting with inspectors on June 2nd	P. Street	BDC BDHT CAB WEEAC NWC&RA		Ongoing  86% of actions completed as at 15.06.07 = Green

**KEY RECOMMENDATION R2**

Strengthen the focus on providing effective access and customer care by:

- Introducing, publishing and monitoring service standards in conjunction with customers.
- Establishing systems to gather regular feedback from customers and use this information to inform service development.
- Ensuring that effective monitoring arrangements are in place covering externalised services.



Proposed Outcome -






- Delivery of services in accordance with customer needs
- Increased engagement by customers and increased customer satisfaction
- Greater transparency in the provision of services







Outcomes being improved for local residents




- Improving customer care
- Better access and information on HUB




Target completion – December 2006




CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
R2.1 Introduce Customer First Strategy and raise staff awareness	On-going	As per Customer First Strategic Action Plan	H. Bennett	N/a	Customer First Officer	Strategy Introduced.  Green
R2.2 Complete staff training on Customer care	30 Nov. 06	All staff trained.	H. Parkinson	Sandstone	Training budget.	Training recommended in 2007. Monthly programme for all new starters plus any existing employees who missed training last year.  Green
R2.3 Head of Service / Manager training on imbedding principles of Customer First in each departments BP and service.	30 Sep. 06	Training completed.	H. Bennett	Simon Haslem	Capacity Fund	Complete

						 Green
<b>R2.4</b> Issue clear guidelines to departmental managers upon how to develop individual departmental service standards AND consult with their client groups relevant to the services in developing these standards.	31 Aug. 06	Guidance and templates for business plans issued.	H. Bennett	N/a	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.	Covered in training.  Green
<b>R2.5</b> Develop training for new staff and reminder training for existing staff.	30 Sep. 07	Wave 2 training completed.	H. Parkinson	TBD	£25,000 training budget bid.	Training recommended in 2007. Monthly programme for all new starters plus any existing employees who missed training last year.  Green
<b>R2.6</b> Establish system of gathering customer / officer / partner organisation views for each client group that is inclusive and monitor the diversity of customers responding.	31 Jul. 06	Customer Panel contract established.	H. Bennett	TBD by tender.	£25,000 budget.	Contract let  Green
<b>R2.7</b> Publicity and launch of Customer First <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pamphlet</li> <li>• Poster</li> <li>• Complaints procedure</li> </ul>	31 Aug 06 30 Sep. 06	Vision agreed at June Cabinet. System in place.	H. Bennett R. Horton	N/a By tender.	N/a £3,000	Publicity and launch of Customer First Strategy Completed  Amber
<b>R2.8</b> Monitor implementation of Customer First, assess customer stakeholder / partner views and feedback into implementation process.	31 Dec. 06	First survey completed.	H. Bennett	TBC via tender.	£25,000 budget.	Customer Panel not suitable SNAP training undertaken by Strat Housing staff in January. Commencement of surveys imminent.



						 Amber
<b>R2.9</b> Analyse responses to ensure monitoring is representative	The contract will ensure the Customer Panel is representative.					See above.  Green
<b>R2.10</b> Appoint a HUB employee to have responsibility for monitoring all leaflets that are to be on display, monitor stock and re-order as appropriate.	1.4.07	Service Champion Appointed	Val Jarvis		N/A	 Green
<b>R2.11</b> Review image/marketing of Council.	31 Dec.06	Brand agreed and action plan to deliver in place.	H. Bennett	I&DeA	To be identified as part of review. Budget bid unsuccessful. Framework contract for existing spend to be established by 30 September 2007.	Communications Manager employed – work ongoing.  Green
<b>R2.12</b> Review signposting at HUB and other facilities and ensure adequate training and maps are provided to staff in respect of directing the public to other services.	Completed					Completed  Green
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R2.13</b> Investigate and fully understand Corporate Strategy (Customer First) and Action Plan	July 06	Corporate dissemination of strategy. Strategic Hsg Team Review meeting.	AC JB JR AG	NONE	N/A	Completed  Green.
<b>R2.14</b> Completion of Customer Service Training by all Strategic Housing and Planning Officers	Dec 06	All officers trained.	H P	N/A	Budgeted	All Strategic Hsg officers now trained. Corporately 75% of staff fully trained.

						 Amber
<b>R2.15</b> Develop a suite of Strategic Housing Customer Questionnaires / feedback forms specific to our services to assess customer views and priorities for improvement after accessing the following services: DFGs Discretionary Grants Mandatory Licensing Empty Homes Landlords forum Caravan site occupants Energy Efficiency Following Homelessness Decision At end of occupation of temp accom Housing Advice / prevention. Housing in new developments.	Sept 06	Forms in draft form by end of August.	AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Timetable/schedule of remaining service surveys drawn up and SNAP IT software installed and questionnaires completed.   Green
<b>R2.16</b> Survey customers of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness service</li> <li>• Grants service</li> <li>• Enforcement</li> <li>• Housing Advice</li> <li>• New housing developments</li> <li>• Empty homes/ initiatives</li> </ul>	Sept 06	Agreed customer questionnaires by end August.	AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Homelessness, Landlords Forum, New Development, Caravan site and Empty Homes and new housing development questionnaires completed and surveys carried out.  Timetable/schedule of remaining service surveys drawn up and SNAP IT software installed.   Amber
<b>R2.17</b> Develop draft Strategic Housing customer service standards.	November 06	Standards agreed as part of service business plan.	AC		Existing staff	Achieved – Overarching Strategic Housing Service Standards have

						<p>been developed (in accordance with Corporate Standards) and a suite of further specific standards for each element of the Housing Service.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<p><b>R2.18</b> Gather and analyse customer service standards of external organisations providing services on our behalf:  BDHT  CAB  NWC&amp;RA  WEEAC  Baseline / BYHF</p>	September 06		AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	<p>Completed.  All partner organisations service standards have been analysed .The only shortfall identified was BDHT on monitoring of written &amp; telephone response. BDHT have agreed to consider our request for inclusion when they next review in 6 mnths.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<p><b>R2.19</b> Meet with each external service provider and compare their service standards with the draft Strategic Housing standards to identify and remedy any shortfall and develop an agreed approach.</p>	December 06	Completion of customer consultation	AC JR JB AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	<p>Completed.  Discussion has taken place with BDHT who have agreed to consider when reviewing their standards   6 months time.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<p><b>R2.20</b> Produce a pamphlet setting out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Strategic Housing Services</li> <li>o Who does what</li> <li>o Customer service standards for each</li> </ul>	December 06	Draft document by October 2006	AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA	Feedback cost of free postage	<p>Completed.  Pamphlet produced providing an A to Z of Strategic Housing</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o element of the service</li> <li>o Complaints &amp; appeals procedure</li> <li>o Comments &amp; feedback</li> </ul>				WEEAC Basement		Services, contact points/officers, service standards and complaints/complements procedures.  Green
<b>R2.21</b> Disseminate pamphlets to all external service providers, HUB, Baseline, Libraries, Drs Surgeries and hospital.	December 06	Production of full range of pamphlets	Strategic Housing Team		Existing staff	Completed. New A – Z of services also now distributed.  Green
<b>R2.22</b> Review website to ensure service standards are published and up to date and include customer enquiry and feedback opportunities.	November 06	Agreement of service standards	JD		Existing staff	Amendments made following the launch of the new website. Housing Initiatives Officer now trained to enable further improvements to be made. New Strategic Housing e.mail address included and all info checked and updated on new Website.  Green
<b>R2.23</b> Further develop key indicators with BDHT, CAB and WEEAC & NWC&RA on accessibility of service.	November 06  Revised Target of Sept 07 for Countywide and PCT Adoption.	Consultation with partner organisations	Strategic Housing Team	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Range of management PI's developed and awareness is being enhanced with Strategic Housing Services pamphlet. Gap analysis Re routes of access completed.



						 Green
<b>R2.24</b> Develop clear and specific information for applicants on the DFG prioritization scheme in place.	November 06	Production of draft leaflet for consultation by October.	J.R		Existing staff	<p>Completed as far as possible within BDC's power. North Worcestershire Code of Practice for Adaptations written and approved at Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> November. Pamphlet cannot be issued until Wyre Forest, PCT and Soc Services have approved the Code of Practice that introduces the new priority system. Still awaited.</p>  Green

### KEY RECOMMENDATION R3

Strengthen the corporate approach to diversity by:

- Developing training for front line staff in dealing with people for whom English is not a first language;
- Ensuring that all Councillors receive diversity training;
- Complete diversity and equality impact assessments in the establishment of all plans and strategies;
- Ensure that translation strap lines are included in all leaflets to indicate their availability in other languages and formats; and
- Display prominent posters indicating the provision of interpreting and translation services at all access points.

#### Proposed Outcome -




- Demonstration of community leadership and to be able to demonstrate that services are being delivered equitably and sensitively;
- Compliance with legislation and positive practice; and
- Increased customer satisfaction from all members of the community.



#### Outcomes being improved for local residents




- Improving access to service for BME clients and availability of a thorough translation service.
- Clearer and more informative information on housing services now available.
- More extensive floating support service for those experiencing DV.






#### Target Completion - December 2006




CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
<b>R3.1</b> Equalities and Diversity to form an explicit part of the values, key priorities, objectives and vision in the new Council Plan.	<p>Consultation of Draft Inclusive Equalities Scheme completed on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2006 – revised version launched on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006.</p> <p>Easy read version of Disability Equality Scheme launched in July 2007.</p>	<p>Legal Officers to be included in the business planning process to ensure that Equality and Diversity is being fed into Service Plans</p> <p>Equality and Diversity business planning template designed based on Level 2 of the LGES and implemented for 2007 – 2008.</p>	Claire Felton	<p>Ethnic Access Link</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Forum</p> <p>Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group</p> <p>Scope</p> <p>Theatre In</p> <p>WREG</p> <p>Worc. Race Equality Council</p> <p>WEG County Council</p>	<p>Equalities Officer</p> <p>Capacity Building Fund</p> <p>Equalities Budget</p>	<p>Inclusive Equalities Scheme launched on 4<sup>th</sup> December.</p> <p>Equalities Scheme addresses need to include Equality and Diversity in business planning and processes.</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Forum to form six working groups to look at each element of Diversity.</p> <p>Gender Equality Working Group formed in February 2007</p>


				through TEDS project. (Tailoring Equality and Diversity Services for Worcestershire)		working on a re-write of the Gender Equality Scheme.  Disabled users Group established July 2007.   Green
<b>R3.2</b> Provide and complete training for all front line staff on how to deal with people for whom English is not a first language.	Completed and reminder training being carried out on request and identified need.	Service re-contracted for 2007.	Fiona Scott	Ethnic Access Link  Equality and Diversity forum.  County Council through annual community consultation events and TEDS.	Equalities Assistant  Equalities Budget	Ethnic Access Link started in Jan 06 and has been renewed in Jan 07. All front line staff received training. Posters, instructions and prompt cards issued to front line staff.   Green
<b>R3.3</b> Develop training for new staff and reminder training for existing staff.	Programme of Disability Equality Training being delivered by SCOPE for all front line staff from February to December 2007.  New one day programme for managers, supervisors and Equality Champions now part of main training programme.  New half day introduction for new staff now part of main stream programme.	Reviewing and evaluating the service.  Analysis of feedback shows change in perceptions and more support for equality and diversity.	Fiona Scott	Ethnic Access Link  Scope  New Training Consultant appointed - Sunita Grigg.	Equalities Officer  Capacity Building Fund  Equality Budget	Programme for training of managers in Corp Training programme Apr - Dec  Induction being revised.  Two half day training modules being provided to all front line staff and new staff.   Green

<p><b>R3.4</b> Write a procedure for all front line staff to follow in dealing with language, cultural, disability, behavioural and other diversity issues.</p>	<p>Guidance written and distributed for clients with language needs.</p> <p>Disability guidance to be made available by January in line with new disability standards DED training</p> <p>Cultural and behavioural awareness training provided by Theatre in – further training completed</p>	<p>Ethnic Access Link service in place since mid June 2006 and renewed until March 2008.</p>	<p>Fiona Scott</p>	<p>Ethnic Access Link</p> <p>Scope</p> <p>New Training Consultant appointed - Sunita Grigg</p>	<p>Equalities Assistant</p> <p>Capacity Building Fund</p> <p>Equalities Budget</p>	<p>Ethnic Access Service in place. Procedure written for non English language needs written.</p> <p>Theatre and follow on training carried out.</p> <p>Disability Equality Training modules being provided.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<p><b>R3.5</b> HUB to record diversity of customers</p>	<p>Inclusive Equalities Scheme includes commitments to monitor service delivery on ethnic origin and disability but not for the other four strands</p>	<p>Corporate data collation in respect of Diversity and effective monitoring of same.</p>	<p>Fiona Scott</p>	<p>All Heads of Service and their departments</p>	<p>Equalities Assistant</p>	<p>Homelessness Advice now being monitored for ethnic access by CAB.</p> <p>Hub only provides information required by Back Office service departments – no Equality and Diversity data is currently being collected. Implementation of service delivery equality monitoring is a long term plan.</p>  <p>Amber</p>
<p><b>R3.6</b> Complete diversity training for all councillors.</p>	<p>Race Equality and Disability Equality training has been delivered to all but 3 members in 2006.</p> <p>New Councillors elected in may 2007</p>		<p>Claire Felton</p>	<p>To be agreed.</p>	<p>Equalities Officer.</p> <p>Capacity Building Fund</p> <p>Equalities Budget</p>	<p>37 of 39 members trained. After May elections new members will automatically be enrolled in the Modern Member Programme which includes equality and diversity.</p>

	will have Equality and Diversity Training in September 2007.					 Green
<b>R3.7</b> Include diversity in Induction Training and policy for all new staff and councillors.	Ongoing	Inclusive Equalities Scheme launched 4 <sup>th</sup> December – provides core values and actions to under-pin the training	Helen Parkinson and HR OD			As above.  Green
<b>R3.8</b> Corporate investigation and consideration of training needs upon making equality and diversity a fundamental foundation in the development of all plans and strategies	Sept 2006	Inclusive Equalities Scheme launched on 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2006	C. Felton/ Helen Parkinson			Corporate Impact Assessment training has been carried Sept, Oct, Dec 06 to support the Business Planning Process sessions held in Jan 2007. 8 ½ days training supplied plus 20 1 to 1s. Business Plans include E & D template. 4 EQIA surgeries per annum planned in main training directory.  Green
<b>R3.9</b> Analysis of all leaflets and publications issued by the Council and development of a corporate image and standard within which translation strap lines become a standardised feature.	Completed	Current project to redesign letter head including “signpost”	Fiona Scott	Ethnic Access Link	Equalities Assistant	Electronic format of language translation signposting for forms and pamphlets and insert for letters formulated and available to all departments. All publications now carry ‘access panel’ and languages offered are based on info advice from Job Centre.

						 Green
<b>R3.10</b> Display posters indicating the provision of interpreting and translation services at all access points.	Completed		Fiona Scott	Ethnic Access Link	Equalities Assistant	Completed.  Green
<b>R3.11</b> Review audit and complete work to access of buildings required to meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995	Capital Programme established to undertake further DDA works in 07/08 and 08/09. FM Group prioritising work. Corporate premises already in top quartile for BVP 156.	To ensure all public buildings are accessible to people with disabilities	Facilities Manager		Staffing	 Green
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R3.12</b> Identify whether partner agencies receive diversity training if not explore the possibility of offering the in house diversity training to partners or encourage them to access training independently.	Sept 06	Meetings with partner agencies completed.	AG / JD	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Results received and collated.  Green
<b>R3.13</b> Receive and analyse diversity breakdown (quarterly) of customers accessing strategic housing services through: BDHT, CAB, WEEAC, NWC&RA	Oct 06	Meetings with partner agencies to agree reporting format.	AC	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Now being provided by CAB Re Housing Advice and homelessness prevention services and BDHT on Waiting List.  Amber
<b>R3.14</b> Review all existing BDC strategic Housing documents, pamphlets and application forms to ensure language strap lines are included on all documentation.	August 06		JB JR		Existing staff	Completed

						 Green
<b>R3.15</b> Record all Strategic Housing Pamphlets on to a CD	Oct 06	Investigate companies to carry out work and Steve Wetherall to design sleeve.	JD		Existing staff	<p>Completed in triplicate for BDC, BDHT and HUB reception areas.</p>  Green
<b>R3.16</b> Review all existing external providers documents, pamphlets and application forms to ensure language strap lines are included on all documentation.	August 06		JB JR	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	<p>Completed and ethnic access strap line labels have been issued to all external providers.</p>  Green
<b>R3.17</b> Develop an increased focus on ensuring that domestic violence services are working well and develop plans to provide additional support, commitment and resources to these services.	August 06	<p>Re-modelling of Gateway Refuge and provision of enhanced floating support services for DV.</p> <p>Report to Cabinet August 06.</p>	AC	Stoneham HA Supporting People BDHT	Existing staff	<p>Stoneham Floating Support Service extended through joint working with Supporting People.</p> <p>Scheme for re-modelling DV hostel following closure of Gateway agreed with Supporting People and BDHT.</p> <p>Scheme to re model Gateway Refuge has gained Planning permission and is underway conveyance of properties to BDHT for re-modelling into 5 self contained units for DV.</p> <p>Revenue bid submitted for Sanctuary Scheme in 07/08. Pilot Scheme running and first</p>

						Sanctuary scheme adaptation completed and commended by Police. Budget for 07/08 in place.  Green
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#### KEY RECOMMENDATION R4

Improve the approach towards value for money by:


- Setting out a clear corporate strategy on providing value for money;
- Ensuring that service heads have access to good quality information about the costs of service, across all areas;
- Comparing costs with other service providers and ensuring that this information is routinely reported and shared with external partners.

#### Proposed Outcome -





- To ensure that resources are used more effectively and efficiently;
- To provide better options for service delivery, leading to improved outcomes for service users;
- The delivery of demonstrably effective, value for money services which provided a balance of cost and quality.




#### Outcomes being improved for local residents

Target Completion – December 2006

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
<b>R4.1</b> Develop a value for money strategy that Heads of Service follow in order to demonstrate that the Council is providing value for money.	Sept 06	Strategy agreed by Executive Board	KD/JP	N/A	External support	 Green Completed
<b>R4.2</b> Incorporate within the business planning process (incorporating budget process) a VFM	Sept 06	Business planning process reviewed	HB/KD	N/A	Existing staff	Incorporated



framework (requirement to investigate VFM of key service areas) – using wherever possible the 'VfM Profiles' report and web-based tool.						 Green
<b>R4.3</b> Training on VFM strategy and framework and revised business planning process	Oct 06	Training provided	HB/KD/JP	N/A		Completed  Green
<b>R4.4</b> Heads of Service to demonstrate Value For Money as part of business planning process	Dec 06	Business plans	HOS	N/A	Existing staff	Completed and ongoing.  Green
<b>R4.5</b> Set up a corporate wide VFM annual performance report to the Performance Monitoring Board that advises upon the Councils progress and VFM against key measures in each department. This to incorporate the Annual Efficiency Statement	Dec 06	Performance Report	KD/JP	N/A		VFM action plans being produced and challenged by steering group including member. To be reported to PMB and Cabinet to monitor delivery against targets. AES to be reported to September PMB & October Cabinet   Amber
<b>R4.6</b> Deliver procurement training on how to achieve VFM and demonstrate duty of care (EU rules) – included in procurement strategy and manual (under development)	Dec 06	Training provided	JP	N/A		VFM training delivered for officers & members Dec 06. Procurement Training set up as part of training programme – staff and members – ongoing as part of financial management training.

						 Green
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
<p><b>R4.7</b> Supply key information on strategic Housing services (with regard to VFM) as part of business planning process on:</p> <p>a) Homelessness, Housing Advice and Housing Register</p> <p>b) Private Sector Housing Services</p>	<p>a) Oct 06</p> <p>b) Dec 06</p>	Service Business Plan	DH / AC	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>a) Homelessness benchmarking exercise completed within County but inconsistencies in approach limit usefulness of results. AC &amp; JR attended Best Value training 13.11.06 Key assessments made in P&amp;E Business Plan</p>  Amber
<p><b>R4.8</b> Revise and adjust Strategic Housing Services as appropriate in response to the findings of the assessment carried out</p>	Ongoing	Service Business Plan	AC / JB	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	<p>Ongoing negotiation with BDHT has introduced additional support, visiting and move on monitoring services under the Housing Agency Agreement. Standard of service has been increased and regular monthly monitoring meetings in place.</p>  Green

**KEY RECOMMENDATION R5**

**Strengthen the approach to providing effective performance management by ensuring that:**

- Individual personal development plans are completed within a set timescale linked to the development of corporate and service plans;
- A consistent reporting framework of both local and national performance indicators is established;
- Training needs against the service objectives are established on a regular basis and training is delivered.



**Proposed Outcome -**






- Enable weaknesses within service delivery to be identified at an early stage;
- Engage all staff in having common objectives for the Council's priorities; and
- Deliver a more effective strategic housing service.



**Outcomes being improved for local residents**



- Developing and more customer needs focussed housing advice and prevention service.
- Increasing supply of affordable housing.
- Confirmation that services and improvements to LSVT tenants is being delivered as promised.

**Target Completion – December 2006**

<b>CORPORATE ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R5.1</b> Develop Council Plan 2007 – 2010 supported by Council Improvement Plan, service business plans, team action plans and PDRs.	31 Dec.06	Council Plan, Service Business Plans, team action plans and PDRs completed.	H. Bennett	N/a	All managers.	Re-programmed to February 2007 on advice of Improvement Director. Completed  Green
<b>R5.2</b> Action to bring PDR's in all departments up to date and meet identified deadlines in future.	31 Dec. 06	Monitoring on an individual manager basis.	J. Pitman	N/a	HR and all managers	Complete.  Green

<b>R5.3</b> Review Top 45 PIs to reflect Council priorities.	15 Aug. 06	New set updated and reported to PMB.	H. Bennett	N/a	CMT	 Green
<b>R5.4</b> Policy Officer to benchmark all of the Council's services with appropriate authorities (using VfM profile tool) and provide managers with clear and consistent guidance on setting appropriate targets. Thus enabling the Council, through supply of consistent information, to reach a balanced understanding of the resources required to achieve continuous improvement towards top quartile performance.	Dec 06	Areas of focus identified.	Policy Officer	N/A		Officer recruited in Financial Services.  Amber
<b>R5.5</b> Increase focus on performing as well as the best local authorities and make plans more specific about setting targets that would bring the Council to the same level as top performers.	September 2006	Revise business plan templates	HB	N/A	Existing staff	Templates agreed and training completed.  Green
<b>R5.6</b> Develop effective monitoring of the service standards that do exist including waiting times at the customer service centre in responding to letters and answering telephone calls.	November 2006	Produce statistics that feed into the quarterly PMB report	DP/RH	N/A	Existing staff	Customer Service Centre already reporting and review planned in September  Green
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R5.7</b> Carry out a 6 monthly review of all Strategic Housing PDRs	July 06	Existing PDRs reviewed and new staff induction PDRs.	AC		Existing staff	Completed.  Green
<b>R5.8</b> Supply national and local PI's collated for all strategic housing services.	Quarterly		JB		Existing staff	Performance reporting issues with BDHT overcome. Ongoing dialogue to address quality and delivery issues has resolved

						performance issues. Reviewed at monthly meetings.  Green
<b>R5.9</b> Update the training needs of Strategic Housing staff as part of 6 monthly PDR review.	6 monthly		AC		Existing staff	Completed.  Green
<b>R5.10</b> Develop annual monitoring report to Performance Management Board upon the management performance of BDHT and progress in meeting promises to their tenants.	Sept 2006		AC JB	BDHT	Staff	Action completed with report written and presented to September PMB covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress made against LSVT promises to tenants</li> <li>• Contribution towards Strategic Housing priorities</li> <li>• Performance in providing services under the SLA.</li> </ul> An important precursor to this report has been the increased level of understanding by members of the role of BDHT through the meetings of the Scrutiny Task Group and the presentation made by BDHT.  Green
<b>R5.11</b> Strengthen the performance management within Strategic Housing where there is a lack of	November 2006	Quarterly report to Performance	AC, JR	OT's NWC&RA	Existing staff	Report on affordable housing delivery 05/06

<p>effective reporting on issues such as - the outturn of development of affordable housing, the performance on providing grants within the private sector housing Strategy. Measure and report on the whole customer experience Re DFGs showing the time taken to complete DFGs from the point of initial contact.</p>		<p>Board on Hsg Strategy Action Plan commencing Oct 06</p>		<p>BDHT</p>		<p>and schemes in pipeline for 07/08 submitted to Cabinet 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 06 and presentation made to Scrutiny Steering Board On 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 06 and Housing Advisory Group on 7<sup>th</sup> November 06.</p> <p>Report for Performance Management Board on progress against Housing Strategy Action Plan and performance against key targets reported to April PMB.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<p><b>R5.12</b> Develop a formal mechanism to enable Strategic Housing and Planning to jointly track and monitor the delivery of housing in the district.</p>	<p>November 2006</p>	<p>Monthly meetings between Head of Service for Planning &amp; Environment / Corp Director with Portfolio Holder to ensure he is up to speed with regional housing issues and becomes an Affordable Housing Champion.</p>	<p>AC / DH /PS</p>		<p>Existing staff</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Championing Group now meeting monthly. Four meetings held to date.</p> <p>A second Group involving members has been set up – Strategic Housing Advisory Group – met November and January and received reports from Head of Planning &amp; Env and Strategic Housing Manager. Tasks set to identify land holdings suitable for affordable housing. Good Practice visits being undertaken.</p>  <p>Green</p>

## KEY RECOMMENDATION R6

### Improving leadership and support for strategic housing and addressing the needs of vulnerable people by...

- Ensuring that members play a more prominent and pro-active role in influencing regional housing issues;
- Ensure that members are fully involved in developing a strategy for the future of hostel and temporary accommodation in the district;
- Reconsidering the effect of the planning moratorium of the delivery of affordable housing; and
- Working in a more focussed way with officers in seeking to redress the imbalance in the housing market.

### Proposed Outcome –

- Better outcomes for people living in temporary accommodation;
- Clearer partnership working with external stakeholders, set on a firm vision for housing in the district; and
- Improved delivery of affordable housing.

### Outcomes being improved for local residents



- Increased member focus on affordable housing is increasing progress in delivery of improved temporary accommodation for the homeless, clients experiencing DV and wider options for housing applicants.


### Target Completion – March 2007

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
<b>R6.1</b> Complete consultation and implementation of Supplementary Planning Documents on Affordable Housing and Managing Housing Supply to enable members to become more actively involved.	Feb 07  Revised to July 2008		DH		Staff recruitment issues	"The publication of the Affordable Housing and Managing Housing policies has been put on hold due to the phased revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The current RSS review will allocate district targets for housing provision between 2001 - 2026, until the outcome of this process is known the District is unclear as to the required level of provision. Upon completion the planning policy section will

						develop new strategies to deliver the required amount of housing with a substantial element of new Affordable housing."  Red
<b>R6.2</b> CEO of BDHT to become member of the newly revised LSP Board to raise affordable housing agenda from major RSL aspect.	Achieved					Completed  Green
<b>R6.3</b> Monthly meetings between Head of Service for Planning & Environment / Corp Director with Portfolio Holder to ensure he is up to speed with regional housing issues and becomes an Affordable Housing Champion.	August 2006	Agreed schedule of meetings	PS		Existing staff	Schedule of meetings set and taking place on the first Friday of each month. Named Affordable Housing Championing Group.  Green
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R6.4</b> Develop the existing Housing Strategy Officer Steering Group to include Member representation to address key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hostel re-modelling</li> <li>• Planning Moratorium</li> <li>• Balancing Housing Market</li> </ul>	Ongoing	First meeting by Mid September	AC	BDHT WEEAC CAB Baseline NWCRA	Existing Staff	Group has been re-convened and meetings scheduled to include Portfolio Holder. 5 meetings held reviewing all 4 priority areas of Strategy. SHMA and RSS reviewshave ben items of discussion.



						 Green
<b>R6.5</b> Develop a Strategic Housing Roadshow to provide District and Parish Council Member training including "Understanding and raising the profile of affordable housing", new initiatives, homelessness and private sector housing and Lifeline.	Ongoing  Develop a programme of visits to PC's by October	1 <sup>st</sup> DC presentation completed March 06. Stoke PC carried out May 06.	Strategic Housing Team	BDHT CAB Baseline	Existing Staff	1 <sup>st</sup> Roadshow held on 18 <sup>th</sup> January 07. Dates being set up with Parish Council's for Roadshow to deliver monthly visits around District. Romlsley PC event to take place on 9 <sup>th</sup> July. Bentley booked for September.   Green
<b>R6.6</b> Progress Hostel de-commissioning / re-modelling strategy for hostels and submit to Cabinet.	Sept 06	Mothballing Wythall Hostel.	AC PS	BDHT	Capital funding Impact on B&B?	Action completed but ongoing. Strategy report approved by Executive Cabinet on 6 <sup>th</sup> Sept 06. Steering Group meetings now on operation up with BDHT officers to progress. Wythall Hostel de-commissioned and being marketed. Remaining Hostel occupancy reducing. Strategic Housing Manager and BDHT Devel Officer attended meeting with Hsg Corp re funding on 14.11.06.  New Heads of Terms agreed with BDHT, Revised strategy approved by Cabinet in April 07, funding for re-modelling plus buy


						<p>backs agreed and re-negotiation of SLA to provide enhanced standard of move on monitoring.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<b>R6.7</b> Arrange 'learning from others' visit for Members to other local authorities.	Oct 06	Good practice identified and agreement on changes at BDC	AC PS	TBD	Housing Team	<p>Visit took place by Members / Officers to Wychavon Re: Spend to Save Prevention and Homelessness Strategy on 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb.</p> <p>AC&amp; Portfolio Holder attended Elgar Housing event on Housing Needs of BME Groups 24.11.06</p> <p>Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Portfolio Holder for Planning attended briefing and good practice on Choice Based Lettings by Wychavon on 5<sup>th</sup> Dec.</p> <p>Portfolio Holder attended IDEA/CIH Strategic Housing Capacity Building Conference in Birmingham on 27.06.07.</p> <p>DH – Arranging visit for Portfolio Holder to Solihull to discuss Green Belt / affordable housing issues.</p>

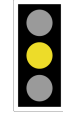
							 Green
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**ADDITIONAL ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THE FULL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMISSION – R7**

**Outcomes being improved for local residents**



- Signs that use of temp accom may be on the decrease.
- HMO's in District becoming safer places to reside.




<b>CORPORATE ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R7.1</b> Address the capacity issues within the Planning Department	Ongoing		DH		Staff recruitment issues	Strategic and Local Plans Officer appointed. Strategic Planning Manager appointed.  Green
<b>STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Partner Organisation Involved</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Monitoring Status and comments</b>
<b>R7.2</b> Develop clear written guidance to support the planning function on the type, quality and layout of affordable and other social housing being developed in the district	Summer 2007		DH		Staff recruitment issues	Hsg Strategy Steering Group developing guidance in advance of LDF process. Work is linking into County Housing Enabling Sub Group work programme re Sect 106 checklist and RSL open book development analysis.







Amber

<b>R7.3</b> To continue to work in partnership with BDHT, CAB and Baseline, other RSLs to reduce use of temporary accommodation for homeless families	On going	Reduced reliance on hostel accommodation and reduction in time spent in temp accommodation.  Target one hostel de- commissioned by Nov 06.  Introduction of new floating support / prevention scheme by Nov 06.  Maximised use of nomination rights to target homeless.	A. Coel	BDC/BDHT	LA Grant. Staff Time.	Guidance / assistance received from Gov't office – strategy for reducing temp accom revised and submitted to DTLR – who asked us if it can be used as example of good practice!  New support service in place from Jan 07. Joint funding new home visiting service with BDHT from March.  Spend To Save, Rent Deposit schemes and match funding to create home visit / intervention was approved in principle by Cabinet 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov subject to budget process.  Pilot Spend to Save ran from Jan 07.  Close working with BDHT has lead to a marked reduction in hostel occupancy and closure of Wythall Hostel.  Housing Services Liaison Group is meeting monthly to



						<p>include BDHT, HUB, CAB, BYHF and BDC.</p> <p>Spend to Save and Rent Deposit Budgets in place for 07/08.</p> <p>Mediation Service for County being coordinated.</p> <p>Bid submitted for additional funding for additional support for Rent Deposit under 25's.</p> <p>Intro of CBL should increase move on performance.</p> <p>Step reduction – 06/07 down from 79 to 63 in temp accom.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<b>R7.4</b> Monitor levels and reasons for homelessness reported by CAB and BDHT to improve prevention services.	Quarterly	<p>Better understanding of Homelessness.</p> <p>Reduced use of temporary accommodation.</p>	JB	BDC/CAB/BDHT	Staff Time	<p>Quarterly breakdown now being received. 06/07 outturn shows 26% reduction in homeless presentations and acceptances.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<b>R7.5</b> Investigate provision of a freephone service for homeless applicants to access BDHT and out of hours service.	October 2006	<p>Budget consideration by Jan 2007.</p> <p>Introduce interim call back policy by</p>	JB		Existing Staff	Interim call back policy introduced.


		July 06.				 <p>Awaiting response from IT dept to emails requesting assistance.</p>
<b>R7.6</b> Re submit budget bid for funding support for the post of County Rural Housing Enabler.	Autumn 2007	Budget consideration Jan 2008.  Interim financial support is provided by BDHT.	AC		Existing Staff	<p>Completed Now being funded by BDC.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<b>R7.7</b> Fully investigate the benefits of implementing a private sector leasing scheme for Bromsgrove whereby the Council or an RSL provides a defined management service to private landlords in return for the use of private rented properties to be used to meet the Council's nominees.	January 2007	Report for officer / member consideration.	JD		Existing Staff	<p>Completed. Pilot scheme now fully researched by new Housing Initiatives Officer and reported to Executive Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> November.</p> <p>Cabinet turned down scheme due to VFM and risk issues.</p> <p>Further investigation of alternative scheme under discussion with Servite HA.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<b>R7.8</b> Review and strengthen the SLA for Hostel management with greater specification of number of management visits.	September 2006	Improved management regime, supplemented by already implemented higher degree of monitoring / visits	JB AC	BDHT	Existing Staff	<p>Completed. Actions from Internal audit of BDHT performance mechanisms addressed. Revisions negotiated and agreed with BDHT.</p>


		by Strategic Housing Staff.				 Green
<b>R7.9</b> Develop and implement a Rent Deposit / private tenancy scheme for over 25's.	November 2006	<p>Commencement of new Housing Initiatives Officer.</p> <p>Cabinet report to Members by Oct 06</p>	JD	Baseline CAB BDHT	Existing Staff  Funding - £10k pa	<p>Report on developing Rent Deposit / private leasing. Cabinet approved outline report on 1<sup>st</sup> Nov subject to budget process. Detailed report on how it will operate if budget approved by Exec Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> Dec.</p> <p>Pilot running from Jan 07 and referrals now being received.</p> <p>Budget for 07/08 approved at Feb Cabinet. Currently in operation. Four in place and capacity for up to 20.</p>  Green
<b>R7.10</b> Enhance the RSL property database and monitoring of nomination rights and negotiate higher levels where possible.	October 2006	Improved feedback information through the HIP information gathering process.	AG	All RSLs	Existing Staff	<p>Ongoing and awaiting further input from partner RSL's following request at Liaison meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November. Nominations being reviewed as part of preparation for CBL implementation. 07 HIP process is assisting in updating</p>

						<p>info.</p>  <p>Amber</p>
<p><b>R7.11</b> Re-submit a bid for provision of a Homelessness 'Spend To Save' Scheme (previously turned down in 06/07 budget process)</p>	<p>October 2006</p>	<p>Cabinet report for consideration by Sept 2006.</p>	<p>JB AC</p>		<p>Existing Staff</p> <p>Funding £5k - £10k pa</p>	<p>Completed. Report approved in principal by Executive Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006 subject to budget approval.</p> <p>Bid formulated and submitted as part of Business Plan process.</p> <p>Mechanism approved by Exec Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> Dec.</p> <p>Pilot to run from Jan 07.</p> <p>Budget approved for 07/08 at Feb Cabinet</p> <p>Scheme currently operational.</p>  <p>Green</p>
<p><b>R7.12</b> Review and examine the use of Discretionary Housing Benefit Payments to prevent homelessness.</p>	<p>September 2006</p>	<p>Presentation from Coventry CC. July 31<sup>st</sup> 2006.</p> <p>Cross-departmental panel to consider cases.</p>	<p>AC, PS</p>		<p>Existing Staff</p>	<p>Completed. Reviewed and procedure developed to coordinate usage through new HB Welfare and DHP Specialist post. Guidance for agencies being developed. There is now an increased awareness of DHB and increased use.</p>



						 Green
<b>R7.13</b> Address the lack of written protocols in place at BDHT for joint working with external advice and support agencies in the provision of homelessness services.	December 2006	County Homelessness Officers Group approved protocols (when completed) to be considered for adoption by BDC/BDHT.	JB AC	BDHT	Existing Staff	<p>16 /17 Yr old protocol completed. CAB / BDHT / BDC officer working group set up and met in December and Jan including Customer Service Centre. All protocols being analysed with view to development of one all encompassing. Being progressed thjrough Front Line Liaison Group.</p>  Green
<b>R7.14</b> License all HMO's that requires mandatory licensing to comply with new legislation.	Ongoing	Targets of initial application to production of Licence – 3 weeks. Any subsequent applications – 2 weeks.	JR, KSF		Existing Staff	<p>Ongoing. Regulatory Officer in post and procedures implemented.</p> <p>Procedure and process now fully operational and all applications being addressed. Extensive progress being made on one particularly sub standard case where all Cat 1 and 2 hazards removed. Licensing imminent on all 3 HMO's (2 licences and 1 pending)</p>

						 Green
<b>R7.15</b> Agree schedule of regular review meetings with NWC&RA to monitor annual spend against budgets for DFG and Discretionary Grants.	July 2006	Improved spend against grant budgets.	JR	NWC&RA	Existing Staff	<p>Monthly monitoring meetings between the Private Sector Housing Officer and North Worcestershire Care and Repair Service Bromsgrove Team in operation to take place on 3rd Tuesday of each month.</p> <p>Follow up meetings between the Private Sector Housing Officer and the Strategic Housing Manager are taking place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month. Also attends 6 monthly Steering Group. Admin post now in place to address backlog has now caught up on payments and approvals.</p>  Green
<b>R7.16</b> Identify empty homes and work to achieve increased usage and performance against BVPI 64.	Ongoing	Commencement of duties of the Housing Initiatives Officer.	JD			<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>BVPI Target achieved and exceeded. 8 empty homes brought back into use 06/07 with our assistance.</p> <p>Scheme being fully researched by new Housing Initiatives</p>

						<p>Officer. Empty Homes survey / questionnaire carried out. Identified all empty homes in District from Council Tax records. Inspected problematic homes using HHSRS. Working in with Rent Deposit Scheme. 2006/7 performance increased to 6 in first 3 months.</p>  <p>Green</p>
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