

STRATEGIC HOUSING RE-INSPECTION - ACTION PLAN June 2008

KEY RECOMMENDATION R1 -

IMPROVE THE FOCUS ON CUSTOMERS BY:

Monitoring, reporting and taking action to ensure that all agreed targets within the housing advice and CAB service level agreements which relate to accessibility and timeliness of the service are met;

Developing and implementing arrangements to monitor and report measures of satisfaction for all aspects of the strategic housing service and setting targets for improvement;

Involving customers in the review and re-development of service standards for the strategic housing service, implement arrangements for customers to be involved in monitoring them, and publicise the standards and performance against them; and

Ensuring that analysis of complaints, which includes common and recurring factors, is regularly reported by service area and that action to resolve them is recorded and reported internally and externally.

Proposed Outcome –

Customers are able to access the generic and specialist housing advice services in a timely way and that any changes in demand or resourcing required are more readily identified;

Customer feedback about the service through complaints and satisfaction information is used to improve services; and;

Customers know what level of service they should receive and can see how the service is performing against agreed standards.

Outcomes being improved for local residents

Target Completion – November 2008

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments ¹
R1.1 Resource and develop staffing to analyse and compile report from customer feedback from range of strategic housing questionnaires. (i.e. housing officers formulate and post out questionnaires, but need a resource to compile and analyse completed questionnaires.	Dec 08	Surveys available for analysis by September 2008	HB	N/A	Corporate Communications. Policy and Performance Team.	
R1.2 Implementation of Corporate Complaints Recording System	Implement Feb 08 start recording 1 st April 08	Formal annual review of Customer First	SS	Police County Council	Corporate Communications. Policy and	

		Strategy			Performance Team.	
R1.3 Quarterly reports to CMT reporting upon complaints from all departments	July 08	1 st report July 08	SS	Tagish Software Company	Corporate Communications. Policy and Performance Team.	
R1.4 Publish results of complaints monitoring on Council website	July 08	1 st report July 08	SS	Tagish Software Company	Corporate Communications. Policy and Performance Team.	
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
R1.5 Develop a spreadsheet to monitor Homeless application clients who have approached and been seen on the same day	July 08	Format agreed with BDHT	JB	BDHT	Strategic Housing Performance and Monitoring Officer	Agreed on 11 th April that BDHT would arrange for CSA's to start monitoring
R1.6 Monitor clients who are homeless and need same day accommodation	July 08	Abritas implementation	JB	BDHT	Strategic Housing Performance and Monitoring Officer. BDHT staff.	
R1.7 Monitor clients who have been officered an appt to see a housing officer within 5 days of initial approach.	July 08	1 st audit to take place in July 08	JB	BDHT	Strategic Housing Performance and Monitoring Officer. BDHT staff.	
R1.8 Meet with CAB to discuss monitoring of service standards	July 08		JB	CAB	Strategic Housing Performance and Monitoring Officer.	
R1.9 Meeting to review schedule of customer feedback questionnaires	July 08		AG		Strategic Housing Team	
R1.10 Report annually to PMB on level of satisfaction of customers to Strategic Housing services and to identify areas of improvement and actions and targets to address.	Sep 08 and then annually		AG/AC		Strategic Housing Team	
R1.11 Investigate best practice authorities for delivery of customer service standards	June 08		JD		Housing Initiatives Officer – information from Audit Commission	
R1.12 Consultation on service standards	Sep 08		JD	BDHT Partner RSLs CAB Baseline	Housing Initiatives Officer	
R1.13 Agree and develop service standards	Nov 08		JD, AC		Strategic Housing Team	
R1.14 Promote and publicise service standards	Dec 08		JD		Strategic Housing	

					Team. Existing Printing and stationary budget.	
R1.15 Add customer standards to all outgoing questionnaires and include question to monitor performance against them	Jan 09		Strategic Housing Team		Strategic Housing Team.	

KEY RECOMMENDATION R2

IMPROVE THE FOCUS ON DIVERSITY BY:

Collecting and using customer profile information and feedback to inform development of a corporate strategy and action plan to identify and remove any barriers to accessing services;

Developing and implementing diversity monitoring for service take up and satisfaction, across all groups identified in the equality scheme, reporting this regularly and taking action to address any actual or perceived inequality in service provision;

Revisiting and updating the Equality Impact Assessments for the strategic housing service to ensure that they are robust and that any weaknesses are integrated into the current service improvement plan; and

Reviewing compliance with the CRE Code of Practice for Rented Housing and for Employment and ensuring that actions to achieve compliance are included in existing improvement plans

Proposed Outcome -

Services are accessible to all parts of the community and are delivered fairly to all customers.

Outcomes being improved for local residents

Target completion – April 2009

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
R2.1 Development of Customer Access Section in Customer First Strategy.	November 2008	Draft available in September for CMT	HB	Police County Council	Possible 2009/2010 budget bids depending on results of strategy development.	
R2.2 Ensure that Equality Monitoring data collection system is adopted by all service areas, that data is submitted to the Community Safety Analyst on time and the forthcoming reports are actioned by service departments.	Dec 08	Collection of meaningful information to input into action planning and policy making.	HB,FS	County Council Community Safety Analyst.	Existing.	In progress
R2.3 Consult the community on the extension of Equality Monitoring (data collection) to extend it to the categories of sexual orientation and religion or belief.	Dec 08	Making contact with relevant organisations and community groups.	FS		Equality and Diversity Officer.	In progress.
R2.4 Review compliance with the CRE Code of Practice for Employment	March 09	Review February 09 Report findings March 09	JP		HR Team	
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
R2.5 Arrange for Equalities Officer to meet with team and facilitate the review and improve of existing impact assessments	Sept 08		AG		Equality and Diversity Officer and Strategic Housing Team.	
R2.6 SH and BDHT to work to review compliance with CRE Code of Practice for Rented Housing	Dec 08	A schedule of meetings agreed with BDHT	AC, AG		Strategic Housing and BDHT staff resources.	

KEY RECOMMENDATION R3 –**MAXIMISE THE IMPACT OF ACTIVITIES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR BY:**

Revisiting internal guidance regarding identification of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and developing and implementing regular programmes of work in the district to identify the type and location of HMOs and targeting inspection and enforcement activity appropriately; and

Developing an overarching strategy to guide all activities in the private sector which clearly sets out the expected combined benefits of work in this area supported by performance targets and monitoring.

Proposed Outcome -

Improved standards in the private sector; and

Improved contribution of the private sector to meeting housing need.

Outcomes being improved for local residents

Target Completion – April 2009

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
R3.1 Review and Revise HMO policy and take report to Exec Cab	Report Jan 2009		KSF, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	
R3.2 Develop and disseminate questionnaire to known HMO's, RSIs, Letting Agents, Charities	April 2008		LE		Private Sector Housing Team. Existing printing and stationary budget.	Formulated questionnaire and sent out.
R3.3 Update existing HMO database with information received back from questionnaires.	June 2008		LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	
R3.4 Develop a risk register of HMO properties to prioritise action	Risk Register completed in July 2008		KSL, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	

R3.5 Commence re-circulation of questionnaire and commence annual review of HMO register	March 2009		LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	
R3.6 Review and agree specification for housing condition survey update (county) approach	June 08		KSF, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	Completed
R3.7 BDC to become proactive in attendance of Private Sector Housing Officer Group	Ongoing	Attendance at every meeting	KSF, LE		Private Sector Team Leader,	Now attending meetings.
R3.8 Researching good practice from other local authorities private sector housing teams	August 08		KSF, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	
R3.9 Housing Strategy Mid Term Review Consultation Event	Nov 08		Strategic Housing Team	CAB BDHT Baseline Supporting People	Private Sector Housing Team.	
R3.10 Collate Information from consultation and research	Dec 08		KSF, LE		Strategic Housing Team	
R3.11 First draft of Private Sector Housing Strategy	Dec 08		KSF		Private Sector Housing Team.	
R3.12 Second Consultation of Private Sector Housing Strategy	Jan 09		Strategic Housing Team	CAB BDHT Baseline Supporting People	Private Sector Housing Team.	
R3.13 Completion of Private Sector Housing Strategy	Feb 09	Completion of Countywide condition survey.	KSF		Private Sector Housing Team	Dependent upon delivery of Countywide condition survey.
R3.14 Cabinet Approval for Private Sector Housing Strategy	March 09	Completion of Countywide condition survey.	KSF, AC		Private Sector Housing team	Dependent upon delivery of Countywide condition survey.
R3.15 Develop a model of stock condition information that can be updated and used to measure the impact /outcomes of actions	April 09	Discuss at PSHOG ways to develop a formula of stock falling out of standard.	KSF		Private Sector Housing team.	

KEY RECOMMENDATION R4

MAXIMISE THE DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING BY:

Ensuring that sufficient staff resources are in place to prioritise the development of strategic planning documents linked to delivery of affordable housing;

Assessing the skills and capacity within the strategic housing and planning teams to ensure that they are equipped to maximise opportunities for delivery following the outcome of the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy, particularly in relation to negotiation skills;

Formalising arrangements for contact and liaison with developers and partners; and

Formalise joint working arrangements between the strategic housing and planning teams to more proactively consider and address required flexibility within pipeline schemes.

Proposed Outcome -

- Effective guidance, skills, tools and practices are in place to support delivery of new affordable housing.

Outcomes being improved for local residents

Target Completion – September 2008

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
STRATEGIC PLANNING ACTIONS						
R4.1 Head of Planning & Environment to undertake a review of Department to ensure operational efficiency and ability to deliver cost effective services.	April 09	Report to CMT Sept 08 Cabinet approval Oct 09	DH	None	Existing	
R4.2 HOS and Managers to ensure sufficient skills exist to carry out negotiations with regard to major planning applications, including affordable housing schemes.	Annually with 6 month review in accordance with Council Policy.	Undertake personal Development Reviews identifying and setting out individual training needs.	Head of Planning & Environment. Area Planning Managers. Strategic Planning Manager. Strategic Housing Manager.	None	Existing	
R4.3 Arrange monthly meetings of strategic housing and planning officers to discuss strategic housing/planning issues to promote	Sept 08	Monthly meeting to be set on same day as RSL	AC / MD	None	Existing	

affordable housing		Principle Preferred partner meetings				
R4.4 Within the developing SPD for affordable housing ensure that clear officer contacts are included and procedure for developers to instigate scheme development and pre planning enquiries and meetings.	Dec 08		MD		Strategic Housing and Planning Officers time.	
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
R4.5 Specific scheme development meetings to be formalised and minuted	June 08		JB			Now operational.

KEY RECOMMENDATION R5 –

IMPROVING VALUE FOR MONEY BY:

Ensuring that spending performance against allocated capital budgets for grants is more closely monitored and maximised and that reporting arrangements allow for prompt action to mitigate any under spends;

Developing baseline cost, performance, and satisfaction analysis to determine value for money of the strategic housing service and any services provided under agreement, subject to regular review;

Assessing the effectiveness of internal and external funding and investment in the service, and the impact of different resource streams, to inform a strategy for maximising the impact of future funding; and

Implementing arrangements to ensure that the impact of investment in learning, training and development is assessed and meets stated objectives.

Proposed Outcome -

- Resources are maximised; and
- Improved information on which to base decisions and planned improvements.

Outcomes being improved for local residents

Target Completion – April 2009



CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
R5.1 Capital programme group established to monitor on quarterly basis performance against budget. Monthly capital monitoring reports prepared for	May 08	To undertake meetings on a quarterly basis	JLP, TB	Discussions to be held with relevant partners in relation to payment profile	Financial services	

consideration of budget holders. Designated accountant for Housing to address financial management with team						
R5.2 To compare costs associated with the provision of the strategic housing service to costs from neighbouring district Councils.	Dec 08	To establish baseline costs of service provision	AC, JLP	Discussions with neighbouring service providers for cost comparison	Strategic Housing, Financial Services	
R5.3 To undertake customer survey to determine levels of satisfaction with the service (including externally provided services)	Mar 09	To undertake survey	AC			
R5.4 Undertake full review of projects implemented to ensure maximum impact of investment in delivery of service to the customers	March 09	To undertake review of funding streams	JLP,AC			
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS						
R5.5 Monthly reports upon spend against DFG and Disabled Facility Grant budget to be made available to SH Manager, for onward reporting to Departmental Management Team and CMT.	August 2008		KSF		Private Sector Housing Team	Now Operational
R5.6 Strategic Housing/Planning Team Group and RSL Principal Preferred Partnership group to consider best use of LA social housing grant/joint commissioning to maximise leveraging in external funding.	June 2008		AC / DH / PS	BDHT West Mercia Housing Group County Council Estates	Strategic Housing Team Portfolio Holders for Planning and Strategic Housing BDHT and W Mercia.	Completed and reviewed on monthly basis through SH Preferred RSL Partner Group.
R5.7 Maximise continued gov't funding for homelessness, Supporting People, DFGs and private sector renewal by supporting the collation of data to back up needs in order to maximise contributions through LAA	Ongoing		AC/ PS / AG	SHMA DC and RSL partners	Existing plus SHMA Partnership Group.	



ACTIONS REMAINING FROM PREVIOUS HOUSING INSPECTION REPORT THAT REQUIRE ONGOING MONITORING.

Target Completion – March 2009.

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
AR1. HUB to record diversity of customers	Inclusive Equalities Scheme includes commitments to monitor service delivery on ethnic origin and disability but not for the other four strands.	Corporate data collation in respect of Diversity and effective monitoring of same.	Fiona Scott	All Heads of Service and their departments	Equalities Assistant	Homelessness Advice now being monitored for ethnic access by CAB. 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. The scheme is under review and will be updated to take account

						<p>of changes that have taken place since scheme first published. i.e. to cover Race, Gender, age and disability.</p>  <p>Amber</p>
<p>AR2. Receive and analyse diversity breakdown (quarterly) of customers accessing strategic housing services through: BDHT, CAB, WEEAC, NWC&RA</p>	<p>Oct 06</p>	<p>Meetings with partner agencies to agree reporting format.</p>	<p>AG</p>	<p>OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement</p>	<p>Existing staff</p>	<p>Now being provided by CAB Re Housing Advice and homelessness prevention services and BDHT on Waiting List and lettings.</p>  <p>Amber</p>
<p>R6.1 Complete consultation and implementation of a Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing to enable members to become more actively involved.</p>	<p>Feb 07</p> <p>Revised to July 2008</p> <p>Re-Scheduled to October 2008</p>		<p>DH</p>	<p>Strategic Planning Team</p>	<p>Staff recruitment issues</p>	<p>"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, The Regional Planning Board submitted the allocations for the West Midlands in December 2007. Bromsgrove District Council has been allocated 2100 dwellings for the period (680 of which have already got planning permission). The original timetable for</p>

						<p>the publication of the RSS has been substantially delayed by central government requesting further work to be done and thus extending the consultation period which is now expected to end in December 2008 with an Examination in public likely in the spring of 2009.</p> <p>The Core Strategy and Affordable Housing SPD preferred options will be published in October 2008</p> <p>Upon finalisation of the allocation the Strategic Planning section will adopt new strategies to deliver the required amount of housing with a substantial element of new Affordable housing."</p> <p>The Housing Strategy Steering Group is developing affordable housing standards in preparation for development of AH SPD.</p> <p>Strategic Housing Manager chairs County Enabling Group – Holding special meeting on 30th October to agree countywide AH elements</p>
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						for SPD.  Red
AR4. 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	Ongoing and awaiting further input from partner RSL's following request at Liaison meeting on 7 th November. Nominations being reviewed as part of preparation for CBL implementation. 07 HIP process is assisting in updating info. Again raised with RSL's at Liaison Mtg 6 th Sept 07 – Template being agreed for quarterly monitoring.  Amber