

STRATEGIC HOUSING RE-INSPECTION - ACTION PLAN Updated February 2009

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.	June 09	Surveys available for analysis by September 2008	HB	N/A	Corporate Communications. Policy and Performance Team.	HB to consider staff resource upon recruitment of currently vacant posts in CCPP Team.

						
R1.2 Implementation of Corporate Complaints Recording System	Implement Feb 08 start recording 1 st April 08	Formal annual review of Customer First Strategy	SS	Police County Council	Corporate Communications. Policy and Performance Team.	Achieved 
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.	Achieved 
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.	Published and now updated regularly.  Achieved
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. Spreadsheet set up and monitoring in process.  Achieved
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.	Spreadsheet set up and monitoring in process.

						 Achieved
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.	 Achieved Spreadsheet set up and monitoring in process.
R1.8 Meet with CAB to discuss monitoring of service standards	July 08		JB	CAB	Strategic Housing Performance and Monitoring Officer.	 Item on next front line liaison meeting.
R1.9 Meeting to review schedule of customer feedback questionnaires	July 08		AG		Strategic Housing Team	 Achieved, schedule being worked to by strategic housing staff
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.	Annually		AG/AC		Strategic Housing Team	 Achieved Schedule and range of customer surveys formulated and being issued. Staff resources insufficient to provide any meaningful analysis of results. HB seeking resource to assist see R1.1 above.
R1.11 Investigate best practice authorities for delivery of customer service standards	June 08		JD		Housing Initiatives Officer – information	Worked with Audit Commission re

					from Audit Commission	identifying good practice authorities. Researched authorities and questionnaire model formulated.  Achieved
R1.12 Consultation on service standards	Sep 08		JD	BDHT Partner RSLs CAB Baseline	Housing Initiatives Officer	Consultation with customers taken place to understand their needs from service. Additional consultation to take place to check standards (once formulated) are right.  Achieved
R1.13 Agree and develop service standards	Nov 08		JD, AC		Strategic Housing Team	Draft Service Standards developed awaiting final phase of consultation with customers through the Corporate Customer Panel and then on all customer satisfaction surveys.  Achieved
R1.14 Promote and publicise service standards	Dec 08 Revised target – July 09		JD		Strategic Housing Team. Existing Printing and stationary budget.	Awaiting final consultation with customers to check final draft of standards.

						
R1.15 Add customer standards to all outgoing questionnaires and include question to monitor performance against them	Jan 09 Revised Target Aug 09		Strategic Housing Team		Strategic Housing Team.	Follows on from R1.14 above. 

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.	April 2009	Draft available in September for CMT	HB	Police County Council	Possible 2009/2010 budget bids depending on results of strategy development.	Started work on this in Oct 08, delayed by CPA 
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.	A high level working group including Deb Poole has been set up to establish a local data system as at the moment the data collected is compiled by the Community Safety Analyst. Service departments need at least a year's worth of data to enable them to look for trends.  Achieved

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.	E&D officer is consulting with community groups about extending the existing system to include sexual orientation and religion or belief and this has been generally well received. 
R2.4 Review compliance with the CRE Code of Practice for Employment	March 2010		JP			Progress in initiating a self assessment has been delayed due to competing staff resource priorities associated with implementation of single status. Jo Pitman is including in 2009/10 Business Plan. 
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.	E+D officer held Impact Assessment training for team and assisted with sample EIAs. on 26 th November 2008. Fiona Scott will be developing a Council wide 3 year rolling plan for Equality Impact Assessments based on the service sections 3 years plan which will be checked at every meeting of the

						Equality Champions Working Group.  Achieved
R2.6 BDC 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.	Review meetings held with TY of BDHT in Dec 08 and Feb 09. Self Assessment completed by BDC and just awaiting final contributions from BDHT relating to their Landlord Services. 

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						
R3.1 Review and Revise HMO policy and take report to Exec Cab	Report Jan 2009	Updated HMO policy, to be taken to Executive Cabinet with Private Sector Housing Strategy.	KSF, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	Review completed and policy corrected. Policy is incorporated in Private Sector Housing Strategy that has been written and is being reported to Executive Cabinet for approval on 29 th April.  Achieved
R3.2 Develop and disseminate questionnaire to known HMO's, RSIs, Letting Agents, Charities	April 2008	HMO Questionnaires sent out to all Privately Rented Accommodation	LE		Private Sector Housing Team. Existing printing and stationary budget.	Formulated questionnaire and sent out. Re-issued due to poor response. Now have 30 HMOs undergoing inspection and prioritised on basis of risk.

						 Achieved
R3.3 Update existing HMO database with information received back from questionnaires.	June 2008	HMO questionnaires received, collating and currently analysing data.	LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	<p>Poor initial response from questionnaires sent out, have identified landlords from revenues dept, questionnaire has been resent and data base being updated.</p>  Achieved
R3.4 Develop a risk register of HMO properties to prioritise action	Risk Register completed in July 2008		KSL, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	<p>Risk register set up and ongoing process of populating with information from questionnaires and inspections.</p>  Achieved
R3.5 Commence re-circulation of questionnaire and commence annual review of HMO register	March 2009		LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	<p>Already re-circulated in advance due to poor response to initial questionnaire.</p>  Achieved
R3.6 Review and agree specification for housing condition survey update (county) approach	June 08	Agreed, meeting to be schedule with RBC to assist with project.	KSF, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	<p>KSF has assisted RBC in finalising the specification. Now in process of being commissioned.</p>

						 Achieved
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,	KSF Now attending meetings.  Achieved
R3.8 Researching good practice from other local authorities private sector housing teams	August 08	Completion of research, however to extend further with a formal approach	KSF, LE		Private Sector Housing Team.	Information gathering through PSHOG meetings. Currently working on DFG timescales and working with Wyre Forest on HIA and Kick Start Exec Cabinet report for county use. Chairing KS Steering Group and have investigated other products.  Achieved and ongoing
R3.9 Housing Strategy Mid Term Review Consultation Event	Nov 08	Complete	Strategic Housing Team	CAB BDHT Baseline Supporting People	Private Sector Housing Team.	Housing Strategy Review Events completed on 26 th Nov 08.  Achieved
R3.10 Collate Information from consultation and research	Dec 08	Complete with results highlighted within the Private Sector Housing	KSF, LE		Strategic Housing Team	Mid Term Review Summary and Refreshed Action Plan completed on 3 rd Jan 09

		Strategy.				and received final approval by Cabinet in Feb 09.  Achieved
R3.11 First draft of Private Sector Housing Strategy	Dec 08		KSF		Private Sector Housing Team.	Formulated for reporting to April Exec Cabinet.  Achieved
R3.12 Second Consultation of Private Sector Housing Strategy	Jan 09 Revised to April 09		Strategic Housing Team	CAB BDHT Baseline Supporting People	Private Sector Housing Team.	Delayed due to competing workload from private sector customers (1 st priority)To be actioned Feb/March 09 
R3.13 Completion of Private Sector Housing Strategy	Feb 09 Revised to April 09	Completion of Countywide condition survey.	KSF		Private Sector Housing Team	PS Strategy written for approval at April Exec Cabinet prior to delayed delivery of Countywide condition survey. May therefore require further revision after survey completed. 
R3.14 Cabinet Approval for Private Sector Housing Strategy	March 09 Revised to April 09	Completion of Countywide condition survey.	KSF, AC		Private Sector Housing team	Process delayed by competing call on staff resources to maintain customer first approach.

						
R3.15 Develop a model of stock condition information that can be updated and used to measure the impact / outcomes of actions	April 09 Revised to July 09	Discuss at PSHOG ways to develop a formula of stock falling out of standard.	KSF		Private Sector Housing team.	To be formulated upon completion of Countywide Condition Survey. 

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	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Status and comments
<p>R4.1 Head of Planning & Environment to undertake a review of Department to ensure operational efficiency and ability to deliver cost effective services.</p>	<p>April 09</p>	<p>Report to CMT Sept 08 Cabinet approval Oct 09</p>	<p>DH</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>Consultation and restructuring completed.</p>  <p>Achieved</p>
<p>R4.2 HOS and Managers to ensure sufficient skills exist to carry out negotiations with regard to major planning applications, including affordable housing schemes.</p>	<p>Annually with 6 month review in accordance with Council Policy.</p>	<p>Undertake personal Development Reviews identifying and setting out individual training needs.</p>	<p>Head of Planning & Environment. Area Planning Managers. Strategic Planning Manager. Strategic Housing Manager.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>Major housing applications are currently dealt with by the Area Planning Managers. However all case officers are actively encouraged to attain membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute which ensures a baseline of competency. In addition case officers have undertaken specific training such as appearing at Hearing appeals training which provides a stepping stone approach to gain experience. The Development Control section has also proposed a restructure to be implemented 01/04/09 that provides a new post of Principal Planning Officer which will provide an additional Senior post and strengthen the units ability to deal with complicated applications such as housing proposals.</p>

						 Achieved
R4.3 Arrange monthly meetings of strategic housing and planning officers to discuss strategic housing/planning issues to promote affordable housing	Sept 08	Monthly meeting to be set on same day as RSL Principle Preferred partner meetings	AC / MD	None	Existing	Monthly meetings now arranged before strategic housing RSL preferred partner consultation group takes place each month.  Achieved
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 Revised target – July 09		MD		Strategic Housing and Planning Officers time.	AC and AF currently working to amalgamate Draft SPD and County Framework SPD. Affordable Housing SPD delayed due to change in national planning guidance, work ongoing to link SPD to Bromsgrove Core Strategy see AR6.1 below 
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.  Achieved

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 consideration of budget holders. Designated accountant for Housing to address financial management with team	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	Monthly meeting with KR, HW and Tony Beirne to review programmed expenditure within year.  Achieved
R5.2 To compare costs associated with the provision of the strategic housing service to costs from neighbouring district Councils.	Dec 08 Agreed to commence 6 months after implementation of Choice Based	To establish baseline costs of service provision	AC, JLP	Discussions with neighbouring service providers for cost comparison	Strategic Housing, Financial Services. Bid for consultants to complete the work rejected in 09/10	6 month review planned for June 09 onwards which will establish cost of service. Contact Tamworth by end of Apr to ask for framework of


	Lettings. Revised Target June 09 onwards				bidding round process.	benchmarking. By June agree breakdown of service questions for other LA. Bid submitted for consultations funding to complete work refused. 
R5.3 To undertake customer survey to determine levels of satisfaction with the service (including externally provided services)	Mar 09	To undertake survey	HB			Overall satisfaction will be measured using current suite of surveys for all services within SH 
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			Project Initiation Documents completed. 
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	On-going	KSF		Private Sector Housing Team	Now Operational New PIs developed and reported quarterly to PMB. Reports on spend to be passed to AC  Achieved
R5.6 Strategic Housing/Planning Team Group and RSL Principal Preferred Partnership group to consider best use of LA social housing	June 2008		AC / DH / PS	BDHT West Mercia Housing Group	Strategic Housing Team Portfolio Holders for	Completed and reviewed on monthly basis through SH


grant/joint commissioning to maximise leveraging in external funding.				County Council Estates	Planning and Strategic Housing BDHT and W Mercia.	Preferred RSL Partner Group.  Achieved
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.	 Ongoing



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	Corporate data collation in respect of Diversity and effective	Fiona Scott	All Heads of Service and their departments	Equalities Assistant	Homelessness Advice now being monitored for ethnic access by CAB.

	delivery on ethnic origin and disability but not for the other four strands.	monitoring of same.				<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>The scheme is under review and will be updated to take account of changes that have taken place since scheme first published. i.e. to cover Race, Gender, age and disability.</p>  <p>Amber</p> <p>There is no change to the Inclusive Equalities Scheme as this is not due to be republished until the end of December 2009. However, it will be updated to reflect changes in all respects that have occurred since it was first published in 2006.</p>
AR2. 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.	AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC	Existing staff	Now being provided by CAB Re Housing Advice and homelessness prevention services and BDHT on Waiting List

				Basement		<p>and lettings. Care and Repair provide information. Weeac are not yet taking this information, KSF to discuss with WEEAC how they can start collecting.</p>  <p>Amber</p>
R6.1 Complete consultation and implementation of a Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing to enable members to become more actively involved.	<p>Feb 07</p> <p>Revised to July 2008</p> <p>Re-Scheduled to October 2009</p>		DH	Strategic Planning Team	Staff recruitment issues	<p>The Affordable Housing SPD has been delayed due to a change in national policy it was hoped the SPD could be linked to regional policy as outlined in Draft PPS12, although this change was excluded in the final version of PPS12.</p> <p>The SPD will now be linked to the Core Strategy which is currently be consulted on, work is about to commence on updating the draft SPD to allow it to be adopted alongside the core strategy.</p> <p>The Housing Strategy Steering Group is developing affordable housing standards in preparation for development of AH SPD.</p> <p>Strategic Housing</p>

						<p>Manager chairs County Enabling Group – Held special meeting on 30th October to agree countywide AH elements for SPD.</p>  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	<p>Monitoring now in operation with RSLs Amber</p>  Achieved