

**HRA Business Plan 2015/16
ACTION PLAN**

Action	Corporate Housing Objectives	Responsibility for Achievement	Target Date	6-Month Progress Report (as at 1 st November 2015)
Housing General				
1) Review the HRA Financial Plan, through formal officer reviews on a quarterly basis and reviews by the Housing Scrutiny Panel on a half-yearly basis.	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5	Director of Communities	Mar 2016	On Target - The Q1 Update was reviewed by officers and the Report on HRA Financial Plan Options (which is being reported to the Housing Select Committee in November) has replaced the need for a Q2 Update
2) <i>(Subject to Cabinet approval)</i> Consider additional appropriate housing improvements and service enhancements, funded from additional resources available to the HRA from April 2016, once the available additional funding is known.	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5	Director of Communities	Jan 2016	No Longer Required – At its meeting in September 2015, following consideration of the Report on HRA Financial Plan Options, the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee decided that, with two or three agreed exceptions, a Moratorium should be placed on the use of the Housing Improvements and Service Enhancements Fund for one year, pending a further review of options for the HRA Financial Plan during 2016.
3) Introduce a new centralised, co-ordinated and customer focussed complaints handling regime for all Step 1 and Step 2 complaints within the Communities Directorate	HO 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Private Housing & Communities Support)	June 2015	Achieved – The new post of Customer Relationship Officer has been created and the post-holder started in August 2015. A completely new approach has been introduced for dealing with Step 1 and Step 2 complaints, which is working very successfully.
4) Undertake the tri-annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey of a random sample of Council tenants, using Housemark's standard "Star" Tenant Satisfaction Survey questions	HO 2 / 3 / 4 / 5	Information and Customer Relations Team Leader	Dec 2015	Achieved – The Tenant Satisfaction Survey has been completed, and the results are being presented to the November meeting of the Select Committee.

Council Housebuilding Programme

5) Seek and obtain Investment Partner status with the HCA, to enable the Council to draw down its HCA funding and charge affordable rents for newly-built properties.	HO 1 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	May 2015	Achieved – May 2016
6) Complete Phase 1 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme, to provide 23 new affordable rented homes in Waltham Abbey.	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Nov 2015 July 2016	Delayed – The contractor is behind programme. No request for an extension of time has been received to date. In November, a Certificate of Non-Completion will be issued in line with the contract. The contractor is advising that completion will be in March 2016 at Roundhills and July 2016 at Harveyfields.
7) Complete the improvement scheme at Marden Close and Faversham Hall, Chigwell Row, to convert the 20 existing bedsits a former hall into 12 one bedroom flats	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Sept Nov 2015	In Progress – The contractor has claimed, and been granted, an extension of time due to required additional work and delays caused by utility companies. Completion is due in November 2015.
8) Commence Phase 2 of the Housebuilding Programme, providing 52 new affordable rented homes at Burton Road, Loughton, including the receipt of planning permission and the procurement of the works contractor	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Mar 2016	On Target – Planning permission was granted for 51 new rented homes at Burton Road, Loughton. Tenders have been issued - and are due back in November 2015. The Cabinet Committee will consider the outcome of the tender exercise at its meeting in January 2016.
9) Obtain planning permission for Phase 3 of the Council Housebuilding programme, to provide new affordable rented homes in Epping, North Weald and Ongar	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Sept Dec 2015	In Progress – Planning Permission has been granted at thee of the nine sites making up Phase 3. Others are delayed while traffic surveys are completed to support the applications. The revised target date is December 2015.
10) Complete the development and financial appraisals for the remaining Council sites with development potential and, through the Council's Housebuilding Cabinet Committee, determine which sites planning permission for development should be sought.	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Sept 2015 Jan 2016	In Progress – The final 13 feasibility studies will be considered by the Cabinet Committee in January 2016.

11) Formulate a programme to deliver Phases 3-6 of the Council Housebuilding Programme	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Sept 2015 Jan 2016	On Target – The Cabinet Committee has already agreed the sites that will make up Phases 3-5. The sites that make up Phase 6 will be considered by the Cabinet Committee in January 2016.
Housing Management				
12) Implement the revisions to the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme and Tenancy Policy, to deliver the agreed requirements.	HO 2	Asst Director (Housing (Operations))	July 2015	Achieved – July 2015
13) Procure a new choice based lettings provider agency for when the existing contract with Locata Housing Services ends.	HO 1 / 2	Asst Director (Housing (Operations))	Sept Nov 2015	In Progress – Following a detailed EU procurement exercise through competitive dialogue, Locata (the current provider) has been selected as the provider for the new contract. The contract documentation is currently in the process of being finalised
14) Undertake an Environmental Improvement Scheme for the Oakwood Hill Estate, Loughton, in partnership with Essex County Council, through a specially-formed Task Force of key individuals and partners	HO 2 / 3 / 4	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Mar 2016	In Progress – Task Force meetings continue to be held and Essex Highways have undertaken pilot work to renew the adopted footpaths, which is currently being evaluated. Following evaluation, arrangements will be put in place to renew the remaining adopted footpaths, renew EFDC's footpaths and undertake the other identified improvements
15) Introduce an IT system to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the Council's leasehold property portfolio	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Communities Support Manager	Dec 2015	In Progress – The project has been delayed, due to difficulties in appointing to the Housing IT Team Leader post. However, progress continues to be made.
16) Extend the opening hours of the Council Office at the Limes Centre, Chigwell into weekday afternoons and increase the range of Council services accessible from the Office	HO 2	Area Housing Manager (South)	Jul 2015 Feb 2016	Delayed – Regrettably, it was not possible to recruit to the new part-time Housing Officer post following the recruitment exercise. However, a new approach to officers' working times is being introduced which, it is hoped, will increase the interest from potential candidates. In the

				meantime, progress is being made for a variety of Council services to provide “surgeries” at the Limes Centre.
17) Provide paperless direct debit facilities to Council leaseholders and clients of the Council’s Careline Service, and increase the flexibility of direct debit dates for all housing clients	HO 1 / 2 / 5	Communities Support Manager	Sept 2015	Achieved – September 2015
18) Extend the funding for the Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau to enable the CAB to appoint their two Debt Advisors for a further year	HO 1 / 2	Asst Director (Housing (Operations))	June Nov 2015	In Progress – Due to a period when the posts were vacant, the current funding will enable the service to continue until March 2016. The Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee has agreed in principle to continue to fund the posts for a further year, subject to the CAB providing a presentation to the Grant Aid Task and Finish Group and the Cabinet Committee being satisfied that reports on the use of the funding are being received and that the funding provides good value for money.
19) Increase the level of financial incentives offered to existing Council tenants to downsize their accommodation	HO 1 / 2	Asst Director (Housing (Operations))	July 2015	Achieved – July 2015
20) Investigate the feasibility and consult tenants on a proposal to provide a caretaking service on the Ninefields Estate, Waltham Abbey	HO 2 / 4	Area Housing Manager (North)	Sept 2015 Mar 2016	No progress yet – due to workload and other commitments
Tenant Participation				
21) Work with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation to commence the undertaking of periodic “mystery shopping” exercises on the Council’s housing services by trained tenants.	HO 2 / 3 / 4	Tenant Participation Officer	June 2015	Achieved – June 2015
22) Complete the Tenant Scrutiny Panel’s Service Review of Tenant Participation	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4	Tenant Participation Officer	Sept 2015 June 2016	Delayed - Very little progress has been made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, which has been exacerbated by the recent departure of the Tenant Participation

				Officer. However, recruitment to the post is underway and the new officer will be assisting the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation to review its approach to tenant scrutiny.
23) Undertake a recruitment campaign and rebranding exercise to increase the membership of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel	HO 4	Tenant Participation Officer	Jun 2015 Jan 2016	See Item (22) above
24) Work with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation to identify an appropriate area of the Housing Service for the Tenant Scrutiny Panel to undertake a Service Review	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4	Tenant Participation Officer	Jan 2016	Not yet required – The intention is to undertake the planned Service Review of Tenant Participation first
Housing Related Support				
25) Complete the first schemes under the programme of providing scooter stores at sheltered housing schemes	HO 2	Housing Assets Manager	July 2015	Achieved – at Chapel Road, Epping and Parsonage Court, Loughton.
26) Consider the level of Housing Related Support (HRS) Charges to made to tenants living in sheltered housing and other housing designated for older people for the Careline and Scheme Management Services from April 2016, in the light of the availability of funding provided by Essex County Council for housing related support	HO 1 / 2	Asst Director (Housing (Operations))	Dec 2015	In Progress – The Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee is due consider a proposed HRS Charging Plan in November 2015. The proposals have already been pre-scrutinised by both the Resources Select Committee and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, both of whom support the proposals.
27) Undertake a feasibility study into the condition and future use of the chalets at Norway House, the Council's Homeless Persons Hostel	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 6	Asst. Director (Housing Property and Development)	June 2015 Jan 2016	In Progress - A feasibility study is underway, with the outcome planned to be reported to the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee in January 2016
28) Review the approach to the designation of Council properties suitable for older people, to ensure that vacant properties are allocated to housing applicants in the most need	HO 2	Asst Director (Housing (Operations))	July Nov 2015	In Progress – A report is in the process of being considered by the Housing Portfolio Holder, setting out the proposed approach to the de-designation of a number of properties currently designated for occupation by older people.

Housing Repairs and Maintenance

29) Implement a programme for repairs and maintenance expenditure over 5 and 30 years.	HO 1 / 3 / 5	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt / Housing Assets Manager)	Mar 2016	Achieved – As part of the annual business planning process, planned maintenance programmes have been put in place to deliver the replacement of key building components as part of the Council's new Modern Homes Programme.
30) Install mains-operated smoke detectors in all Council owned properties over the next 5-years	HO 3	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt) / Housing Assets Manager	Mar 2017	In Progress – Mains smoke detectors have been installed in around 5,000 homes, with around 1,500 remaining. The Programme should be completed by around 2017/18
31) Timetable at least one meeting each year with the Tenants Federation to discuss the annual repairs and maintenance programme.	HO 3 / 4	Housing Assets Manager	Mar 2016	Not yet required.
32) Identify a new site to which the Housing Repairs Service can be re-located - to free up the existing Epping Depot for redevelopment.	HO 3	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt)	Mar 2016	Achieved – At its meeting In November 2015, the Cabinet will be considering a site in North Weald as a new Repairs and Maintenance Hub, to which the Housing Repairs Service and Housing Assets Team would relocate.
33) Closely monitor the new materials supply contract with Grafton Buildbase, and if performance deteriorates to an unacceptable level, then implement arrangements with an alternative supplier.	HO 1 / 3	Mears (Repairs Management Contractor)	June 2015 Mar 2016	In Progress – The performance of Buildbase as materials suppliers continues to be closely monitored.
34) Undertake a tender to appoint at least two Framework contractors to undertake Gas Servicing and breakdown works to gas heating and hot water appliances in time to coincide with the existing contract end date in July 2015.	HO 1 / 3	Housing Assets Manager	July Nov 2015	Achieved – In November 2015 the Cabinet will be considering the outcome of the recent EU procurement exercise.
35) Migrate from the Council's existing bespoke Schedule of Rates to the industry standard National Housing Federation Schedule of Rates (NHF SOR)	HO 3	Mears (Repairs Management Contractor)	Mar 2015	Achieved – The migration took place in April 2015, with the rates now being closely monitored to ensure they reflect the actual cost of competing jobs.

36) Renew at least 3,300 key components each year to maintain its housing stock to a more modern standard based on industry standard life cycles.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager / Mears (Repairs Management Contractor)	Mar 2016	In Progress - As part of the annual business planning process, planned maintenance programmes are put in place to deliver the replacement of key building components as part of the new Modern Homes Programme.
37) Continue with the Repairs Focus Group	HO 3 / 4	Asst. Director (Housing Property & Devt)	Mar 2016	In Progress - The Repairs Focus Group has continued to meet.
38) Complete the installation of EWI to a further 40 properties using Green Deal Cash Back funding.	HO 1 / 3	Housing Assets Manager	Mar 2016	Achieved – 31 properties were completed in the rural communities. The Council has received £106,000 in Green Deal Cashback as a result.
39) Continue to offer a 75% discount for leaseholders for 30-minute front entrance fire door installations to flats	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	Mar 2016	In Progress – In advance of the annual External Repairs and Redecoration Programme, leasehold flats are identified, and leaseholders offered the discounted rate for replacement fire doors
40) Implement the second set of “key deliverables” as agreed by the Repairs Advisory Group and the Housing Portfolio Holder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To introduce an on-line repairs diagnosis and reporting service with access to book appointments on-line To introduce materials product warranty notification software to warn of any warranty in existence To complete a HQN Repairs Self-Assessment. 	HO 3	Mears (Repairs Management Contractor)	Sept 2015 Mar 2016	Delayed – This was delayed whilst the ICT integration took place between Mears MCM system and the Council's OHMS system. The key deliverables are now anticipated to be completed by March 2016.
41) Seek to include at least one local business on the list of tenderers for all future contracts.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager / Mears (Repairs Management Contractor)	Mar 2016	In Progress – This has been achieved on all tenders completed this year to date.
42) Complete a programme of refurbishment to communal kitchens in Sheltered Housing Schemes	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	Mar 2016	On-target – This is due to be completed by March 2016.
43) Complete a pilot installation of scooter stores at Chapel Road and Parsonage Court sheltered housing schemes	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	Mar 2016	Achieved – Scooter stores have been completed at Chapel Road and Parsonage Court.

Key to Corporate Housing Objectives

HO 1 - Value for Money
HO 2 - Housing Management

HO 3 - Repairs and Maintenance
HO 4 - Tenant Participation

HO 5 - Housing Finance
HO 6 - Housing Development