

**HRA Business Plan 2016/17  
6-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT ON KEY ACTION PLAN**

Action	Corporate Housing Objectives	Responsibility for Achievement	Target Date	12-Month Progress Report <i>(as at 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017)</i>
<b>Housing General</b>				
1) Review the HRA Financial Plan, through formal officer reviews on a quarterly basis and reviews by the Communities Select Committee on a half-yearly basis.	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6	Director of Communities	Mar 2017	<b>Achieved</b> – Quarterly reviews have been produced by the Council’s HRA Business Planning Consultant. The Quarter 2 Review was reported to the 21 <sup>st</sup> November meeting of the Communities Select Committee for consideration. The Quarter 4 Review is effectively being undertaken through the Stage 1 HRA Financial Options Review Report due to be considered by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2017, to which all members of the Select Committee are invited to attend to give their views.
2) Undertake an HRA Financial Options Review, and agree actions to be taken to safeguard key housing services, whilst ensuring that the HRA does not fall into deficit at any time over the next 30 years	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6	Director of Communities	Sept 2016 Mar 2017	<b>Achieved</b> – The Stage 1 HRA Financial Options Review Report has been produced and is due to be considered by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2017, to which all members of the Select Committee are invited to attend to give their views. The Cabinet Committee is expected to make its recommendations to the Cabinet on the future strategy for the HRA at the meeting.
3) <i>(Subject to Cabinet approval)</i> Consider additional appropriate housing improvements and service enhancements, if affordable following the HRA Financial Options Review.	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5	Director of Communities	Jan 2017	<b>Not Required</b> – Due to the Government’s requirement that all social landlords reduce their rents by 1% p/a from April 2016, there are currently insufficient resources for service enhancements.

4) Ensure that a sufficient number of vacant Council properties are sold on the open market, in order to pay the required levy to the Government to fund the extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants	HO 1 / 5	Director of Communities	Mar 2017 Nov 2017	<b>Delayed</b> – The latest information from the Government is that no payments will be required in 2017/18 at the earliest and that a consultation exercise will be undertaken on the proposals some time this year,
5) Engage with the Council's corporate Transformation Programme, particularly in relation to improved customer contact and customer service	HO 1 / 2 / 3	Director of Communities	Mar 2017	<b>In Progress</b> – Officers from across the Housing Service have been involved with, and contributing to, the Transformation Programme.
<b>Council Housebuilding Programme</b>				
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)	July Sept 2017	<b>In Progress</b> – Following the termination of the contract with the previous contractor, a new contractor was appointed at the end of October 2016 to complete the works. The first 2 properties are due to be handed over in March - with others following in May, June and September.
7) Commence Phase 2 of the Housebuilding Programme, to provide 51 new affordable rented homes at Burton Road, Loughton.	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Mar 2016	<b>Achieved</b> – The contractor commenced on site as planned, and works are currently in progress.
8) Procure a variety of works contractors, under separate contracts, and commence Phase 3 of the Housebuilding Programme, to provide 34 new affordable rented homes in Epping, Coopersale and North Weald	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Aug 2016 Feb 2017	<b>Achieved</b> – Tenders for 6 of the 7 separate contracts comprising Phase 3 were approved by the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee in December 2016 with the final tender approved by the Housing Portfolio Holder in February 2017.
9) Obtain planning permission for up to 40 new affordable rented homes in Loughton, to comprise Phase 4 of the Council Housebuilding Programme	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	July 2017	<b>In Progress</b> – Planning permission has been secured on 10 sites for Phase 4 which, subject to the outcome of the Stage 1 HRA Financial Options Review, will create 31 new affordable homes. One further planning application for 10 new homes at Vere Rd is in progress. However, no further progress has been undertaken due to the temporary moratorium placed on the Council Housebuilding Programme, pending the outcome of the Stage 1 Review.

<p>10) Submit planning applications for up to 33 new affordable rented homes in Buckhurst Hill and Ongar, to comprise Phase 5 of the Council Housebuilding Programme</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Property &amp; Development)</p>	<p>Dec 2016</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b> – Planning permission has been secured on 5 sites for Phase 5 which, subject to the outcome of the Stage 1 HRA Financial Options Review, will create 13 new affordable homes. Two further planning application for 15 new affordable homes are in progress. However, no further progress has been undertaken, due to the temporary moratorium placed on the Council Housebuilding Programme, pending the outcome of the Stage 1 Review.</p>
<p>11) Enter into an agreement, in partnership with B3Living, to purchase 8 affordable rented homes proposed at Barnfield, Roydon, to fulfil the requirements of the Section 106 Planning Agreement for the development.</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Property &amp; Development)</p>	<p>April 2016</p>	<p><b>Achieved</b> – The Agreement was signed and works are currently on site. The completed properties are due to be handed over in Summer 2017.</p>
<p>12) Purchase a sufficient number of vacant properties from the open market to ensure that the Council utilises all of its “one-for-one” replacement RTB receipts</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Property &amp; Development)</p>	<p>Dec 2016</p>	<p><b>Achieved</b> – The Council has completed the purchase of 6 properties from the open market.</p>
<p>13) Enter into discussions with the landowner of the Fyfield Research Park, Ongar about the possibility of the Council purchasing 32 affordable rented homes, to fulfil the requirements of the Section 106 Planning Agreement for the development of the site.</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Property &amp; Development)</p>	<p>June 2016</p>	<p><b>Not Required</b> – It has been concluded that the development is currently too large for the Council Housebuilding Programme.</p>
<p>14) 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.</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Property &amp; Development)</p>	<p>Apr 2016</p>	<p><b>Achieved</b> – All currently identified development and financial appraisals have been completed. Where the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee has agreed that development should be pursued, planning applications have been submitted.</p>
<p>15) Make appointments to the new 3-year fixed term posts of Housing Development Manager and Housing Development Officer</p>	<p>HO 6</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Property &amp; Development)</p>	<p>June 2016 Jan 2017</p>	<p><b>Unsuccessful</b> – An appointment was made to the post of Housing Development Manager. However, the post-holder resigned after a few weeks, due to the uncertainties over the future of the Council Housebuilding Programme. It was not possible to make an appointment to the Housing Development Officer post, and attempts are currently being made to source someone from an agency.</p>

				The vacant Housing Development Manager post will not be filled until the future of the Council Housebuilding Programme has been determined through the Stage 1 HRA Financial Options Review.
<b>Housing Management</b>				
16) Prepare for the Government's "Pay to Stay" Scheme, whereby tenants with higher incomes will be required to pay higher rents	HO 2 / 5	Asst Director (Housing Property & Development)	Mar 2017 Mar 2018	<b>Not required</b> – The Government has recently announced that the compulsory requirement to introduce Pay to Stay schemes has been rescinded.
17) Prepare for the Government requirement to reduce the maximum length of fixed-term tenancies provided to new tenants from 10 years (as currently provided by the Council) to 5 years	HO 2	Asst Director (Housing Operations)	March 2017 March 2018	<b>Delayed</b> - No preparations can be made until the Government announces the detailed arrangements, which have been delayed. The implementation date is expected to be around April 2018.
18) Complete 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)	June 2016 Sept 2017	<b>Delayed</b> – Following EFDC and residents being dissatisfied with the quality of the footpath surfacing laid by Essex CC for trial works, EFDC are awaiting details of options from Essex CC for the remaining works.
19) Introduce an IT system to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the Council's leasehold property portfolio, including the provision of direct debit facilities to Council leaseholders for the first time	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 5 / 6	Communities Support Manager	April 2016	<b>Achieved</b> – The new system was successfully installed in April 2016 and appears to be working well.
20) Review the success and effectiveness of the extension of the opening hours of the Council Office at the Limes Centre, Chigwell into weekday afternoons and the increased the range of Council services accessible from the Office	HO 2	Area Housing Manager (South)	Sept 2016 Mach 2017	<b>In Progress</b> – Extended opening hours and an increased range of Council services have been introduced and appear to be successful. The success and effectiveness is due to be considered by the Communities Select Committee at its meeting in March 2017.
21) 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)	April 2016	<b>Achieved</b> – The funding was extended for a further year, and the work of the two Debt Advisors continues to be valued by residents. Indeed, it has recently been agreed to extend the funding for an additional year

### Tenant Participation

<p>22) Work with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation to stabilise the scheme of “mystery shopping” on the Council’s housing services by trained tenants.</p>	<p>HO 2 / 3 / 4</p>	<p>Tenant Participation Officer</p>	<p>July 2016 Dec 2017</p>	<p><b>No Progress</b> - Following the resignation of the Tenant Participation Officer, it has not been possible to pursue this action yet. Furthermore, despite all best efforts, numbers involved with the Federation continue to dwindle. However, it is hoped that this initiative can be picked up again if the Federation membership can be re-invigorated.</p>
<p>23) Increase the number of recognised tenants associations within the District and, at the same time, increase the number of members of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation.</p>	<p>HO 4</p>	<p>Tenant Participation Officer</p>	<p>Mar 2017</p>	<p><b>Unsuccessful to Date</b> – Despite the efforts of the former and current Tenant Participation Officers, residents appear reluctant to devote the time to setting up new tenant associations.</p>

### Housing Related Support

<p>24) Undertake a review of the Council’s Careline Monitoring Service, in order to determine the most appropriate approach for the future</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Operations)</p>	<p>Jun 2016 Nov 2016</p>	<p><b>Achieved</b> – The review has been undertaken and was considered by the Communities Select Committee in November 2016. The Select Committee made recommendations to the Cabinet that the Monitoring Service be outsourced, which were subsequently agreed by the Cabinet.</p>
<p>25) Undertake a review of the Council’s Sheltered Housing Service, in order to determine the most appropriate approach for the future</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2 / 5</p>	<p>Asst Director (Housing Operations)</p>	<p>Nov 2016</p>	<p><b>Delayed</b> – No work can be undertaken on this review until the Careline Monitoring Service has been outsourced, since staffing resources need to be reviewed in a comprehensive manner.</p>
<p>26) Undertake a review of the Council’s sheltered housing assets, in order to determine the most appropriate approach for the future</p>	<p>HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 6</p>	<p>Director of Communities</p>	<p>Sept 2016</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b> – An Officer Working Party has been established and has met on a number of occasions. A number of proposals have been formulated, but they cannot be brought forward for consideration until the future of the Council Housebuilding Programme has been determined through the Stage 1 HRA Financial Options Review.</p>

27) Complete 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 2016	<b>Achieved</b> – A recent technical inspection has established that the chalets are still in a reasonable structural condition and do not need to be replaced in the foreseeable future.
<b>Housing Repairs and Maintenance</b>				
28) Implement programme for repairs and maintenance expenditure over 5 and 30 years.	HO 3 / 5	Asst. Director (Housing Property and Development)	March 2017	<b>Achieved</b> – Following approval of the Business Plan, all work making up the Planned Maintenance Programme for 2016/17 was put in place
29) Install mains operated smoke detectors in all Council owned properties over the next 5-years	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	March 2017	<b>Achieved</b> - This has now been completed, with all properties now having mains-operated smoke detectors installed.
30) Timetable at least one meeting each year with the Tenants Federation to discuss the annual repairs and maintenance programme.	HO 2 / 3	Asst. Director (Housing Property and Development) / Mears	March 2017	<b>Not yet required</b> – This will be undertaken in March 2017.
31) Seek planning permission for a new depot site from which to relocate the Housing Repairs Service to free up the existing Epping Depot for redevelopment.	HO 3	Asst. Director (Housing Property and Development)	August 2016	<b>Achieved</b> – Planning permission was secured in August 2016. However, a decision on whether or not to progress with the works has been held in abeyance, until the outcome of the Council-wide Strategic Accommodation Review has been decided.
32) 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	June 2016 March 2017	<b>In progress</b> – Due to poor performance by the supplier, the contract with Grafton Buildbase has now been determined by mutual agreement. A new EU-compliant Framework Agreement has been identified and a Portfolio Holder decision is currently being prepared. The target to conclude this contract award is the end of March 2017.

<p>33) 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.</p>	<p>HO 3</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>March 2017</p>	<p><b>Not achieved</b> – As at Quarter 3, the Council is 1,184 components behind its target. It is unlikely this target will now be achieved as the main aspects of work currently being progressed are complex works such as re-roofing and re-wiring to flat blocks where the work is high value and the number of properties affected are small. In any event, the future adoption of the Council's Modern Home Standard, or a reversion to the Decent Home Standard, will be reviewed as part of the Stage 1 HRA Financial Options Review.</p>
<p>34) Continue to hold meetings with the Repairs Focus Group</p>	<p>HO 2 / 3</p>	<p>Asst. Director (Housing Property and Development)</p>	<p>March 2017</p>	<p><b>Not achieved</b> – Due to the departure of the previous Tenant Participation Officer and the demands of the Council Housebuilding Programme on the Asst. Director (Housing Property and Development) it was not possible to schedule a meeting in 2016. However, it is planned to hold a meeting during 2017, now that a new Tenant Participation Officer has been appointed.</p>
<p>35) Continue to offer a 75% discount for leaseholders for 30-minute front entrance fire door installations to flats</p>	<p>HO 3</p>	<p>Housing Assets Manager</p>	<p>March 2017</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> – The Council has been offering this to all leaseholders to coincide with its own Door Installation Programme. To date, 427 leaseholders have been offered fire doors since April 2014, of which 281 (66%) have been installed.</p>
<p>36) Implement the second set of “key deliverables” as agreed by the Repairs Advisory Group and the Housing Portfolio Holder:</p>	<p>HO 3</p>	<p>Mears</p>	<p>Sept 2016 June 2017</p>	<p><b>Part-Achieved:</b></p> <p>1) <i>Customer Focused Training</i> – This has now been completed for all Housing Repairs and Housing Assets staff</p> <p>2) <i>HQN Assessment &amp; Trading Account</i> – Some work was completed for the Assessment, but officers generally felt that the approach taken by HQN was not useful and it was not pursued any further. Following discussions between Housing and Finance, it has been determined that</p>

				<p>there would be no benefit in creating a trading account</p> <p>3) <i>Asbestos Policy</i> – A new Asbestos Policy has been drafted and is currently with the Council's Health &amp; Safety Officer for comment. A new leaflet for tenants on asbestos in their home has been produced and is available on-line</p>
37) Seek to include at least one local business on the list of tenderers for all future contracts.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager / Mears	March 2017	<b>In progress</b> – Wherever this is possible, a local supplier is added to all tender lists.
38) Analyse and report the SAP rating results of the National Home Energy Rating (NHER) software programme annually.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	March 2017	<b>Not yet required</b> – This will be undertaken towards the end of the year, once all work has been completed up to 31 March 2017.
39) Continue to seek and apply for grant funding, such as Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) and the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund, to fund energy efficiency measures	HO 1 / 3	Housing Assets Manager	March 2017	<b>In progress</b> – The Council continues to apply for, and be successful in securing, Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) grant for its installation of air-sourced heat pumps to rural properties that do not have access to mains gas supplies. This is a Government grant to recognise the use of renewable energy, and is available for 7-years after installation. The total projected income over 7-years is £490k. The actual amount received to date is £86k.
40) Provide Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) solutions for properties suffering from severe condensation.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	March 2017	<b>In progress</b> – Properties in need of MVHR units are mainly identified during the winter months. All new-build properties on the Council Housebuilding Programme are having MVHR units fitted as standard.
41) Ensure all new homes, from Phase 2 onwards, built under the Council Housebuilding Programme are built to the Code for Sustainable Homes Code 4 or higher.	HO 3	Asst. Director (Housing Property and Development)	March 2017	<b>Achieved</b> – This is now set out in the Specifications and Employers Requirements for new build contracts
42) Monitor opportunities to trial and utilise renewable heating technologies.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	March 2017	<b>In progress</b> – This is generally reviewed on an on-going basis. However, no new technologies have been trialled so far this year.



<p>43) Review the budget headings and formats for the Repairs Service with a view of setting up accounting systems that will analyse, monitor and report on a surplus or deficit.</p>	<p>HO 1 / 3 / 5</p>	<p>Mears</p>	<p>June 2016 March 2017</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> – This is to form a specific task for the new HRA Accountant following a restructure in the Accountancy Service area. A formal review of the first 6-months' costs is currently taking place in readiness. However, it has been identified that part of the operating costs need to be passed to the Capital Programme for repairs. The latest up-to-date Schedule of Rates have been purchased and installed, to give a more accurate benchmark for repair costs.</p>
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**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