

## Select Committee Agenda



### **Stronger Communities Select Committee Tuesday, 11th January, 2022**

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Stronger Communities Select Committee**, which will be held at:

**Council Chamber - Civic Offices**  
on **Tuesday, 11th January, 2022**  
at **7.00 pm**

**G Blakemore**  
Chief Executive

**Democratic Services  
Officer**

Email: [democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

#### **Members:**

Councillors J Lea (Chairman), R Balcombe (Vice-Chairman), H Brady, I Hadley, S Murray, C Nweke, D Plummer, S Rackham, J H Whitehouse, K Williamson and D Wixley

Co-opted Member: W Marshall

#### **SUBSTITUTE NOMINATION DEADLINE:**

**6:00 pm**

#### **1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman will read the following announcement:

“I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet (or filmed) and will be capable of repeated viewing (or another use by such third parties).

Therefore, by entering the Chamber and using the seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.”

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

#### **3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

**5. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 24)**

To agree the notes of the meeting of the Select Committee held on 21 September 2021.

**6. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 25 - 30)**

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have agreed the Terms of Reference and work programme for this Select Committee. Members are invited at each meeting to review both documents.

**7. HRA BUSINESS PLAN (Pages 31 - 58)**

(D Fenton) To consider the updated HRA business plan and recommendations.

**8. SHELTERED HOUSING - EMERGENCY ALARM SYSTEM UPGRADE (Pages 59 - 70)**

(D Fenton) To consider the proposal to use Everon to replace the Council's Hard-Wired Alarm system.

**9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To note that the next meeting of the Select Committee will be held at 7.00pm on 1 March 2022.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2021  
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES  
AT 7.00 - 9.30 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	J Lea (Chairman), , H Brady, S Murray, C Nweke, S Rackham, J H Whitehouse and D Wixley
<b>Co-opted Member:</b>	W Marshall
<b>Other members present:</b>	R Brookes, S Kane, A Lion, A Patel and H Whitbread
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	I Hadley, D Plummer and K Williamson
<b>Officers Present</b>	N Dawe (Chief Operating Officer), J Gould (Service Director (Community & Wellbeing)), S Lewis (Customer Services Manager), Pellegrino (Heritage & Venues Team Manager), R Perrin (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), N Ross (Police Officer), C Wiggins (Directorate Specialist – Technical Services) and J Nuth ((interim) Housing Strategy Manager)

## **12. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman reminded everyone present that this meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

## **13. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The Committee noted that there were no substitute members.

## **14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interests pursuant to the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

## **15. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

That the notes of the meeting held 15 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record subject to item 3. Declarations of Interest (b) replacement of Epping Reuse Centre with Epping Forest Reuse.

## **16. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee noted the Terms of Reference and the Committee' work programme for 2021/22.

**17. COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM EFDC FUNDED POLICE OFFICERS 6 MONTHLY UPDATE.**

The Directorate Specialist and Community Safety Team Sgt N Ross gave a six-month report on the work and range of operations of the Council's funded Police team, including a operation synopsis of work carried out in the District.

There had been 20 tasking requests in 2021, to date and the most significant work had been partnership working to respond to a county lines drugs supply in Waltham Abbey. (Details attached in the presentation).

Other highlights included;

- Supporting council officers with joint visits at licenced and business premises highlighted to be committing COVID legislation breaches;
- Supporting Environmental Health with the initial site visit at a House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) where there had been a potential threat, harm and risk to staff. The visit had been conducted without incident and the EHO was able to secure sufficient evidence;
- A site visit with Planning Enforcement and Community Resilience at a venue where the occupant presents risk to staff;
- Site visits and representation at professionals meeting in relation to a high-risk homeless person. The Team also conduct the arrest of the same subject for breach of Criminal Behaviour Order;
- The planning and preparation for community policing resources for the local election process. In addition to providing police cover throughout the two additional count days;
- Targeted patrols and activity around three specific locations which were subject to anti-social behaviour and required a medium to long-term problem solving approach, which were still ongoing. This had resulted in arrests, seizures of nuisance vehicles, stop/searches, service of Community Protection Warnings and enforcement of any EFDC-lead orders;
- A report of a fraud in progress (elderly victim, bank cards reported stolen and police send a taxi to collect). The team identified the subjects vehicle and tracked it via ANPR to the M11. Appropriate tactics were put in place to prevent a pursuit and the funded officers arrested the offender. The investigation was still ongoing but this was a significant and rare arrest to catch an offender at a live fraud;
- Two arrests following a pursuit with cloned vehicle which was found decamped in Buckhurst Hill. The two men who were linked to organised crime were stopped nearby and the police dog located car key and illegal cloning equipment nearby;
- Following an attempted burglary in Loughton the subject made off in a van which then made off from officers. The funded team officers located the offender hiding in bushes and arrested him. He was charged and remanded for burglary offences; and
- Following a series of distraction thefts in the district whereby victims had their Rolex watches stolen, the team reviewed CCTV and identified the offender's vehicle. By chance two suspects were sighted, that matched the description parked on Epping High Street paying close attention to pedestrians. The team made the arrest of both suspects, who remain under investigation at time of writing.

The Committee asked the following question;

- What was a closure order and can they be applied to both Council and private properties? Stg Ross advised that they can be applied to any property which prevents only the named person(s) entering the property excluding emergency services and council staff. The Directorate Specialist advised that a closure order was a really powerful and important tool in preventing crime and disorder in properties in the district. There were also weekly partnership meetings with the Neighbourhood Housing Teams which allowed any issues to be flagged earlier.
- What were the sanctions for the youth offenders mentioned in the presentation? The Directorate Specialist advised that officers had to be mindful, that some young people may be victims as well as perpetrators that have been exploited and forced in this position. Stg Ross advised that sanctions depended on the mitigating circumstances.
- Were there any other areas of concern in the District? And was there or plans for a Community Policing Panel in the District? Stg Ross advised that there were other areas in the district but the example provided in the presentation showed how the partnership working functioned well. The Directorate Specialist advised that she would enquire with the Insp T Mitchell, the Community Policing Team with regards to the a Community Policing Panel for Epping Forest.\*
- Had any of the Closures Orders been refused? Stg Ross advised that the team had never had any refused. The Directorate Specialist advised that the EFDC Policing Team's work had been flagged up as best practice in Essex.
- Why could the gangs who used Cuckooing not be stopped? And was it possible to trace back the drugs to the original source? The Directorate Specialist advised that due to covid there had been a massive backlog in courts, for offenders on remand as well as achieving courts date for closure orders. Stg Ross advised that loads of work went on to get up stream in the drugs trade, which happened at all levels.
- Was there a way of anonymously reporting information to the Police? Stg Ross advised that information could be submitted online, by phone or text to Crimestoppers as well as using the QR code (attached in the presentation).
- How many Police officers were within the Team and in the Community Resilience Neighbourhood Team? The Directorate Specialist advised that there were 3 fully funded Police officers within the Community Safety Team with a fourth position out for recruitment. There were three ASB officers and 5 Environmental Enforcement Officers with one vacancy.

The Community & Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder commented on the partnership working of the EFDC Community Safety Team and EFDC funded Police and successes.

The Housing Services Portfolio Holder commented on the added value the services provided for the District and the push to try and achieve a Police presence within the Community Hub in the Civic Offices.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee noted the 6 monthly update.

\* Response from Inspector Tom Mitchell received following the meeting.

'We are moving away from coffee with cops and police lead engagement and instead trying to attend/piggy back engagement events that are already in existence e.g. a coffee morning, xmas market or something that your team arrange, such as ASB Awareness events.

The reasons are we weren't getting many people coming to coffee with cops and if operationally we can't attend then we aren't letting people down or disappointing them as much as they were going to the event anyway rather than a specific visit to meet officers

The plan is to move towards more engagement as we enter the Covid Recovery Period.'

## 18. MUSEUM COLLECTIONS PROJECT - RATIONALISATION

The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues presented a report on the Museum Collections Projects and the rationalisation.

The report set out the problems the museum was facing due to the breath of the collection, documentation, storage, suitability and relevance to the museum and it's audience. The full capacity meant that there was no expansion space to address any gaps in the collection highlighted in the Collections Development Policy. The Council also needed to ensure that the collection had been thoroughly audited in order to comply with Health & Safety regulations.

There were 5 guiding principles that had been agreed and adopted for the rationalisation project and along side the project process and Museum Association Guidelines.

The Committee noted the following success to date;

- that the Museum was currently being recognised across the industry as undertaking a fully ethical and high standard project;
- Articles on the project had been featured in industry magazines, online web resources and the team had been asked to speak at various conferences;
- The team had uncovered some fantastic stories in the collection which would not have been discovered if the project had not been undertaken;
- Objects were being stored and cared for better;
- Documentation and information about each object had improved which also, in turn, supported the current work to improve the Museum's documentation database and allowed the collections to be made accessible online;
- The project has the full support of key groups including the Waltham Abbey Historical Society who supported the setup of the Museum in the first place.
- The audit had highlighted objects and collections that required further work and support. A bid for £120,000 from Arts Council England had been made, to support work on the Museum's Ethnographic Collection. A further external funding bid would be submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support a partnership project with the Lea Valley Regional Park and Historic England on material relating to the Abbey Church; and
- So far 10 new volunteers had been recruited for the project with a total of 19 volunteers currently supporting the project. To date, collections volunteers had contributed 556 hours working on this specific project, equating to nearly £5,500 investment into the district.

The Committee asked the following questions;

- Could historians and/or collectors be given the chance to purchase items before disposal was considered? The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues advised that the Museum Association had a strict code of ethics which governed the process of disposal. This would allow for the sale of items although the core aim was to ensure that most items stayed within the public domain. The only time an item may be disposed of, would be if they contained hazardous materials or were dangerous damaged.
- Would anything be disposed of that had not gone through this process? No.
- What happened to items that have a legal requirement attached to them? The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues advised paper work has to be completed for every donation which would stipulate the Museums conditions. If an item had been purchase with external funding, there may be conditions which would be looked into. Furthermore, if an item had been deemed no longer required and had been donated in the last 20 years the donor would receive a letter to confirm what was happening with the donation.
- How would the museum advertise the stories that were being discovered throughout this process? The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues advised that through social media the Museum had started sharing the stories and they were in the initial stages of planning an exhibition next year in core gallery that will display some of the objects as well as explain the process the museum has undertaken.
- What was the general storage capacity? The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues advised that this project would improve the amount of storage available and allow for areas of the collection that were missing to be improve and continue collecting items from this time for future generations.
- How long would the project take? The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues advised that this project would always be an ongoing process where new items were added to the collection. The initial 2 year timescale would audit and research the items, with the more timely matters of transfer unrequired items following.
- How did the volunteers approach the museum? And how many have them stayed and what training was involved? The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues advised that some volunteers saw the advertisement through social media, the Council's website and through a specialised website for Museums. All of the volunteers had received the specialist training required and they had all remained.
- Did the museum have it's own conservators? The Team Manager for Heritage and Venues advised that although the museum did not have a conservator, they would seek external funding for items that required specialist conservation.

The Community & Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder commented that it was good to see how many volunteers they had attracted.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee noted the process, reasons and update on the Museum Collect Project.

**19. CUSTOMER SERVICE UPDATE**

The Service Manager for Customer presented a Customer Service update on the following areas;

- What the Customer were telling the Council;
- Complaints;
- Performance for Customer Satisfaction & Complaints;
- What worked well; Training;
- the Multi-Channel Digital Platform;
- Corporate External Communications;
- Members Technology & Members Contact Process Review; and
- the Digital Inclusion project.

She advised that social media continued to grow as an interactive communications resource as customers reported day to day issues such as fly tipping and littering with the website being the most effective and efficient means of accessing Council Information. The number of formal complaints had reduced and the overall customer satisfaction was 66%. It was noted that complaints resolved with the SLA was 89% and first point resolution was 49% although the customer contact centre had been severely impacted by resourcing issues.

At the Civic Offices the Welcome Lounge had opened on 19 July with the general footfall beginning to increase and the Community Hub had opened on 13 September.

The Broadway Cash Office continued to see a strong usage of cash payments in addition to the kiosks in Waltham Abbey and Epping. This would be taken into consideration for the report on future options for cash paying customers.

Plans were in progress for the launch of a news app – provisionally titled District Matters and following a soft launch in September, the app would provide a digital platform for the Council to share its own and third party news content from partners and other relevant stakeholders.

Members were advised that in absence of a full Members Portal, an interim single access point via the website was being developed and would include all the main links that Members may need. Furthermore once a Team Manager for Members Services had been recruited, a working group would be set up to progress the Digital Inclusion Programme.

The Committee asked the following questions:

- Was there anything place to assist with the recruitment of staff such as terms, salary? The Service Manager for Customer advised that people were either not moving or a counter offer was made to retain them with a national trend of vacancies. In additional to this, the Customer Services team had experience a number of long term absences.
- When would the Members Portal be launched? The Customer & Partnerships Services Portfolio Holder advised that they were due to launch the Members Portal, which contained links to the various frequently ask questions, members contact form and access to Mod.gov. The link could be found at the bottom of the EFDC website home page. It was also noted that the Member Contact Form could be accessed directly from members i pads.
- Were there lessons to be learnt from the residents use of cash payments? The Service Manager for Customer advised that this data would be taken and included in a report which would be presented to Members in October 2021.
- Did the reference to 65 Complaints, mean formal complaints? The Service Manager for Customer advised that was correct.



- What was the customer journey for residents who make a formal complaint to the Chief Executive? The Service Manager for Customer advised that it would be logged by the Customer Complaints and Satisfaction Manager and logged and then allocated to the relevant specialist officer and should receive a response within the service level agreement.
- What was the trend for Customer Services? The Service Manager for Customer advised that unfortunately she did not have the capacity to analyse the data because of the resourcing issues, although some services were taking calls back into their service to assist with the call waiting times such as issues involving waste. Regarding phone calls that were not being answered, this issue would be flagged with the Leadership team to enable officers to understand the problems that may be occurring.
- Would the issues be reported back to Members once the resourcing issue had been resolved? The Service Manager for Customer advised that once the Team Manager for Members had been recruited, focus groups would be held with Members to understand what Members' needs were and what information they would like to receive. It was noted that KPIs for Customer Services would now be reported to Stronger Council Select Committee, in line with other services areas.
- Could more information be given on the 13 waste complaints? The Service Manager for Customer advised that she did not have the details although all of the complaints had been dealt with by the waste department and Biffa.
- Whether the desk ratio was correct? The Operation Officer advised that the building capacity was a 4:10 desk ratio although there were a number of alternative meeting rooms and work spaces which brought the ratio up to 6/7:10. This equated to the same number of people in the building as before and the issue about staff being in the building was more around staff returning to work following the pandemic.

The Committee made a number of comments which included;

- that there were major issues with contacting the Council for both members and residents, in particular where action was required urgently. In addition to the way in which members were required to now report issues. The Customer & Partnerships Services Portfolio Holder advised that there were a number of issues that had affected the service which included the changes in the building through the transformation process, covid sending staff to home working before everything was in place, recruitment issues and the telephone system was not designed to provide the link between services. He stated that he was aware that a solution required both online services and a call centre for both residents and members and he was working to resolve these issues.
- That the term 'the Civic' which had previously been discussed at another Select Committee and that many members were not happy with officers using this term when either the Civic Offices or the Community Hub were discussed.
- That a discussion was required around what type of remote working was appropriate for meetings because of technical and sound issues when presenting to Members.
- That the rural residents would not benefit from either the Community Hub in Epping or other two proposed in Waltham Abbey or Loughton because of the poor transport links. Could there be consideration for a mobile version of the hub to visit the rural areas? The Community and Wellbeing Service Director advised that the Community Hub approach did not have to rely on footfall but brought a number of services together for a collaborative outcome for the resident. There was a scoping exercise being carried out across the District

for Community and Wellbeing services and this would look at what services were being provided and how they were being articulated back to members. Following this, officers would be able to determine where there were gaps within the district and look at solution.

## 20. REVIEW OF THE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Community and Wellbeing Director presented a report on the Housing Allocations Policy which was due for renewal in April 2022. The report set out the proposed major changes for the Allocation Policy 2022-2027 and the next steps for the stage 2 consultation.

The review had highlighted evidence-based issues and opportunities for inclusion in the Housing Allocations Policy in the following areas.

1. Defining the Priority Bands – To attribute clear identifiable needs level to each band and review the criteria for each band.
2. Priority Date – To prioritise bids for accommodation based on the applicant's band and then in date order that they had joined that band, rather than when they joined the Housing Register.
3. Medical Categories – To have three medical categories which included band A - emergency medical need; band B - urgent medical need and band C - moderate medical need.
4. Domestic Abuse – To incorporate the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 into the Housing Allocation Scheme.
5. Homeless Households – To award priority band B to homeless households that the Council had accepted a duty to rehouse under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.
6. Homeless Households - To afford homeless households the opportunity to bid for suitable properties in accordance with their priority banding, on the understanding that they would be made a direct offer to enable the Council to discharge its duty if they failed to bid or secure an offer via choice based lettings within a reasonable timescale.
7. Under-occupation - To remove the penalty of suspending an under occupier from bidding if they refused 4 offers and replace with a discretionary decision to suspend an applicant who repeatedly bid for, then refuses a property where it was evident that they have no intention of moving.
8. Under-occupation - To allow under-occupiers wishing to downsize from a house to a flat where they were giving up one or more bedrooms, to be considered for a flat with a spare bedroom (i.e. a couple or single person can move from a 3-bed house to a 2-bed flat or a 1-bed flat) with or without a garden.
9. Serious Unacceptable Behaviour including Rent Arrears - To replace the 7-year rule for all unacceptable behaviour with a prescribed risk-based approach, to determining whether a history of unacceptable behaviour was serious enough to warrant exclusion from the Housing Register. Looking at patterns and severity of behaviour, cause and effect, recent history and support mechanisms that the applicant had, to prevent reoccurrence.

10. Allocation of Accommodation (rent arrears in excess of 4 weeks rent) - To replace the blanket 4-week arrears rule with a discretionary prescribed risk based approach, to determine whether an offer could be made to an applicant with rent arrears based on the cause of the arrears, and repayment plan.

11. Local Lettings Plans and Key Workers Housing - To include the use of a local lettings plans where appropriate to do so in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 1996.

12. Priority Transfers and Management Transfers - To replace Appendix 3 Priority Transfers with relevant sections in the main body of the Allocations Policy that define the offer policies for management transfers, temporary or permanent decants, overcrowding and welfare grounds (as well as medical grounds).

13. Pre-Transfer Property Inspections and Recharge Policy - To introduce a 'ready to go' inspections for tenants who were pursuing a transfer, to ensure they left the property in a suitable condition, and to have the ability to suspend applicants from bidding until they brought their property up to the required standard. Furthermore, for anyone who does leave a property in a poor condition (for example it was fine during the 'ready to go' inspection but damage had been done since) to be recharged for the cost of bringing the property back up to a standard that was suitable to re-let.

All of the recommendations would be submitted for stage 2 consultation to stakeholders between October and December 2021.

The Committee requested that if requested could the feedback received from other housing professionals and housing associations with regards to the Housing Allocation Policy be shared.

The Committee asked the following questions;

- What were Local Lettings Plans and Key Worker Housing? The Community and Wellbeing Service Director advised that Local Lettings Plans and Key Worker Housing allowed for balanced communities to be created within new estates or developments rather than just going from the Allocation Policy which would be a members decision rather than an officers decision. It would also allow for consideration around communities where there were problems, to ensure an effective change could occurred.
- Could the accommodation allocated to service people, such as the Police or Fire Services be considered for housing residents? The Housing Services Portfolio Holder advised that she would contact the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner regarding this query.
- Should the Allocation Policy take into account international emergencies such as the Afghanistan Refugees resettlement programme? The Community and Wellbeing Service Director advised that there were always situations where discretion was required and the Allocation Policy allowed for these circumstances to be considered out side the policy.
- How did the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 change the duty placed on the Local Authority? The Interim Housing Strategy Officer advised that although the previous policy had included Domestic Abuse, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was very prescriptive and therefore needed to be included in the new policy. She would supply a copy of the differences between the new and old policy for Members via the members briefing note.

- What was meant by Personal Housing Plans; Cascading letting arrangements and the Debt Reset Bite Scheme? The Community and Wellbeing Service Director advised that the Debt Respite Scheme Regulation 2020 was introduced following the pandemic and a further information on the scheme would be supplied in the Members Bulletin. The Interim Housing Strategy Officer advised that the Personal Housing Plans were introduced with the Homelessness Act 2017, as a requirement for people seeking rehousing to engage in an agreement with the Council to take some responsibility, ensuring that the wellbeing and welfare of the person was considered. The cascading letting arrangements allowed housing which targeted a particular priority to cascade down to a larger geographical group, if the need was not required.
- Could the information sent out to members be sent to the Co-opted member of this Committee as well. The Co-opted members details would be passed onto the relevant officer.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee noted outcome of the stage 1 initial consultation on the review of the Allocations Policy 2022-2027; and
2. That the Committee approved the proposed major changes to the Allocation Policy 2022-2027 which would be included in the stage 2 consultation between October 2021 and December 2021.

**21. REVIEW OF THE TENANCY POLICY**

The Community and Wellbeing Director presented a report on the Tenancy Policy which was due for renewal in April 2022. The report sets out the proposal not to make any material changes to the terms of the current Tenancy and the next steps for the stage 2 consultation.

The Committee were advised that a Government Equalities Impact Assessment in 2016 found that nationwide far fewer councils and housing associations had introduced fixed term tenancies than had been anticipated. A recent desk-top analysis of councils in Essex found that of the other stockholding councils Castlepoint, Colchester, Basildon and Harlow were issuing lifetime tenancies rather than flexible tenancies and many of the Registered Providers operating in Rochford had ceased issuing flexible tenancies because of the disproportionate burden of the review process on their resources.

To date none of the 10-year fixed term tenancies in EFDC had reached the point of review and therefore it was felt that it would be prudent to continue with the period until the data was available.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee noted outcome of the stage 1 initial consultation on the review of the Tenancy Policy 2015-2022; and
2. That the Committee approved the proposal not to make any material changes to the terms of the Tenancy Policy, which would be sent out from consultation to Stakeholders in the stage 2 consultation between October 2021 and December 2021.

**22. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Community and Wellbeing Director presented a report on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which was due for renewal in April 2022. The report set out the proposed recommendations and the next steps for the stage 2 consultation between October and December 2021.

The review had highlighted evidence-based issues and opportunities for inclusion in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which included;

1. To streamline the strategy for 2022 – 2027 into an easy to read publication and for the associated policy and procedures for preventing and tackling homelessness and rough sleeping to be produced as separate stand-alone documents;
2. To formulate the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy as a set of 5 strategic priorities within the framework of the national context, the local context, and Epping Forest District Council's Corporate Objectives; and
3. That an Action Plan with SMART targets be produced, following the same style and format as the proposed Overarching Housing Strategy to enable it to feed into service plans, teams and individual one-to-ones.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee noted the stage 1 initial consultation on the review of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy;
2. That the Committee approved the proposed changes to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027 which would be included in the stage 2 consultation between October 2021 and December 2021 and presented to Cabinet in Spring 2022.

**23. OVERARCHING HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Community and Wellbeing Director presented a report on the Overarching Housing Strategy which was due for renewal in April 2022. The report set out the proposed recommendations and the next steps for the stage 2 consultation between October and December 2021.

The review had highlighted issues and opportunities for inclusion in the overarching Housing Strategy 2022/2027 which included;

- The Five Strategic Priorities
  1. Increasing the supply of affordable housing – to maximise opportunities to increase the supply of suitable affordable housing;
  2. Promoting health wellbeing and independence - to consider health wellbeing prevention and support when its needed;
  3. Economic growth and regeneration - to strengthen the links with partners to collectively bridge the gap between the cost of housing and the ability of households on low incomes to meet these costs;
  4. Quality and standards - the Council's commitment to offering high quality housing and housing related services and the recourse that was open to residents who were dissatisfied; and

5. Protecting and enhancing the environment – to cover the natural environment culture and heritage that was unique to the district.
- An action plan with SMART targets be produced that would follow the same style and format as the proposals for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which could then be fed into service plans, team plans and individual one-to ones.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee noted the stage 1 initial consultation on the review of the Overarching Housing Strategy; and
2. That the Committee approved the proposals for the Overarching Housing Strategy 2022/2027 to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027 which would be included in the stage 2 consultation between October 2021 and December 2021.

**24. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee noted that the date of the next meeting would be 11 January 2022.



# Overview: Operation Synapse

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at Neil Ross- Community Safety Team, Essex Police  
Melissa Faux- EFDC Senior Crime and ASB Officer

Minute Item 17

# The Problem

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- Historical patterns around a number of properties in Waltham Abbey used by local youths: drugs and ASB.
- March 2021: Serious assault at EFDC property. Premises had been cuckooed, drug dealer attacked and local youth arrested at scene.
- EFDC officers apply for and obtain a Closure Order
- Hypothesis: Criminality will be displaced and further local addresses will be at risk of being taken over.

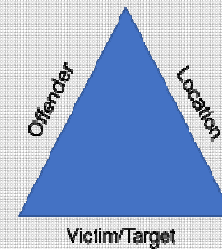


# Problem Solving

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## Routine Activity Theory

Crime occurs when a motivated offender comes together in time and space with a suitable victim in the absence of a capable guardian.



OFFENDER

Reduce the number of likely offenders

LOCATION/TARGET

Harden any prospective targets/places

GUARDIAN

Increase number/presence of guardians

## Creation of working party

- EFDC Housing, Community Resilience and the funded police team meet fortnightly to share information regarding new or recent ASB complaints.
- The intention is to identify any persons or premises at risk of, or in the process of, being exploited by criminal networks.
- The group assess each strand of intelligence. If it fits the above criteria or otherwise indicates that a property or tenant may be at risk or being targeted by criminals, actions were allocated to the most suitable team

## Partnership work with Operation Raptor (drugs and gangs)

- Separate operation running simultaneously to target the known offenders

# Results

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1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – Closure Order obtained for XX Caneland Court

Intelligence received that group are linked to a property at Essex House, Quaker Lane. Closure Order considered but tenant is re-housed out of area and the property boarded up.

Within 2 days, the group return to YY Caneland Court, which had previously been targeted and addressed in 2020.

3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021- incident involving the group occurs at XX Amesbury

4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – Closure Order obtained for YY Caneland Court

16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 – Closure Order obtained for XX Amesbury

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021- Closure Order extension obtained for XX Caneland Court

15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - Closure Order extension obtained for XX Amesbury

ARRESTS – 3 x juvenile males, 1 x adult female, 1 x adult male

# Closure Order

## Closure Order

(SECTION 80(5) ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT [2014](#))

In the Chelmsford Magistrates' Court  
Sitting at 10 New Street Chelmsford Essex CM1 1NT

Address:

On application of Epping Forest District Council  
Address of Applicant Authority: Civic Offices High Street Essex CM16 4BZ

Relevant Authorities Consulted – Essex Police,

The Court has found on the balance of probabilities in relation to the address at ("the Premises"):

- (a) that a person has engaged, or (if the Order is not made) is likely to engage in disorderly, offensive or criminal behaviour on the Premises, or:
- (b) the use of the premises has resulted, or (if the Order is not made) is likely to result in serious nuisance to members of the public, or
- (c) there has been, or (if the Order is not made) is likely to be, disorder near those premises associated with the use of the Premises

And that the Order is necessary to prevent the behaviour, nuisance or disorder from continuing, recurring or occurring

Accordingly the Court orders that a Closure Order is made pursuant to Section 80 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in respect of the Premises

A Closure Order is an Order prohibiting access to the Premises for a period specified in the Order

~~This Closure Order prohibits access to the Premises by all persons (except those persons specified or those of a specified description) at all times (unless specified) for a period of THREE MONTHS from \_\_\_\_\_ and ending at \_\_\_\_\_~~

Subject to the following exceptions:

Staff and representatives of Epping Forest District Council, Emergency Services,

A person who without reasonable excuse remains on or enters premises in contravention of a Closure Order commits an offence under Section 86 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 liable on summary conviction to a maximum of 51 weeks imprisonment and / or an unlimited fine.

A person who obstructs a constable or authorised person entering or doing anything reasonably necessary to secure the premises against entry by any person commits an offence under Section 86 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 liable on summary conviction to a maximum of 3 months imprisonment and / or an unlimited fine.

District Judge / Justice of the Peace

[By order of the clerk of the court]

Date

# Next Steps

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- Youths are due in court, two parties still to be charged.
- Funded officers have drafted Criminal Behaviour Order applications for 3 x youths and 1 x adult
- Op Raptor officers have completed extensive investigations
- The working party were meeting fortnightly to remain aware of any concerns however owing to the reduction in activity this has been conceded and future discussions are on an adhoc basis.

# Reporting

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If residents suspect any properties are being used for Criminal purposes they can report it via the below channels:

- Call 101
- Live chat with Essex Police online
- Report it online to Essex Police
- Report to EFDC via the website: [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/crime-and-safety/report-anti-social-behaviour/](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/crime-and-safety/report-anti-social-behaviour/)



Any questions?

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## **STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE 2019/20**

#### **Core Areas of Responsibility**

- (1) To provide scrutiny for the following corporate projects:
  - Customer Excellence - Delivering services that put the customer at the heart of everything we do;
  - Behaviours and Insights - Future-proofing the Council's service provision by understanding customer needs and expectations over the next ten years and beyond; and
  - Partnerships - Working with public, private and third sector partners to deliver and develop services to our community, businesses and visitors to the district including shared and cross-border working.
- (2) To monitor levels of customer satisfaction and provide scrutiny of services that are not performing to standard and develop proposals for their improvement. This will also include matters of concern that are identified by the Stronger Council Select Committee in its review of Corporate Key Performance Indicators.

#### **Scrutiny Role of the Select Committee**

- (1) To engage in policy review and development, with a focus on improvement and how this can be best achieved;
- (2) To develop a work programme each year that effectively scrutinises the areas of responsibility outlined above;
- (3) To consider any matter referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder and to make recommendations as appropriate;
- (4) To look outwards and show community leadership;
- (5) To consider the effect of Government actions or initiatives that affect the Select Committees areas of responsibility and the impact on customers, residents, businesses and visitors to our district, and to respond to consultation activities as appropriate;
- (6) To establish working groups and task and finish panels to undertake any activity within these terms of reference;
- (7) To undertake pre-scrutiny through the review of specific proposals of the Council and its partner organisations or other local service providers to help develop policy;
- (8) To monitor and review relevant projects and associated closure and benefits reports; and
- (9) To engage with the community and encourage community engagement.

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## Stronger Communities Select Committee

### Work Programme 2021/22

**Chairman: Cllr J Lea**

**Stronger Communities Corporate Programme Alignment focuses on People living longer, healthier and independent lives; Adult and Children were supported in times of need; and People and Communities achieve their potential.**

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No.	Item	Deadline	Progress and Comments	Owner (Officer)	Programme of Meetings
1.	The Social Housing White Paper	15 June 2021	COMPLETED	D Fenton	<del>15 June 21</del> <del>21 Sept 21</del> 11 Jan 22 1 Mar 22* (meeting solely for Ch/Inp Annual reports) 22 Mar 22
2.	Our new approach to resident's involvement	15 June 2021	COMPLETED	D. Fenton	
3.	Waltham Abbey Community & Cultural Hub (Feasibility on Epping Forest culture and community hub)	15 June 2021	COMPLETED Detailed proposal to be considered	J. Gould	
4.	"What are our customers telling us?" and update on the Customer Services Strategy	15 June 2021	Quarter 1 Report – Committee was updated. The figures for Q1 would not be available until 30 June.	S. Lewis/ R. Pavey	
		21 Sept 2021	Quarter 2 Report – Committee was updated.		
		22 March 2021	Reporting on a 6-month basis		
5.	Six-month report on the work of the Council-funded Police Officers	21 Sept 2021	COMPLETED	C. Wiggins	

6.	EFDC Museum Collections	21 Sept 21	To consider the high-level action Plan for the programme of work over 3 years, sent out in the Corporate performance Reporting Q3 and requested at O&S on 19.11.20.	F. Pellegrino/ J. Gould	
7.	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Review	<del>21 Sept 21</del> 22 March 22	EFDC's current Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy reaches end of life in March 2022. A revised strategy will need to be taken through governance structure ahead of formal adoption in March 2022.	J Gould	
8.	Allocations Scheme Review	<del>21 Sept 21</del> 1 March 22	Current allocations policy due to expire March 2022. A revised Policy will need to be drafted, consulted on and be taken through governance structure ahead of agreement by Cabinet ready for implementation of new policy in April 2022.	J Gould	
9.	Tenancy Policy Review	<del>21 Sept 21</del> 1 March 22	Current tenancy policy due to expire March 2022. A revised Policy will need to be drafted, consulted on and be taken through governance structure ahead of agreement by Cabinet ready for implementation of new policy in April 2022.	J. Gould	
10.	Overarching Housing Strategy	<del>21 Sept 21</del> 22 March 22	EFDC's current Housing Strategy reaches end of life in March 2022. A revised strategy will need to be taken through governance structure ahead of formal adoption in April 2022.	J. Gould	
11.	Domestic Abuse Act	June 22	A briefing to members on the Act and the Strategy and impact on EFDC.	J. Gould/ C. Wiggins	
<del>12.</del>	<del>Market Strategy</del>	<del>11 Jan 22</del>		<del>S. Devine</del>	<del>O&amp;S 27.01.22</del>
13.	Sheltered Housing	11 Jan 22	Alarm upgrades in Sheltered housing.	D. Fenton	
14.	<b>HRA Business Plan</b>	11 Jan 22	To consider the HRA Business Plan	D. Fenton	
15.	Presentation from the District Police Commander	1 March 2022	Annual Report	C. Wiggins	
16.	Community Safety Partnership annual report and review of the district Strategic Intelligence Assessment	1 March 2022	Annual Report	C. Wiggins	

17.	Housing Associations	TBC	To consider how the Council could scrutinise housing associations. Requested O&S 3.06.21 Supported by the Committee 15.06.21	J. Gould	
18.	Data insight led review of customer service outlets	TBC	Options and recommendations for short, medium and long-term options		
19.	Digital Inclusion	TBC		S Lewis	
20.	Unaffordable rents	TBC	To report on the numbers of social rents and affordable rents for properties being built under the Council Housebuilding programme and those being bought under right to buy receipts. (O&S 12.10.21)		

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### **Report to Stronger Communities**

**Date of meeting: 11 January 2022**

**Portfolio: Housing Services (Cllr Holly Whitbread)**

**Subject: HRA Business Plan**

**Officer contact for further information: Deborah Fenton (07988860412)**

**Democratic Services Officer: R Perrin (01992 564532)**

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#### **Recommendations/Decisions Required**

- (1) That the Committee note the Safe and Prudent HRA business plan, and recommends to the Cabinet for approval
- (2) That the Committee receives a yearly performance update, that will include stringent stress testing.
- (3) That the Committee note that the business plan includes all assumed costs but not all income streams, as such the Committee also notes appendix B which is an alternative plan including some potential income
- (4) That the Committee note the opportunity to improve our estates which will improve the life span of our assets and feed into our ongoing work to 'create great places where people want to live'

#### **Executive Summary:**

The HRA business plan has been developed in partnership with our retained consultant Above-Consult. A bespoke HRA model is used which enables us to provide a reasonable cashflow projection of the next 30 years. It is based on evidential data from the Council's current systems and projections for economic assumptions in the social housing sector. Furthermore, the plan gives us the ability to stress test. This is vital given key dynamic risks such as the borrowing rate and changes in Government legislation regarding Social Housing.

Officers have taken both a safe and prudent approach when developing the business plan, with a balance between borrowing, developing, and improving the housing stock. The agreed minimum £2m revenue working capital balance is maintained throughout the plan.

All costs have been included in the plan; however, some potential income has not been included because at present it cannot be quantified. Examples of this include the ransom strip leading to Parkland and other similar pieces of land in the ownership of the HRA.

The Plan can be amended and updated year on year and during the year, to respond to changes, therefore maintaining a safe and prudent approach.

Controls are in place to mitigate risk; these can be found in Appendix C

#### **Context**

The abolition of the cap on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing in the 2018 Autumn Budget has raised a whole range of questions.

What is a realistic and achievable target for local councils to contribute to the development of

new affordable housing? What does a sensible and proportionate borrowing strategy look like for the HRA? How do stock holding councils go about setting their own borrowing capacity limits now that the government is not doing it for them?

The HRA does not have a balance sheet of its own (forms part of the Council one) and the value of fixed assets is not based on cost, it is based on existing use value and can be revalued on a regular basis. The business plan makes an estimate of how this might change over time based on the current valuation and new development added. The amount of debt held by the HRA does not relate to the property in the HRA as the majority of the current debt figure was allocated in 2012 as part of self-financing. The self-financing debt settlement figure was calculated based on the net present value of the income and expenditure assumed to the HRA over 30 years to give a level of borrowing that the Government estimated the Council could afford to service via the HRA revenue. It has not been built up from borrowing to buy property.

As there is no longer a debt cap, if there is sufficient revenue to service the loans, and loans can be refinanced if required, then prudential borrowing is allowed without limit. The Council may wish to set a maximum debt to which it is prepared to borrow for the HRA, but this is not set yet either. These targets are for discussion.

The delivery of a sustainable HRA business sets out not only to set the scene for capital expenditure during the period, which in this case is 30 years.

## **Background**

As we move towards our commitment of reaching Net Zero and creating 'Place' an emphasis on developing a clear and achievable business plan is required to ensure we can meet our commitments. This is against a backdrop of increasingly challenging budgets and pressures on local councils to drive down costs and improve efficiency. In 2015 the government introduced a 1% reduction in rent each year for 4 years. This would eventually lead to a 12% real term reduction in average rents by 2020/21. This was during a period where Housing Associations in particular, were making large surpluses.

The council, during the first couple of years of rent reduction were able to absorb costs, as such did not make any significant changes to services. Subsequently a decision was made to stretch the life cycles of both the internal components and the block replacement/upgrade programme.

The reduction was only ever going to be a temporary measure, the delays in spend, on the housing stock would need to be made up during subsequent years. Delayed lifecycle replacement usually leads to disproportionate levels of responsive repairs, whilst still leaving the need to invest in full replacement. During this period the council house building continued, this had a positive impact on the HRA account and would give rise for the opportunity to invest in the estates when the rent settlement changed. As promised by central government, this took place in 20/21.

Following the new rent settlement agreement which is CPI plus 1% changes have been made to the components replacement programme to fit in with the decent home standard.

## **What is 'decent home standard'?**

The Government believes everyone should have the opportunity to have a decent home. This means it should be warm and weatherproof with reasonably modern facilities and that each are a key element of any thriving, sustainable community. To help achieve this, it introduced the "decent homes" standard to help social housing providers improve the conditions of their homes. For a property to be labelled a decent home it must meet certain criteria. It has nothing to do with location, floor level or size. Instead, it focuses on the health and wellbeing of the people who live in them.



The detail around the decent home standard is complicated and relates to several criteria. In simple terms it is a nationally recognised standard which all social housing providers use when assessing and planning for upgrades to housing stock.

The allowances for expenditure within in the self-financing settlement in 2012 were based upon the Decent Home Standard at that time. Since then issues such as cladding and Net Zero Carbon have been introduced which stretch the resources of the HRA. Income in the HRA continues to be limited by Government guidance via the Regulator of Social Housing.

### **Council Housing Building**

The Epping Forest District Council HRA includes a Council house building programme.

Members agreed to begin a development programme, following a paper which was presented to Scrutiny Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011. (Appendix A). This included a discussion around what the benefits are in building inhouse. As such, Committee noted the advantages in both financial terms and in terms of maintaining control of and developing our stock, therefore providing the best possible service for residents.

The initial programme was based around a significant number of garage sites. In 2019 a further review of sites was undertaken with a corresponding feasibility study which included a financial appraisal. At this point officers purchased ProVal and started to use a baseline of 3.2% for the return over 30 years, this was prudent as it made sure that any future council house building was going to add value to the business plan.

Whilst the return on individual development scheme appraisals is a strong indicator of the ability of the cashflows to repay over time, it is equally important to test the schemes within the business plan as a whole. The combination of the requirements of the existing stock investment together with borrowing to build now to receive future rentals must be affordable. There should also be sufficient capacity in the workforce to deliver once borrowing has taken place.

During 2020/21 Phase 5 of the development programme was presented to Council House Building Cabinet Committee. This included a move towards driving further efficiency, by prioritising sites which produced a higher NPV, therefore benefiting the business plan financially.

### **Major Works**

It is well understood that properties have a finite life cycle. To maximise the life span of our blocks, it is vital that we carry out regular improvement works. The process of improving blocks is worked out using life cycles, there is an industry average for all components for buildings.

Our residential assets are reaching the point where major investment is required. Choosing not to invest would lead to a situation where the asset could become dangerous and losses in income through increased voids. Furthermore, it will lead to a disintegration of quality of life for our residents.

### **Stock condition survey – Capital replacements**

To understand the level of investment, required to meet the minimum standards in both our estates and individual properties, a Stock Condition Survey has been commissioned. This is used to assist with managing our assets and for planning and efficiently procuring maintenance and capital investment programmes.

A programme and budget for planned maintenance would normally be based on past maintenance history and a detailed stock condition survey It would include works such as window replacement, kitchen and bathroom replacement, upgrading fire/ smoke/ heat detection, heating upgrades, mechanical ventilation, electrical rewiring, security recommendations and external environmental improvement works etc.

EFDC have not carried out a stock condition survey for 10 years, although some information is available, to enable comprehensive planning over the 30 years of the business plan, a survey has been commissioned.

The data currently held allows us to prepare a medium-term financial plan. This covers both the planned works and capital investment required in our stock. However, this plan will change when the stock condition data is available.

Given the information officers currently have access to, it is expected that this will be positive as many replacements have been carried out when properties have become void. However, the new Charter for Social Housing and our commitment to achieving Net Carbon by 2030 is likely to draw on any potential savings.

Recent publicity (<https://www.itv.com/presscentre/ep1week37/surviving-squalor-britains-housing-shame>) highlights the risk of not investing in our assets in a timely manner.

## **Sector Risk Profile**

This year's Sector Risk Profile specifically refers to the existing stock quality. This follows the substantial degree of stakeholder and media scrutiny of stock quality issues.

EFDC housing stock is most fundamentally a home for its tenants. Failure to ensure that quality of housing stock is maintained, can result in significant consequences for tenants, as well as having substantial implications for the trust and confidence that tenants and other stakeholders have in EFDC. Furthermore, failure to invest appropriately can also lead to deterioration of stock, potentially leading to greater expense later.

The review of the Decent Homes Standard announced in the White Paper and more stringent energy efficiency requirements as part of the government's net zero-carbon commitments are likely to result in requirements for substantial investment in EFDC's existing housing stock.

This follows an earlier report in which the chief executive of the Regulator of Social Housing, drew attention to "the importance of adequately investing in existing stock, as well as ensuring necessary scrutiny of the build quality of new stock".

This includes satisfying statutory health and safety requirements and effectively managing all outsourcing arrangements, along with a need for "high-quality data" on the condition of properties.

"Failure in these areas not only puts tenants' health and lives at risk but also has major reputational risks to both the provider and the sector as a whole."

The regulator's report reiterates that providers lacking good quality data on the condition and compliance position of their stock "risk failure to comply with statutory requirements and placing their tenants in danger".

"Boards are responsible for safeguarding their tenants," it says, adding that failure to adequately invest in existing stock may put tenants' health and lives at risk.

The report says as part of a well-integrated, strategic approach to asset management, providers should understand the overall condition of their stock, including areas where additional investment is required.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sector-risk-profile-2021/sector-risk-profile-2021#operational-risks--existing-stock-and-service-delivery>

## Report

### Epping Forest DC Current HRA BP Assumptions (November 2021)

#### 1. CPI and RPI Rates

The underlying economic assumption of increases for CPI and RPI for future years are set at the same rates within the model. Where assumptions of income or cost are assumed to vary from these, real additions or increases are added and explained in the notes below.

##### Global Assumptions

CPI			
From Year			%
2	01-Apr-22		3.10%
3	01-Apr-23		4.00%
4	01-Apr-24		2.60%
5	01-Apr-25		2.00%
6	01-Apr-26		2.00%

#### 2. Stock and Rent

Opening stock on 1 April 2021 for the HRA included 6,385 dwellings excluding guest rooms and warden accompt / offices and Norway House. There were 152 Affordable Rented and 6,233 Social Rented dwellings.

Stock Description	Affordable Rent Bedsit	Affordable Rent One Bed	Affordable Rent Two Bed	Affordable Rent Three Bed	Affordable Rent Four Bed	Social Rent Bedsit	Social Rent One Bed	Social Rent Two Bed	Social Rent Three Bed	Social Rent Four Bed	Social Rent Five Bed	Supported Bedsit	Supported One Bed	Supported Two Bed	Supported Three Bed	Hostel
Tenure Type	Affordable Rent	Affordable Rent	Affordable Rent	Affordable Rent	Affordable Rent	Social Rent	Social Rent	Social Rent	Social Rent	Social Rent	Social Rent	Supported	Supported	Social Rent	Social Rent	Supported
Repairs & Maintenance Archetype	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock	Main Stock
Opening Stock Numbers	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units
Current Stock Numbers	0	24	61	66	1	223	1,797	1,720	1,810	145	1	85	428	15	0	9
Total Opening Stock Numbers	0	24	61	66	1	223	1,797	1,720	1,810	145	1	85	428	15	0	9

The 52-week average rent per unit type per week on a 52-week basis is shown below. Rents are currently allowed to rise by a maximum of CPI + 1% until April 2024 and then the expectation is that rents will be limited to CPI increases only.

Epping Forest DC has a policy which limits the setting and the future increase of Affordable Rented property to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). It is expected that LHA rates will be frozen until April 2025 and so Affordable Rents are expected to rise by less than the maximum allowed if they reach the imposed limit. This could have a negative impact on the business plan. As such a report will be presented to Cabinet in the New year.

The real annual increases / decreases in inflation compared to CPI by property type and size are also shown below. Three bed Affordable Rents will rise by an average of  $3.1\% - 0.14\% = 3.086\%$  for example in 2022-23 as properties reach the LHA limit. The following year, more 3 beds and some 4 beds also reach the limit.

## Rent Assumptions

Current Average Rent

New Letting Average Rent

Rent uplift from Current to New Letting

Current Rents Real Increases / (Decreases) +/- CPI

From Year	
2	01-Apr-22
3	01-Apr-23
4	01-Apr-24
5	01-Apr-25
6	01-Apr-26

Affordable Rent Bedsit	Affordable Rent One Bed	Affordable Rent Two Bed	Affordable Rent Three Bed	Affordable Rent Four Bed	Social Rent Bedsit	Social Rent One Bed	Social Rent Two Bed	Social Rent Three Bed	Social Rent Four Bed	Social Rent Five Bed	Supported Bedsit	Supported One Bed	Supported Two Bed	Supported Three Bed
£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk	£ / unit / wk
£0.00	£160.74	£196.23	£234.70	£303.26	£77.21	£87.09	£100.05	£113.87	£126.40	£115.14	£79.32	£87.00	£103.31	£0.00
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.84%	1.96%	2.44%	6.55%	5.70%	3.75%	3.46%	3.10%	4.59%	0.00%
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	1.00%	0.54%	-0.14%	1.00%	1.00%	0.99%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	0.00%
	0.74%	0.44%	-0.76%	-1.94%	1.00%	0.99%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	0.00%
	0.20%	0.40%	-0.48%	-2.60%	1.00%	0.99%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	0.00%
	-0.64%	-0.47%	-0.81%	-2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

## 3. Voids and Bad Debt Rates

Void loss is assumed to be 1.4% of the Council's social and affordable dwelling rent per annum. For Norway House this is assumed to be 63.75% in 2021-22 and 50% per annum thereafter.

There are some urgent works planned for certain areas of stock for the next four years (see "Capital Works") which will require a period to decant 24 properties (2 bed social), undertake the works and then return the tenants. 24 units represent 1.4% of the 2 bed social properties in stock and therefore the void loss for this stock type has been increased by 0.7% in 2022-23 (assuming 50% of the rents are lost that year), then increased by 1.4% for 2 years, then 0.7% before returning to the standard void loss of 1.4%. This will largely be due to the proposed redevelopment of Shelley Close.

Bad debts are assumed to be 0.26% of the rental income which in 2021-22 is the equivalent of around £90k.

## 4. Development Schemes

The following development schemes are included in the plan:

Scheme Names	New Build Units Developed	Acquisition Units Developed	Total Units Developed	Scheme Costs £	Sales Receipts £	External Grant £	Use of RTB 141 Receipts Capital £	Use of RTB 141 Receipts - Another RP £	Homes England Grant £
4.2 Etheridge Road (Debden)	3	0	3	-1,038,263	0	0	0	0	64,181
4.2 Denny Avenue (Waltham Abbey)	3	0	3	-778,696	0	0	0	0	46,871
4.2 Beechfield Walk (Waltham Abbey)	5	0	5	-920,881	0	0	0	0	60,333
4.2 Kirby Close (Loughton)	4	0	4	-1,025,331	0	0	0	0	58,133
4.3 Pick Hill (Waltham Abbey)	2	0	2	-800,958	0	0	320,383	0	0
4.3 Pentlow Way (Buckhurst Hill)	7	0	7	-1,948,066	0	0	779,226	0	0
4.3 Woollard Street (Waltham Abbey)	8	0	8	-1,748,206	0	0	699,282	0	0
4.4 Chequers Road Site B (Loughton)	8	0	8	-2,945,560	0	0	1,178,224	0	0
4.4 Ladyfields (Loughton)	16	0	16	-4,145,830	0	0	1,658,332	0	0
4.4 Lower Alderton Hall Lane (Loughton)	2	0	2	-628,327	0	0	251,331	0	0
Ph 5 Beechfield (B)	4	0	4	-1,437,378	0	0	0	0	0
Ph 5 Burney Drive	2	0	2	-713,811	0	0	0	0	0
Ph 5 Castell Road	4	0	4	-1,286,706	0	0	0	0	0
Ph 5 Fairfield/Millbank	2	0	2	-674,290	0	0	269,716	0	0
Ph 5 Hornbeam Close Site A (Buckhurst Hill)	14	0	14	-3,804,525	0	0	0	0	0
Ph 5 Hyde Mead (Nazeing)	6	0	6	-1,821,272	0	0	728,509	0	0
Ph 5 Pyrls Lane A (Loughton)	2	0	2	-749,312	0	0	299,725	0	0
Ph 5 Pyrls Lane B (Loughton)	3	0	3	-1,061,487	0	0	424,595	0	0
Ph 5 St Peters Avenue, Shelly, Ongar	63	0	63	-20,470,525	0	0	4,188,143	0	0
Ph 5 St Peters Avenue, Acres Av	1	0	1	-388,530	0	0	155,412	0	0
Ph 5 Winters Way Bromefield	3	0	3	-950,491	0	0	380,197	0	0
Ph 5 Winters Way Shingle	3	0	3	-1,035,572	0	0	414,229	0	0
Ph 5 Winters Way Wrangley	2	0	2	-777,271	0	0	310,908	0	0
Fees	0	0	0	-2,631,200	0	0	1,052,480	0	0
Qualis Acquisitions	90	0	90	-20,916,952	3,298,001	0	0	0	0
Street Properties	0	10	10	-2,941,484	0	0	1,176,594	0	0
Mason Close	10	0	10	-2,678,877	0	0	1,071,551	0	0
Valley Hill	7	0	7	-1,678,547	0	0	670,695	0	0
St John the Baptist	7	0	7	-2,904,417	0	0	1,161,767	0	0
Unidentified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>-84,902,765</b>	<b>3,298,001</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17,191,299</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>229,518</b>

Grants have only been included where they are known to be part of a scheme at this point. RTB 1-4-1 receipts have been assumed for all schemes to the point at which the current estimate of receipts brought forward and generated are used up. The actual mix of grant versus RTB receipt

use is still to be finalised. Homes England Grant and RTB 1-41 receipts cannot be used on the same scheme.

From 1 April 2021, the proportion of a scheme funded by 1-4-1 receipts has been increased from 30% to 40%. The Council will also have 5 years to spend the receipts rather than 3 as per the former arrangement. The receipts can also now be used to fund the development of shared ownership and First Homes as well as social and affordable rented properties. There will be a limit from April 2022 on the number of “acquisitions” per annum that can be funded from 1-4-1 receipts to ensure that the receipts fund new development by the Council. “Acquisitions” are expected to include the purchase of street properties, former RTB’s and purchases of new build on developments that are not on the Council’s land – this would include S106 purchases for example or purchasing of newly built properties on a developer’s market sale site.

Based on the estimate of RTB sales for future years, the estimated sales and discount values and the Council’s requirement to pool (pay over to Government) a share of the receipts, the table below sets out the expected generation and use of the 1-4-1 receipts in the plan. This is the proportion of the receipt that can only be used for new development / acquisition of property. It is only generated when the Council has received enough receipts to cover its liabilities to pay to Government and to compensate the business plan for the loss of income through excess sales.

The table shows the opening balance of £8.845 m at 1 April 2021, the new receipts, and the subsequent use for development. As there is only development in the plan assumed for 5 years so far, the plan shows that receipts generated from year 6 would be repaid to the Government with interest from year 11.

RTB Receipts for Replacement Homes										
Year	Year	Opening Balance £'000	New RTB 141 Receipts £'000	RTB 141 Receipts used for Dvpt £'000	RTB 141 Receipts given to another RP £'000	RTB Receipts Repaid £'000	Closing Balance £'000	Interest £'000	Interest Paid to Gov £'000	Closing Balance Check
1	2021/22	8,845	2,648	-4,304	0	0	7,189	5	0	OK
2	2022/23	7,189	1,564	-5,909	0	0	2,844	3	0	OK
3	2023/24	2,844	1,641	-4,485	0	0	-0	1	0	OK
4	2024/25	-0	1,707	-1,707	0	0	-0	-0	0	OK
5	2025/26	-0	1,747	-1,747	0	0	0	0	0	OK
6	2026/27	0	1,786	0	0	0	1,786	1	0	OK
7	2027/28	1,786	1,826	0	0	0	3,612	2	0	OK
8	2028/29	3,612	1,865	0	0	0	5,477	3	0	OK
9	2029/30	5,477	1,905	0	0	0	7,382	4	0	OK
10	2030/31	7,382	1,945	0	0	0	9,327	5	0	OK
11	2031/32	9,327	1,985	0	0	-1,786	9,526	6	-397	OK
12	2032/33	9,526	2,025	0	0	-1,826	9,725	6	-406	OK
13	2033/34	9,725	2,065	0	0	-1,865	9,924	6	-415	OK
14	2034/35	9,924	2,105	0	0	-1,905	10,124	6	-424	OK
15	2035/36	10,124	2,145	0	0	-1,945	10,325	6	-433	OK
16	2036/37	10,325	2,186	0	0	-1,985	10,526	6	-442	OK
17	2037/38	10,526	2,226	0	0	-2,025	10,728	6	-451	OK
18	2038/39	10,728	2,267	0	0	-2,065	10,929	6	-459	OK
19	2039/40	10,929	2,308	0	0	-2,105	11,132	7	-468	OK
20	2040/41	11,132	2,348	0	0	-2,145	11,335	7	-477	OK

The Council will over time identify further development schemes to add into the plan to utilise the receipts. The receipts forecast at current rates would require a scheme of around £4.5 million per year – with 60% of that being funded by additional borrowing.

The receipts are not grant and will only be available if properties continue to sell via RTB, which also has the effect of reducing the existing stock. It would not be prudent to assume schemes too far into the future so as not to raise expectations.

## 5. Other Income

Other income in 2021-22 consists of:

Income	Amount
Non-Dwelling Rent	£26k
Garages	£783k
Service Charges	£2.092 m
Contribution from GF	£357k
Total	£3.259 m

Income from 2022-23 onwards is assumed to ignore £353k of Other Special Services income included in the service charge figure. All charges are assumed to rise by CPI/RPI only going forwards.

Additional income from the sale of land is not included in the business plan, this income is likely to be significant, an example being the land near Parklands which could realise £10m.

If the General Fund considers that it needs to use capital receipts from the sale of HRA land or appropriates assets from the HRA to sell, it will need to make a compensating reduction to the value of HRA debt to reflect the loss of the asset.

### **Management Costs (excluding Repairs and Maintenance Revenue Costs)**

Management Costs for 2021-22 include:

Cost	Staffing	Non-Staffing	Total
Supervision & Management General	£1.872m	£4.232m	£6.104m
Service Costs (S&M Special)	£350k	£436k	£786k
Community Centres (S&M Special)	£1k	£72k	£73k
Grounds Maintenance (S&M Special)	£14k	£1.36m	£1.374m
Elderly Services (S&M Special)	£625k	£603k	£1.226m
Homelessness (S& M Special) incl. Norway House	£332k	£162k	£494k
Rents, Rates & Other		£589k	£589k
Leaseholders		£300k	£300k
Total	£3.194m	£7.754m	£10.948m

Staffing costs are assumed to rise by 2% in 2022-23 and thereafter by 3%, returning to 2% from April 2026 onwards.

Non-staffing costs are assumed to rise by CPI/RPI.

Adjustments to future year costs outside of inflation:

- Housing Asset Management System - £341k over the next 2 years has been added to fund this project.
- Housing Asset Management System - running costs £123k per annum from 2022-23 onwards
- Community Alarms - running costs reduced by £21k per annum from 2022-23 onwards due to upgrades in equipment
- Council tax saving on reduced voids - £30k per annum from 2022-23 onwards

- Stock Condition Survey – a 50% sample survey to produce good quality asset management information to accurately predict the spend required on the existing stock - £393k added to 2022-23 costs
- Stock condition survey – top up 10% surveys every 3 years to maintain the accuracy of the costs and ensure future requirements are picked up regularly - £200k added.
- HRA Support Service cost additions:
 

2022-23	£590k
2023-24	£709k
2024-25	£831k
2025-26	£956k
2026-27 thereafter	£956k

## 6. Repairs & Maintenance

The budget for day-to-day responsive, void, and cyclical works carried out mainly by Qualis is £7.723 million (approx. £1,200 per unit) for 2021-22.

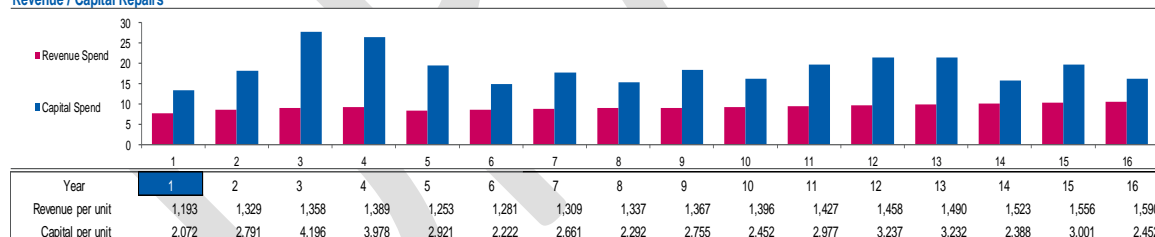
An additional £668k is added from 2022/23 onwards to cover:

- Qualis agreed increase in repairs budget - £426k
  - Minor adaptations – Qualis – additional budget - £90k
  - General repairs budget reinstated - £132k
  - Insurance excess budget created - £20k
- giving a total of £1,300 per unit at today's prices.

From 2025-26 onwards a saving of £900k is assumed giving a budget of £7.491m (£1,162 per unit) at 2021-22 prices based on the current stock.

### Summary Per Unit of Repairs

Revenue / Capital Repairs

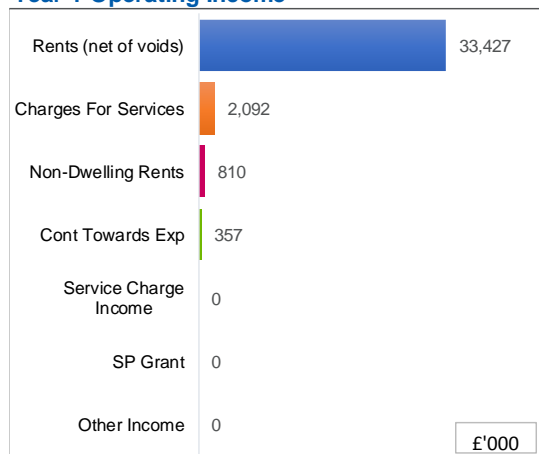


The stock condition survey that is due to be undertaken in the New Year will identify the quality and the requirements for spending on the housing stock over the next 40 years. It should also provide the HRA with an estimate of the level of repairs per unit that might be expected if the stock is maintained to that standard. This figure should be used to agree budgets for work for Qualis in future years.

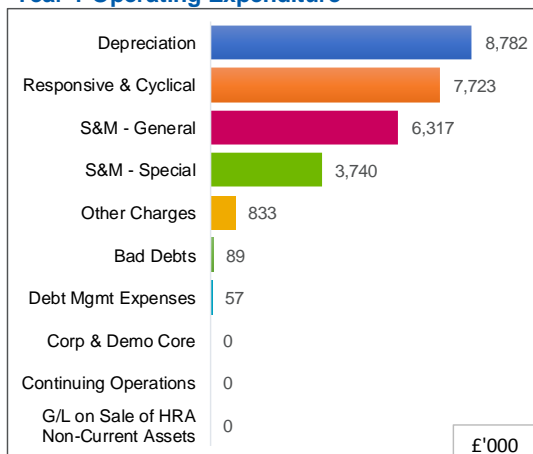


## Operating Income and Expenditure Summary

### Year 1 Operating Income



### Year 1 Operating Expenditure



## 7. Capital Works

The capital programme for 2021-22 remains the same as that agreed by Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020.

The Council's existing paper-based records which are designed to capture information about capital spend by address have been used as the basis of forecasting the spend profile from 2022-23 onwards for 30 years. The records show by property element (e.g. roof, kitchen, Bathroom, etc.) when the last replacement was made and using an agreed set of replacement lifecycles forecasts when the next replacement is due.

The following table shows the previous budget before the extended life cycles were reduced in line with the Decent Home Standard:

HOUSING (HRA) PORTFOLIO						
CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXTENDED LIFECYCLES						
2021-26 5-YEAR FORECAST FROM STOCK CONDITION SURVEY						
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	5 Year
	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>TOTAL HRA</b>	<b>13,471</b>	<b>9,926</b>	<b>9,953</b>	<b>9,950</b>	<b>9,687</b>	<b>52,988</b>

Members should note that the increase in capex spend for majors works and improvements increases from £52.9m to £84.4m from the original 5-year projection. This is in part due that the fact that component costs had not been updated and did not reflect a RPI increase. Furthermore, more importantly, the new costs revert the lifecycles back to the Decent Home Standard. This policy has recently been changed to bring the lifecycles back to normal periods, but this then means that there are more properties that need capital works as their previous timed repair was after the new date. This drops all the delayed work into 2022-23.

It may well be that the work needs doing, but the scale of the work is beyond the Council's capacity (from a delivery point of view) in a single year. £19 million of the work forecast for 2022-23 has been delayed and rephased to be done over 2023-24 and 2024-25.



To give the Council more comfort over the value of works that are required to the existing stock and to aid the accurate population of the new Housing Asset Management system, Ridge and Partners are being instructed to undertake a substantial sample survey. 50% of the properties will be surveyed to establish their condition and to forecast over 40 years a profile of expenditure that should be future-proofed. It will cover the expectations for net carbon zero and cladding as a minimum. The data will be cloned initially to reflect the entire stock and will be used to put together an asset management programme for procuring works in an efficient manner. The cost of the survey is included in 2022-23, together with update surveys every 3 years thereafter. The resulting survey costs should be known in the Spring and are expected to reduce and smooth out the existing forecasts.

The business plan for the next five years also reflects the urgent work required (at 2021-22 prices). The works have been packaged up to reflect the vision for Housing 'creating great places where people want to live' therefore creating maximum input.

- Limes Avenue and Copperfield - £6 million over 2022-23 and 2023-24
  - Broadway - £2.75 million in 2022-23
  - Roofing packages at Pyrles Lane, St Johns Court, Langley Meadow and Hillyfields - £1.2 million in 2023-24
  - Harvey Fields - £2 million in 2024-25
  - Oakwood Hill Estate - £6 million in 2025-26
  - Sheltered Refurbishments - £1.98 million over 6 years from 2022-23 (repeated after every) 5 years
  - Emergency Alarm Upgrade - £360k in 2022-23 (repeated every 10 years)
- Total costs at 2021-22 prices = £20.290 million

Prices are assumed to rise in line with the CPI/RPI rates assumed in the economic assumptions. Works will involve decanting for 24 properties which has an impact on the level of void loss of rental income. This, by in large, relates to The Shelley Estate Redevelopment.

The emergency alarm works provide savings on annual equipment maintenance fees in future years.

These urgent works are partially funded by leaseholder contributions. For example, our work at Limes Ave and Copperfield estimated at £30k per leaseholder (114 over 4 years) paid over 6 years with interest based at 3% (1% above assumed borrowing rate). There will be a scale of payment terms and rates based on the amount of the works so averages have been used for this exercise. The amount expected from leaseholders is £3.42 million.

The works will also reduce the amount forecast to be spent anyway on structural works and roofing per the existing survey data.,

- Structural budget contribution = £1.9 million
  - Roofing budget contribution = £7.7 million
- Total over 4 years = £9.6 million contribution.

Over the next five years, the capital works expected pre-stock condition survey are (inclusive of inflation):

Year	Major Works & Improvements £'m	Urgent Works £'m	New Build Development £'m	Other Capital Spend £'m	Total £'m
2021-22	£84.4	0	16.450	0.567	30.432
2022-23	11.900	6.267	26.059	2.789	47.017
2023-24	22.952	4.857	28.498	0.643	56.950
2024-25	23.869	2.563	11.556	0.660	38.649

2025-26	12.484	7.103	6.695	0.673	26.955
2026-27	14.497	0.378	0	0.687	15.562
Total	99.117	21.168	89.258	5.333	215.564

## 8. Other Capital Spend

In addition to the capital spend required to maintain the stock, there are budgets included for other capital items:

2021-22 Service enhancement costs (Housing Asset Management) - £567k  
 2022-23 Service enhancement costs (Housing Asset Management) - £105k  
 2022-23 Land purchase £2 million  
 2022-23 onwards £600k per annum contingency.

## 9. Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated on owned stock based on £1,358.18 per unit, giving a charge to the HRA of £8.872 million in 2021-22 and this rises by 2% per annum.

Depreciation is treated as a charge or deduction from the HRA revenue balances which is transferred into the Major Repairs Reserve. The Major Repairs Reserve is a pot of money that can only be used to fund capital works. Whilst it can be used for any capital works in the HRA, it is principally designed to fund major works improvements to the existing stock. Any shortfall can be funded from additional contributions from the HRA revenue reserve if the balance is above £2 million, or from additional borrowing.

## 10. Reserves, Funding and Loans

The following reserves exist for the use of the HRA as at 1 April 2021:

HRA Revenue Reserve	£2.105m (revenue or capital use)
Major Repairs Reserve	£8.84m (capital use only)
Provision for Debt Repayment	£12.72m (capital use only)
RTB 1-4-1 Receipts	£8.845m (only use for development)

The minimum HRA balance required by the Council is £2 million.

The HRA has loans totalling £189.433m at 1 April 2021, of which £30.281 million has historically (pre 2012) been borrowed to support the General Fund capital programme and for which the General Fund pays the HRA interest income. The net debt is £159.152m.

The HRA is due to repay a £31.8 million loan which has a fixed rate of 1.04% on 1 March 2022. As there are insufficient reserves to make the repayment of the loan in full, the Council has several options:

- Refinance (re-borrow) the £31.8 million loan at new interest rates (interest is a revenue cost to the HRA)
- Use some of the provisions and/or reserves to pay off part of the debt and refinance part of the loan
- Request repayment of the £30.281 million over-borrowing from the General Fund and use the money to pay off the loan plus some of the debt provision.

The business plan assumes option 3 with the loss of interest charges on £31.8 million and the loss of interest paid by the General Fund. It is expected that the General Fund will re-borrow the

sum to pay the HRA, possibly at lower rates than the current rate paid by the HRA. This will be partially offset by the saving on interest paid to the HRA. The overall borrowing by the Council would be relatively unchanged.

It is also assumed that the HRA will repay borrowing from the Council taken out in March 2021 to fund last year's capital programme using the debt provision reserve to do this.

The net debt on 31 March 2022 would be £153.656 million.

The Major Repairs Reserve has a significant balance of £8.84m on 1 April 2021. The plan assumes that the capital programme for 2021-22 will use these balances, together with grants, RTB 1-4-1 receipts where possible for development schemes, revenue balances and the balance on the debt repayment reserve to fund the capital programme to minimise borrowing. This will in turn minimise the use of revenue reserves used to pay interest charges.

Sale of council houses under the Right to Buy (RTB) after considering the tenant's discount generates receipts which are shared in proportions set by legislation between the Council and the Government. The following shares of income can arise:

- Treasury share – up to 75% of the receipt up to a limit set by local authority (paid to HM Treasury)
- Local Authority share - up to 25% of the receipt up to a limit set by local authority (retained by the Council for any capital purpose)
- £1300 per unit for admin fees
- Allowable debt – a calculation of a value designed to compensate the HRA business plan where sales exceed the number assumed in the self-financing settlement in 2012. This sum is the equivalent of the additional debt taken on for those excess units sold and could be used to pay off debt (retained by the Council for any capital use)
- Any remaining receipts is the 1-4-1 RTB receipt for replacement homes only.

The Council resolved that the HRA should be allowed to keep the admin fees and the 1-4-1 receipts, and 30% of the allowable debt compensation. The remaining 70% and 100% of the LA share is kept by the General Fund.

The business plan shows that the capital programme including development and other capital spend can be funded as follows:

		Capital Expenditure						Financing									
Year	Year	Major Works & Imps £'000	Other Capital Spend £'000	New Build Development Costs £'000	Demolition Costs £'000	Other Fixed Assets £'000	Total Capital Expenditure £'000	External Grant £'000	Homes England Grant £'000	RTB 141 Receipts £'000	Arranged Borrowing £'000	Other RTB Receipts £'000	Other Capital Receipts £'000	MRR £'000	RCCO £'000	Revolver Borrowing £'000	Total Financing £'000
1	2021/22	13,415	567	16,450	0	0	30,432	0	349	4,304	0	180	180	24,846	573	0	30,432
2	2022/23	18,169	2,789	26,059	0	0	47,017	0	0	5,909	0	61	466	8,958	4,994	26,629	47,017
3	2023/24	27,809	643	28,498	0	0	56,950	0	0	4,485	0	66	2,172	9,137	3,579	37,511	56,950
4	2024/25	26,432	660	11,556	0	0	38,649	0	0	1,707	0	70	1,062	9,320	5,292	21,199	38,649
5	2025/26	19,587	673	6,695	0	0	26,955	0	0	1,747	0	72	829	9,506	5,805	8,997	26,955
6	2026/27	14,875	687	0	0	0	15,562	0	0	0	0	74	570	9,696	5,222	0	15,562
7	2027/28	17,779	700	0	0	0	18,479	0	0	0	0	76	570	9,890	7,943	0	18,479
8	2028/29	15,285	714	0	0	0	15,999	0	0	0	0	79	570	10,088	5,263	0	15,999
9	2029/30	18,341	729	0	0	0	19,070	0	0	0	0	81	350	10,290	8,349	0	19,070
10	2030/31	16,295	743	0	0	0	17,038	0	0	0	0	84	300	10,495	6,159	0	17,038
11	2031/32	19,751	758	0	0	0	20,509	0	0	0	0	16	250	10,705	9,538	0	20,509
12	2032/33	21,433	773	0	0	0	22,206	0	0	0	0	16	0	10,919	8,894	2,377	22,206
13	2033/34	21,365	789	0	0	0	22,153	0	0	0	0	16	0	11,138	7,838	3,162	22,153
14	2034/35	15,759	805	0	0	0	16,563	0	0	0	0	16	0	11,360	5,187	0	16,563
15	2035/36	19,767	821	0	0	0	20,588	0	0	0	0	16	0	11,588	8,985	0	20,588
16	2036/37	16,121	837	0	0	0	16,958	0	0	0	0	16	0	11,819	5,123	0	16,958
17	2037/38	34,652	854	0	0	0	35,505	0	0	0	0	16	0	12,056	14,481	8,953	35,505
18	2038/39	16,521	871	0	0	0	17,392	0	0	0	0	16	0	12,297	5,080	0	17,392
19	2039/40	15,645	888	0	0	0	16,534	0	0	0	0	16	0	12,543	0	3,975	16,534
20	2040/41	17,365	906	0	0	0	18,271	0	0	0	0	16	0	12,794	0	5,462	18,271
21	2041/42	14,715	924	0	0	0	15,639	0	0	0	0	16	0	13,050	8,894	2,574	15,639
22	2042/43	23,741	943	0	0	0	24,684	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,311	11,373	0	24,684
23	2043/44	21,400	962	0	0	0	22,361	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,577	8,784	0	22,361
24	2044/45	23,115	981	0	0	0	24,096	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,848	10,247	0	24,096
25	2045/46	29,726	1,000	0	0	0	30,727	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,125	16,602	0	30,727
26	2046/47	30,932	1,020	0	0	0	31,953	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,408	17,545	0	31,953
27	2047/48	30,597	1,041	0	0	0	31,638	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,696	16,298	644	31,638
28	2048/49	23,897	1,062	0	0	0	24,958	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,990	9,969	0	24,958
29	2049/50	22,018	1,083	0	0	0	23,101	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,290	7,811	0	23,101
30	2050/51	21,915	1,105	0	0	0	23,020	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,595	7,424	0	23,020

The financing of the expenditure assumes that known grants, 1-4-1 RTB receipts allocated to development schemes, other RTB capital receipts generated (i.e. the Council's share before 1-4-1 receipts are calculated), other capital receipts including shared ownership 1<sup>st</sup> tranche sales and leaseholder contributions and the balance on the Major Repairs Reserve are used first.

Having exhausted the capital reserves, the plan then assumes that the HRA will contribute revenue to fund the works as a Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) to minimise the remaining amount which is assumed to be borrowed. The amount of revenue contributed is limited by the plan to ensure that the minimum balance on the HRA reserve each year is £2 million.

If there is still a shortfall, then the plan assumes there will be borrowing (Revolver Borrowing) – this is currently a forecast and not actual loans. The assumption is that this borrowing would be at 2.04% interest rates when required and would-be long-term debt, repaid beyond 40 years.

From years 2022-23 to 2026-27 in the first-place show that significant borrowing will be required (£94.336 million) mainly to fund the development but also to fund the urgent works required and the current forecast of works required to existing properties. The new stock condition survey will give a more accurate prediction of the spend profile which will change the predictions for borrowing.

## **11. Financing Summary**

The table below summarises the position on the loans and the HRA surplus carried forwards over 30 years.

The opening net debt is £159.152m. The loan repayment of £5.496 million in 2021-22 is made up of the £31.8million loan repayment, £30.281 million received back from the General Fund and paying down the £3.977 million internal loan taken on 31 March 2021.

Revolver borrowing drawn down is the amount required to fund the capital programme in the plan where other capital receipts and revenue are insufficient in the year. The plan does not have sufficient reserves to fund the repayment of 4 x £30 million of loans in years 17 to 20 so it is assumed that these are refinanced each year as they fall due. Total debt in year 30 is £238.91 million.

The HRA surplus runs very close to £2 million in most years, except out in years 19 and 20 where it builds up to repay a loan of £33.656 million in year 21 to reduce debt.

## Financing Summary

Year	Year	Opening Loan Balance £'000	Loan Drawdowns £'000	Loan Repayments £'000	Drawdown of Revolver £'000	Repayment of Revolver £'000	Closing Loan Balance £'000	HRA Surplus c/f £'000
1	2021/22	159,152	0	-5,496	0	0	153,656	4,969
2	2022/23	153,656	0	0	26,629	0	180,285	2,005
3	2023/24	180,285	0	0	37,511	0	217,796	2,002
4	2024/25	217,796	0	0	21,199	0	238,995	2,001
5	2025/26	238,995	0	0	8,997	0	247,992	2,001
6	2026/27	247,992	0	0	0	0	247,992	3,551
7	2027/28	247,992	0	0	0	0	247,992	2,574
8	2028/29	247,992	0	0	0	0	247,992	4,235
9	2029/30	247,992	0	0	0	0	247,992	3,253
10	2030/31	247,992	0	0	0	0	247,992	5,554
11	2031/32	247,992	0	0	0	0	247,992	3,227
12	2032/33	247,992	0	0	2,377	0	250,370	2,007
13	2033/34	250,370	0	0	3,162	0	253,531	2,007
14	2034/35	253,531	0	0	0	0	253,531	4,560
15	2035/36	253,531	0	0	0	0	253,531	4,776
16	2036/37	253,531	0	0	0	0	253,531	8,117
17	2037/38	253,531	30,000	-30,000	8,953	0	262,485	2,009
18	2038/39	262,485	30,000	-30,000	0	0	262,485	6,137
19	2039/40	262,485	30,000	-30,000	3,975	0	266,460	15,977
20	2040/41	266,460	30,000	-30,000	5,462	0	271,922	26,099
21	2041/42	271,922	0	-33,656	0	0	238,266	2,052
22	2042/43	238,266	0	0	0	0	238,266	3,056
23	2043/44	238,266	0	0	0	0	238,266	6,681
24	2044/45	238,266	0	0	0	0	238,266	9,527
25	2045/46	238,266	0	0	0	0	238,266	6,385
26	2046/47	238,266	0	0	0	0	238,266	2,333
27	2047/48	238,266	0	0	644	0	238,910	2,001
28	2048/49	238,910	0	0	0	0	238,910	7,178
29	2049/50	238,910	0	0	0	0	238,910	14,564
30	2050/51	238,910	0	0	0	0	238,910	23,120

## Key Targets and Outputs

The business plan results shown in chart form below show that peak debt is in year 20 at £271.922 million this is not repaid within the period of the plan. The minimum HRA balance of £2 million is maintained over 30 years, with the lowest balance of £2 million in year 5. if there is no more development.

Targets for interest cover and loan to value are not currently set in the plan. Councils are starting to use these indicators as measures of health of the plan.

**Interest cover** = HRA Net Operating Surplus / Interest Charges

– i.e. how many times the annual surplus could cover the annual interest charge. The minimum interest cover is 1.36 times in year 2.

**Loan to Value** = Total Loans / Housing Fixed Assets

– i.e. the proportion of fixed asset value that covers the debt. The maximum loan to value estimated in the plan is 27% in year 4. This falls in the year where new borrowing peaks, but development will not yet be producing the maximum annual rent.

Should the target for borrowing be forecast to be breached, or borrowing becomes unaffordable, the HRA may need to look to:

- Reduce the revenue services it provides.
- Reduce the volume of development to stem borrowing.
- Sell HRA assets to provide capital receipts to fund the plan.

## Reason for decision:

Although stock holding councils no longer must submit a Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, it is still prudent to produce one as it acts as a planning tool for both financial and personnel resources.

## Options considered and rejected:

To not meet decent homes standard was considered, however that would lead to increase spend in the future as the life span of the asset would be minimised.

To stop development. This we lead to a net loss of stock due to the RTB, in addition there would not be a compounded increase in income, which may impact the investment in stock in the future

To not invest in the urgent works and continue to repair on an ad-hoc bases. This would lead to a long-term deterioration of stock leading, to an increase in cost.

**Consultation undertaken:**

The Finance Team have been consulted and agree. Consultation has taken place with the relevant officers in EFDC

**Resource implications:**

The paper clearly indicates both the Capital and Revenue requirements for the HRA business plan.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Mention HRA, Housing charter etc.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

The plan already includes development using a 'Fabric First Approach' Furthermore the stock condition survey will enable officers to plan for carbon neutrality

**Background Papers:**

25<sup>th</sup> October 2011 – Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel  
Report to the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee Report reference: CHB-005-2020/21  
Date of meeting: 08 September 2020

**Appendix A - 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011 – Report to Scrutiny (relevant section)**

**Appendix B - Business plan including income**

**Appendix C - Risk register**

**Impact Assessments:**

Attached

**Risk Management:**

The risks of not approving the business plan are highlighted in the report. Furthermore, a risk register is attached

## Why undertake a Council Housebuilding Programme

### *25<sup>th</sup> October 2011 – Report to Scrutiny*

11. The main reasons for the Cabinet deciding in principle to introduce a new Housebuilding Programme were that:

- (a) The Council's HRA land could be developed for much-needed affordable housing
- (b) The Council would receive the associated New Homes Bonus (NHB) – equivalent to around £6,700 per property over the six-year NHB period, to use for any Council purpose.
- (c) The land and constructed buildings would be retained as a Council asset - rather than transferring the land to a housing association at a subsidised price, for the housing association to develop the affordable housing.
- (d) The Council would benefit from the net rental income in the future once the development loan has been covered.
- (e) It may be possible for the Council itself to receive the benefit of capital grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency.
- (f) The Council would have greater control over the future use of the affordable homes.
- (g) The cost of construction would be less than for a housing association, since the Council can recover the cost of VAT for fees from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), which housing associations cannot; and
- (h) It would enable the Council to increase its housing stock, instead of continuing to reduce the stock through the Right to Buy, and thereby slowly reduce the associated unit costs of managing and maintaining the Council's housing stock.

## Appendix B

### Financing Summary including Income

The table below shows the financial summary including additional income. The income consists of income from disposing 'Ransom Strips' and Homes England Grant for the development programme.

#### HRA Business Plan | Epping Forest DC

##### Financing Summary

Year	Year	Opening Loan Balance £'000	Loan Drawdowns £'000	Loan Repayments £'000	Drawdown of Revolver £'000	Repayment of Revolver £'000	Closing Loan Balance £'000	HRA Surplus c/f £'000
1	2021/22	159,152	0	-5,496	0	0	153,656	4,969
2	2022/23	153,656	0	0	25,068	0	178,724	2,005
3	2023/24	178,724	0	0	26,836	0	205,560	2,002
4	2024/25	205,560	0	0	20,802	0	226,362	2,001
5	2025/26	226,362	0	0	8,178	0	234,539	2,001
6	2026/27	234,539	0	0	0	0	234,539	4,328
7	2027/28	234,539	0	0	0	0	234,539	3,627
8	2028/29	234,539	0	0	0	0	234,539	5,564
9	2029/30	234,539	0	0	0	0	234,539	4,859
10	2030/31	234,539	0	0	0	0	234,539	7,436
11	2031/32	234,539	0	0	0	0	234,539	5,386
12	2032/33	234,539	0	0	0	0	234,539	2,071
13	2033/34	234,539	0	0	2,773	0	237,312	2,007
14	2034/35	237,312	0	0	0	0	237,312	4,893
15	2035/36	237,312	0	0	0	0	237,312	5,441
16	2036/37	237,312	0	0	0	0	237,312	9,116
17	2037/38	237,312	30,000	-30,000	7,612	0	244,924	2,010
18	2038/39	244,924	30,000	-30,000	0	0	244,924	6,497
19	2039/40	244,924	30,000	-30,000	3,975	0	248,899	16,698
20	2040/41	248,899	30,000	-30,000	5,462	0	254,361	27,181
21	2041/42	254,361	0	-33,656	0	0	220,705	3,495
22	2042/43	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	4,859
23	2043/44	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	8,846
24	2044/45	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	12,053
25	2045/46	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	9,273
26	2046/47	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	5,583
27	2047/48	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	4,969
28	2048/49	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	10,521
29	2049/50	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	18,283
30	2050/51	220,705	0	0	0	0	220,705	27,215



### HRA RISK REGISTER (December 2021)

LIKELIHOOD	<b>A</b> Very High				
	<b>B</b> High			3	
	<b>C</b> Medium				
	<b>D</b> Low / Very Low		2	1	
		4 Insignificant	3 Minor	2 Moderate	1 Major
IMPACT					

Risk no.	Risk score	Description
1	D2	HRA Suplus
2	C2	Gearing
3	B2	Diffiuct to let properties

REF	RISK (IF-THEN)	BACKGROUND CAUSE-EFFECT	Likelihood	Impact	Inherent Risk Rating	MITIGATION/ CURRENT CONTROLS	Likelihood	Impact	Residual Risk Rating	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED (INCLUDE TIMESCALES)	RISK OWNER	COMPLETION ON REVIEW DATE
<b>Risk No 1</b> <b>£2m surplus breached</b>	<b>Vulnerability:</b> That the cost of borrowing increases <b>Consequence:</b> The plan may breach therefore not maintaining the £2m balance	The business plan is based on several assumptions. These may or may not come to fruition. The failure to regularly review the plan and the sensitivities within it could lead to a breach which would not be line with policy.	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>B2</b>	Controls are in place to regularly review and stress test the business plan. The plan will be updated on an annual basis. Information will be fed in using the budget monitoring process which looks at spend v budget monthly.  An annual report will be presented to O & S and Cabinet	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>D2</b>	1. HRA review meeting put in place on a monthly basis 2. Yearly reports added to the Stronger Communities work Programme	Director of Property and Housing	Regular programme meetings (but at least monthly)
<b>Risk No 2</b> <b>Gearing</b>	Vulnerability Although interest cover is not used as a benchmark in local council building borrowing, it is the industry standard. As such it is prudent to include it as a risk. The vulnerability occurs if the interest cover drops below that which is assumed as acceptable <b>Consequence</b> Should additional borrowing be required there would be a risk that the interest may not be covered. This may destabilise the business plan	This may occur due to urgent works being identified and unforeseen cost resulting in additional borrowing	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>C3</b>	The yearly review will take a view on whether the level of interest cover is reasonable based on sector averages and agreed by Cabinet.  Any predicted breach in cover will initiate a review of the plan. This will then lead to a review of the development programme and the spend on repairs, maintenance, and capital upgrades  Current Gearing is at an appropriate level	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>C2</b>	Report to be taken to Cabinet to recommend a level of Gearing with meets with the appropriate level for risk.  Average in the housing sector in 2020 was 1.38%  The business plan assumes a safe level to be at 1.25%	Director of property and housing	April 22
<b>Difficult to let properties</b>	<b>Vulnerability</b> <b>The older persons stock is, in some schemes difficult to let</b>  <b>Consequence</b> <b>Longer voids which means potential rent loss</b>	Several the sheltered schemes are dated and do not meet the requirements of older people. This means that they are more difficult to let which leads to longer void periods	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>B2</b>	An asset review of the sheltered stock was undertaken. This is now being further developed to include a medium to long term strategic direction.	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>B2</b>	Report to be taken to Stronger Place and Cabinet recommending a strategy for the next 7-15 years	Director of Property and Housing	June 22

## Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
  - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
  - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage/civil partnership
  - pregnancy/maternity
  - race
  - religion/belief
  - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:
  - Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
  - Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
  - Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
  - Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
  - Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
  - Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

## Section 1: Identifying details

Your function, service area and team: **Housing and Property**

If you are submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: **NA**

Title of policy or decision: HRA business plan

Officer completing the EqIA: **Deborah Fenton** Tel: 079888 60412 Email: **dfenton@eppingforestdc.gov.uk**

Date of completing the assessment: 17/12/21

## Section 2: Policy to be analysed

2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? <b>no</b>
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):  What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• service users</li><li>• employees</li><li>• the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?</li></ul> <b>No</b>  Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate? <b>No</b>
2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? <b>No</b>
2.5	Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes? <b>Stronger communities</b>

### **Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation<sup>1</sup>**

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	What does the information tell you about those groups identified? NA
3.2	Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?.
3.3	If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary: <b>N/A</b>

## Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	<b>Neutral – the paper is for information only and will not impact on any groups</b>	L
Disability	As above	L
Gender	As above	L
Gender reassignment	As above	L
Marriage/civil partnership	As above	L
Pregnancy/maternity	As above	L
Race	As above	L
Religion/belief	As above	L
Sexual orientation	As above	L

## Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No X	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' <b>YES</b> ', use the action plan at <b>Section 6</b> to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

**Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts**

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.
None	N/A	N/A/De



**Section 7: Sign off**

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.  
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: Deborah Fenton

Date:17/12/21

Signature of person completing the EqIA: Deborah Fenton

Date: 17/12/21

**Advice**

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

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## **Report to Stronger Communities**

**Date of meeting: 11 January 2022**

# SCRUTINY



**Portfolio: Housing Services (Cllr Holly Whitbread)**

**Subject: Sheltered Housing - Emergency Alarm System Upgrade**

**Officer contact for further information: Deborah Fenton (07988860412)**

**Democratic Services Officer: R Perrin (Ext 4532)**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required**

**(1) That the Committee considers the proposal to use Everon to replace the Council's Hard-Wired Alarm system and make a recommendation to present this proposal to Cabinet for approval.**

### **Executive Summary:**

Our sheltered schemes have an analogue telephone system. This means that it operates on the public switched telephone network (PSTN). This network is being switched off in 2025 as we move to an IP network. This means that we are moving from analogue to digital.

The current emergency alarm equipment is around 16 years old, although it still provides a reliable service it has limitations, these being that residents need to get to a pull cord which is situated in each room of their property to raise an alarm call. Furthermore, we can only link a limited number of peripherals to the system. All properties have a smoke detector. Pendants are available for those with limited mobility, or whom have just been discharged from hospital and are unable to reach a pull cord.

Technology has moved on and so have emergency alarm systems. To ensure the alarm systems in our sheltered housing schemes continue to provide a reliable service, and meet the needs of our residents, we need to upgrade them to digital.

Officers have undertaken a review of systems currently on the market and have recommended Everon's Lyra alarm call system.

### **Report**

#### **Background**

In March 2021, four of the leading care technology providers (Tunstall, Apello, Tynetec and Everon) were invited to give a virtual presentation to officers and other interested stakeholders which included one Councillor. Each presentation was evaluated by our Sheltered Housing Officers. Everon's Lyra alarm call system exceeded our expectations. We wanted a system that's easy to use for residents with the ability to install additional equipment as and when resident's needs change. We also want a system that will allow Sheltered Housing Officers to work more efficiently. Everon's system meets these requirements.

There are many benefits to a digital system, it's faster and even more reliable. It also benefits from a range of sensors and devices which will allow us to offer bespoke care technology packages to residents, resulting in a more personalised approach. Care Technology includes:

- Devices that enable independent living around the home
- Remote monitoring which helps support people with long term health conditions
- Lifestyle monitoring which can detect changes in daily living for preventive intervention
- Visual solution to enable social interaction
- Digital support to help promote well-being for those with dementia
- Remote consultations via video with health care professionals

The ability to install the above equipment may also help reduce the number of residents needing to transfer to residential care and help reduce admissions to hospital. Therefore, easing the strain on health and social care budgets.

## **Everon**

Everon have undertaken site visits at all 12 sheltered schemes and submitted a quotation to provide and install their Lyra system at £355,531.00. This includes a Lyra alarm unit, pendant and pull cord in the bathroom for each property. It also includes door entry, speech module in all lifts and link to the fire panel at each scheme. This works out at £759.91 per property (We have 468 properties across the 12 schemes) this is compared to around £1,300 per property for a new hard-wired system. Installing a dispersed alarm system would mean moving away from the traditional hard-wired but there are many advantages which include:

- The system is wireless and easy to install, there is no need for cabling, drilling or disruption to residents and therefore is more competitive cost wise.
- There is no limit to the number of alarms calls in progress, meaning that multiple alarms can be raised from the same site without any 'call stacking'. A hard-wired system only allows one call at a time as it works on one telephone line per scheme.
- The system has the ability to integrate door entry with the flexibility to handle these alerts from the alarm unit, a mobile phone, or a landline.
- Hard wired systems rely on a telephone line, if the line is faulty the whole scheme can go down which effects every resident. With the Lyra system each property has its own unit which has a roaming sim, if for any reason a unit is faulty, we can just replace that unit and other residents are not affected. The system safeguards other residents in the scheme.
- Software upgrades can be done remotely so no need for engineers to attend site which is much more environmentally friendly.
- The system does not require the use of DECT handsets and will allow staff to be 'on-site' using an android application on any android device, meaning if staff are working from home they can still be 'on-site' and receive alerts from the residents. This will help reduce our carbon footprint and reduce the resource need over the long term.
- Various peripherals can be added to the system to accommodate residents changing needs helping them remain independent, easing the burden on Social Care budgets.
- If we redevelop any of our sheltered housing schemes' we can simply remove the alarm system and re-install in the new building later.

## **Procurement**

As we have identified an emergency alarm system that meets the changing needs of our residents and allows our staff to work more efficiently, we propose to seek members approval to procure the new emergency alarm system through a Framework Agreement as oppose to undertaking a tender exercise. Everon are on the Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) framework of which we are members. NHC have offered a Technology Enabled Care (TECS) framework to their members in various forms for over 20 years. The current framework includes alarm installation, alarm maintenance, alarm repair, call centre monitoring and call centre equipment.

The key objective of this framework is to appoint supply partners that offer the most economically advantageous tender in terms of skills, expertise, quality, and cost effectiveness, ensuring efficiencies for members. Companies on the framework have already been through a rigorous tender exercise and demonstrated they meet the tender evaluation criteria allowing us to make a direct award.

## Costing

The below table shows the costs, this is across all schemes. The License Fee is a monthly charge.

Site				
Item	Part No	Qty	Value	License Fee
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>				
Origon Hub	TP-202	532	£191,520.00	£2,585.52
Button	PL-100	541	£31,919.00	£0.00
Pullcord / Radio Token	PL-105VK	528	£34,320.00	£0.00
Lift Unit	TP-202 GREY FI	8	£2,996.00	£38.88
Staff Phone	GSM-001	14	£2,800.00	£0.00
Fire Panel Hub	TP-202	9	£3,240.00	£43.74
Key Safe Hub	TP-202	0	£0.00	£0.00
Radio Token	PL-105	17	£1,080.00	£0.00
Radio Token	PL-105S	0	£0.00	£0.00
Door Panel	DOOR P	11	£20,691.00	£220.00
		0	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Materials Total</b>			<b>£288,566.00</b>	<b>£2,888.14</b>
<b>LABOUR</b>				
Install Hubs		532	£58,520.00	£0.00
Install Lifit Unit		8	£2,760.00	£0.00
Install Door Panel		9	£990.00	£0.00
Install Fire Panel		9	£495.00	£0.00
Establishing Customer Location		12	£4,200.00	£0.00
Install Key Safe		0	£0.00	£0.00
		0	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Labour Total</b>			<b>£66,965.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£355,531.00</b>	<b>£2,888.14</b>

Residents currently pay a charge for the alarm equipment and connection to the alarm monitoring centre, this is in addition to the charge for the services provided under general housing management.

## VFM savings

Although the move towards a digital system is a must due to the 'turning off' of analogue, the new system is innovating and will bring savings. This is likely to be a reduction in resources over a period, while offering an innovative and targeted service.

A service review is planned for the new financial year to examine the current support model offered and propose a modernised service which meets the needs of both our tenants today and in the future. Also, which will complement our emerging digital strategy

**Reason for decision:**

There is a requirement to upgrade the alarm system due to the analogue signal being discontinued in 2025.

**Options considered and rejected:**

The option was considered to not upgrade the system, this was rejected as we would not be able to offer an alarm service.

**Consultation undertaken:**

The Finance Team have been consulted and agree. Consultation has taken place with tenants through the Sheltered Forum and Scheme Chatterbox sessions

**Resource implications:**

Capital funding is required for this project which is budgeted for.

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

This proposal meets with all requirements

**Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:**

Introducing a digital system will allow for less reliance on cars as contact can be made from anywhere

**Background Papers:**

None

**Impact Assessments:**

Attached

***Risk Management:***

Projects of this nature are developed and managed under a project management system which includes risk management

## Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
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7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
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  - Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

## Section 1: Identifying details

Your function, service area and team: **Housing and Property**

If you are submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: **NA**

Title of policy or decision: New Alarm system

Officer completing the EqIA: **Deborah Fenton** Tel: 079888 60412 Email: **dfenton@eppingforestdc.gov.uk**

Date of completing the assessment: 17/12/21

## Section 2: Policy to be analysed

2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? <b>no</b>
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):  What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• service users</li><li>• employees</li><li>• the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?</li></ul> <b>No</b>  Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate? <b>No</b>
2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? <b>No</b>
2.5	Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes? <b>Stronger communities</b>



### **Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation<sup>1</sup>**

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	What does the information tell you about those groups identified? NA
3.2	Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?.
3.3	If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary: <b>N/A</b>

## Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	<b>Neutral – the paper is for information only and will not impact on any groups</b>	L
Disability	As above	L
Gender	As above	L
Gender reassignment	As above	L
Marriage/civil partnership	As above	L
Pregnancy/maternity	As above	L
Race	As above	L
Religion/belief	As above	L
Sexual orientation	As above	L

## Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No X	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' <b>YES</b> ', use the action plan at <b>Section 6</b> to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

**Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts**

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.
None	N/A	N/A/De

**Section 7: Sign off**

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.  
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: Deborah Fenton

Date:17/12/21

Signature of person completing the EqIA: Deborah Fenton

Date: 17/12/21

**Advice**

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

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