



# Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Dawn French

## Cabinet

**Date:** Thursday, 25 May 2017  
**Time:** 19:00  
**Venue:** Council Chamber  
**Address:** Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

**Members:** Councillors H Rolfe (Leader and Chairman), S Barker, S Howell, J Redfern, V Ranger and H Ryles

**Other attendees:** Councillors A Dean (Liberal Democrat Group Leader and Chairman of Scrutiny Committee), J Lodge (Residents for Uttlesford Group Leader) and E Oliver (Chairman of Performance and Audit Committee)

### Public Speaking

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions and make statements subject to having given notice by 12 noon two working days before the meeting.

## AGENDA PART 1

### Open to Public and Press

- 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**  
To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 2 Minutes of the Meeting on 30 March 2017**  
To consider the minutes of the previous meeting

5 - 16

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|-----------|---|-----------|
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Questions or statements from non executive members of the council</b><br>To receive questions or statements from non-executive members on matters included on the agenda   |           |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Matters referred to the Executive (standing item)</b><br>To consider matters referred to the Executive in accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules |           |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Reports from Performance and Audit and Scrutiny Committees (standing item)</b><br>To consider any reports from Performance and Audit and Scrutiny Committee  |           |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Discretionary Rate Relief</b><br>To consider the discretionary rate relief   | 17 - 26   |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Planning Performance Agreements</b><br>To consider planning performance agreements   | 27 - 32   |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Private Sector Housing Strategy</b><br>To consider the Private Sector Housing Strategy report  | 33 - 72   |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Home Repairs Assistance Policy</b><br>To consider the Home Repairs Assistance Policy report  | 73 - 102  |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Strategy</b><br>To consider the Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Strategy report  | 103 - 144 |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Disposal of Land at De Vigier Avenue, Saffron Walden</b><br>To consider the report on disposal of land at De Vigier Avenue, Saffron Walden   | 145 - 148 |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Appointment of Cabinet Working Groups and Representatives on Outside Bodies</b><br>To appoint Cabinet working groups and to appoint members as representatives on outside bodies   | 149 - 156 |

- 13 Appointment of a Representative to the North Essex Parking Partnership**  
To appoint a representative to the North Essex Parking Partnership
- 14 Appointment of Representatives to the West Essex Wellbeing Joint Committee**  
To appoint two representatives to the West Essex Wellbeing Joint Committee
- 15 Refugee Working Group**  
To receive a report from the Refugee Working Group (standing item)
- 16 Any other items which the Chairman considers to be urgent**  
To consider any items which the Chairman considers to be urgent.

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The agenda is split into two parts. Most of the business is dealt with in Part I which is open to the public. Part II includes items which may be discussed in the absence of the press or public, as they deal with information which is personal or sensitive for some other reason. You will be asked to leave the meeting before Part II items are discussed.

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**CABINET MEETING held at STANSTED FREE CHURCH HALL, ST JOHN'S ROAD, STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET on 30 MARCH 2017 at 7pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe (Leader)  
Councillor S Barker (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environmental Services)  
Councillor S Howell (Cabinet Member for Finance and Administration)  
Councillor J Redfern (Cabinet Member for Housing and Economic Development)  
Councillor L Wells (Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships)

Also present: Councillor A Dean (Chairman of Scrutiny Committee and Group Leader of Liberal Democrat Group), Councillor B Light, Councillor J Lodge (Leader of Residents for Uttlesford)

Officers in attendance: D French (Chief Executive), A Bochel (Democratic Services Officer), R Dobson (Principal Democratic Services Officer), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Officer), G Glenday (Assistant Director - Planning), S Pugh (Interim Head of Legal Services) and A Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services).

**CA89 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

Councillor Rolfe welcomed all those present to this venue in Stansted.

**CA90 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Dean said Councillor Loughlin, as a representative for Stort Valley, had wished to attend this meeting as it was taking place in Stansted, but had given apologies.

**CA91 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2017 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**CA91 QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS FROM NON- EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND PUBLIC SPEAKING**

Councillor Light spoke to the meeting in support of the recommendation for Item 8, that The Railway Arms public house become an asset of community value. It was one of only a few pubs left in the Town and had been extensively used as a community forum. The pub had a large garden and was a good place for a quiet drink. External buildings could easily be made use of for

activities such as craft work. She asked Cabinet to agree to this building be added to the list of assets of community value.

Dave Kenny, Tom Bennett, Mike Young, Doug Perry and Barry Drinkwater made statements, summaries of which are appended to these minutes.

CA92      **REPORTS FROM PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

Councillor Dean gave a brief report. He said the bulk of the work of the committee had been on the budget prior to the Council's budget-setting meeting in February. The Committee had noted there had been a delivery plan on the Corporate Plan, and had discussed the potential for improving support for neighbourhood plans.

CA93      **REFUGEE WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Redfern gave a report on refugees. She said there had not been much change since her last update. The Council had not yet been asked to provide accommodation, though it would be willing to if requested. There had been discussion about provision for unaccompanied children, although not in the Uttlesford area, as a consequence of which a page with relevant information had been added to the Council's website. In due course, the page would include a named point of contact. She had messaged all councillors and would be working with the County Council Chairman of the Housing Board.

Councillor Redfern said in conclusion that only one family had so far been taken in, but was settling down very well, and that she would continue to press for action.

CA94      **TO FILL VACANCIES ON THE POLICY PLANNING WORKING GROUP, REFUGEE WORKING GROUP AND STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL**

Councillor Rolfe said he did not intend to make appointments to the vacancies on the Refugee Working Group or Stansted Airport Advisory Panel until after the May elections.

Councillor Lodge nominated Councillor Petrina Lees for the vacancy on the Planning Policy Working Group.

Councillor Rolfe asked the Assistant Director of Planning to meet with Councillor Lees about the role.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Petrina Lees to the Planning Policy Working Group.

**ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE – RAILWAY ARMS NOMINATION**

Councillor Barker said the nomination of The Railway Arms as an Asset of Community Value depended on three points; whether it was a valid nomination, whether there was a time in the recent past when it had helped to further the social wellbeing and interests of the community, and whether it could again in the future. She believed the nomination was valid, that evidence had been provided that it had furthered the community's social wellbeing, and that there was a realistic prospect that it could do so in the future.

The Interim Head of Legal Services endorsed Councillor Barker's summary. He reminded Cabinet that the test was not one of the "balance of probabilities", but whether it was "realistic" to think that the use of the Railway Arms could further the social wellbeing or interests of the community.

Councillor Redfern spoke in support of the nomination. She said she had visited The Railway Arms for a long period of time. It was deteriorating because of the poor options available to customers. Saffron Walden had lost too many pubs lately and she could see no reason to refuse the nomination.

Councillor Howell spoke in support of the nomination. He said he knew The Railway Arms well and was conscious that it was central to the community.

Councillor Lodge spoke in support of the nomination. He said he resented the approach of solicitors acting on behalf of the owners in threatening the possibility of seeking damages.

Councillor Rolfe reminded Members potential liability would bear no weight in the decision-making process.

Councillor Redfern asked that the Council investigate the possibility of other pubs in the area also being registered on the assets of community value list. Cllr Rolfe asked officers to look into this.

RESOLVED to approve the nomination to include the Railway Arms Public House, Saffron Walden, in the Assets of Community Value list.

**OFFICE UNITS AT WALPOLE FARM**

Councillor Howell presented a report seeking Cabinet approval to accept an option to take out a 10 year lease at a peppercorn rent, for four office units at a new development at Walpole Farm.

Councillor Howell said the units would form part of the Council's stock of lettable office space, and would allow the Council to generate a profit.

Councillor Dean welcomed the proposal. He asked whether the units would be used as a starter location for new businesses or whether they would be let to the highest bidder. He said Uttlesford District was in need of starter units.

Councillor Howell said he hoped to let them out at market rates. This would still create employment in the area.

Councillor Lodge asked what would happen to the businesses at the end of the 10 year lease.

Councillor Howell said that it was in the nature of a lease that there was a finite amount of time the units could be let out for and businesses would realise that.

Councillor Lodge said it would be good to see if the Council could keep the units for longer.

In response to a question from Councillor Barker, Councillor Howell said the units were being managed by the Council.

RESOLVED to approve the option to take out a 10 year lease at a peppercorn rent, on full insuring and repairing terms for office units.

CA97

## **STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET AREA - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

Councillor Barker presented a report recommending approval of the Memorandum of Understanding and Statement of Common Ground.

Councillor Barker said the Memorandum of Understanding related to the distribution of Objectively Assessed Housing Need. In the 2015 Strategic Housing Market Area report, it was stated that Uttlesford would need an additional 12500 dwellings. Based on new figures, these projections had increased to 14100 dwellings.

The authority had also been asked to approve the Statement of Common Ground, which stated that there were no significant cross boundary issues between Uttlesford and North Herts District Council.

Councillor Lodge said he was disturbed by the recommendation to approve the memorandum. There was a lack of transparency at how the latest figures had been arrived at and he recommended deferring the situation until the method of calculation had been made clearer. He said it was necessary to have sufficient empirical evidence.

Councillor Barker said that the recommendation was simply that the Council recognise the original figure, although it was important to note this number was flexible and that a higher number may need to be considered.

Councillor Redfern said that this had been an issue for the Council for a long time, and that she would support it because she knew the Planning Policy Working Group would have explored the issue thoroughly and come to a sensible conclusion.

Councillor Rolfe agreed, and said that it had already take a long time to reach the point of a decision, and that a decision had to be made by the Council soon or it would be made for the Council instead.

RESOLVED to approve the Memorandum of Understanding and the Statement of Common Ground as appended to the report with the substitution of an amended paragraph 1:6, as tabled to members at Cabinet, as follows:

Three Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs), published in 2010, 2012 and 2015 have been undertaken for the combined area of East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford Districts<sup>2</sup>. The most recent SHMA was commissioned by the Co-op Member Board and managed through a sub group of the Co-op Officer Group. Details of the terms of reference and working practices of the Co-op Member Board and the Co-op Officer Group are set out in Appendix 2. The 2015 SHMA gives an up to date and Planning Practice Guidance compliant<sup>3</sup> assessment of housing need over the Housing Market Area (HMA) for the period 2011-2033. It is acknowledged that since the publication of the SHMA in 2015, updated 2014-based household projections have been published – see paragraph 3.4. The four authorities are all committed to identifying an up-to-date OAHN based on the 2014-based projections. The 2015 SHMA gave the following headline results (in net additional dwellings) for the HMA as a whole, and for each local authority.

CA98

## **HOUSING WHITE PAPER**

Councillor Barker presented the Housing White Paper, 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market'. She said it clarified the government's policy direction on a range of housing issues, providing significant statements on government policy and the approach to improving the supply and affordability of housing at a national level.

Councillor Rolfe said the paper had been long awaited but that it was disappointing that it would not do more to solve problems in the housing market.

The Assistant Director of Planning agreed, but said it was a consultation document and there was more information to come from the government.

Councillor Redfern said the paper was disappointing and would not help to deliver affordable housing. The situation was that the Council did give planning permission for development but then no builds began.

Councillor Rolfe said that this issue of landholding had been fed back to the government, and it had been hoped that it would respond to this issue in the white paper.

The Assistant Director of Planning said a carrot and stick approach was favoured by the government for encouraging the development industry, but this had not been fully explored in the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean as to how this matter would be taken further, Councillor Rolfe said , information would be put on the Council website to give prominence to the issue.

CA99

## **DELEGATED POWERS FOR MINOR LAND TRANSACTIONS**

Councillor Redfern introduced a report on delegated powers for minor land transactions. She said it proposed an extension to the delegated powers of the Assistant Director – Housing and Environment. This would avoid reports to Cabinet on minor matters and allow these matters to be dealt with promptly.

RESOLVED that the Assistant Director – Housing and Environment be given delegated power, after consultation with the portfolio holder, to authorise:

- a. The disposal of small parcels of land for amenity use, not exceeding 12 square metres, provided that the land does not have development potential;
- b. Boundary rectification and other rectification needed to correct errors made in right to buy disposals

CA100

## **CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY PLAN 2017/18**

Councillor Rolfe presented a report on the Corporate Plan delivery plan for 2017/18. He said that Uttlesford was a special place with a unique character which should be preserved. The plan included a vision for Uttlesford and four objectives. The delivery plan set out how to achieve this, including the more significant actions/projects (outputs), likely resources, expected outcomes, performance measures by which success will be measured, and designation of the officers and members responsible.

Councillor Dean said that although the document encouraged the production of local plans, there had been criticism by neighbourhood plan groups about obtaining information from the Planning Department. One idea had been to create a neighbourhood planning network.

The Assistant Officer for Planning said he was not aware of that proposal. The planning department had met with Stansted neighbourhood plan steering group, and had agreed to meet every six months. The resource was available and was publicised on the website, but if there was an issue he would encourage people to contact him directly.

Councillor Dean asked why the delivery plan only specified an 'improved public realm', since many eyesores such as fly-tipping were in the private realm. It was good the paper focused on the Uttlesford area in general, but there would need to be action on the part of the Council to engage with

people. He also spoke about the need to encourage more people to visit Uttlesford.

Councillor Rolfe said he took the point about an improved private realm, but often these issues ended up with Enforcement. In terms of encouraging people to visit, the 100 Parishes website was good for promoting attractions around Uttlesford. He thanked Councillor Dean for his comments.

Councillor Howell said the delivery plan was achievable because it was based on pragmatic objectives.

Councillor Redfern asked if the line 'promotion events in Dunmow and Stansted' on page 7 could be changed to 'promotion events across Uttlesford'.

RESOLVED to approve the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan with the following amendment on Page 7: Instead of 'promotion events in Dunmow and Stansted', the line should read 'promotion events across Uttlesford'.

CA101

**CONSIDERATION OF AN ITEM CONTAINING EXEMPT INFORMATION WITHIN THE MEANING OF PARA 3 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

RESOLVED under section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

CA102

**SUPERFAST BROADBAND INVESTMENT**

Members considered a report on Superfast Broadband investment detailing the positive consequences that implementation of the proposal would have.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendation.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

**Public speaking**

Statement of Dave Kenny

I am Chairman of the Save The Railway Arms Pub (STRAP) campaign. The campaign has attracted widespread support, including membership of over

130 people in Saffron Walden and the backing of 10 town and district councillors. Comments by solicitors acting on behalf of the pub's owner portray it as simply a food and drink shop. In reality, the pub has furthered social wellbeing, cultural, sporting and recreational interests. Uttlesford had so far registered all 15 pubs that have applied for such a status as assets of community value. The Railway Arms should not be the first one turned down. The land is prime location for development, but prior to being taken over by the current owner, it was a thriving community pub. That community has now emerged with funds, support and a business plan to take over the pub.

#### Statement of Tom Bennett

I am Secretary of STRAP. I contest the owner's claim that The Railway Arms was not a financially viable organisation. I am critical of the business model of large pub companies seeking to maximise profits rather than meeting the needs of the community. The owners of The Railway Arms had not sought to reach its full potential. There are external buildings which could be used for other purposes. Community-owned pubs are now a common business model. With STRAP's viable business model, The Railway Arms offered an opportunity to run a thriving pub and to serve the local community.

#### Statement of Doug Perry

Mr Leader and Cabinet Members.

Although Licensing matters do not form part of your brief as it is a regulatory function and Quasi Legal, I wanted to share with you what has been happening on the ULODA/Trade front.

I joined ULODA late last year as Hon President, and was proud to do so. My aim and vision is to encourage partnership working with UDC, the Licensing Committee, Councillors and Officers, to our mutual benefit.

I have had many meetings with ULODA's Executive, operators both Large and Small which bring vast sums of money into the Uttlesford Economy (in the region of 50 million last year).

I have spoken with my Chairman at Meetings of Full Council, The Licensing Committee and with Officers, and have been pleased to do so.

I have also been encouraging working together with officers on a number of issues and although the response has been one of almost complete silence, we do hope for more effective engagement in the near future.

The trial of the "Right to work" as suggested by 24/7, has been a great success, and it is understood that officers will be taking this forward, with immediate effect.

We have also been involved in the Uttlesford Business Awards in encouraging members of the trade to participate, and have supported the nomination of two of our excellent operators, who have a very good story to tell.

Some members of the Executive Committee also attended last week's award Networking Event, and a photograph of both myself and my Chairman can be seen on the Uttlesford Web site (perhaps we should charge).

I just want to leave you with one thought from both Scrutiny and Councillors, who have stated and it is a matter of record, that Consultation and effective engagement with the Trade IS to be introduced along with time factors which are almost upon us..

As I hand over to my Chairman I wish to place on record that it is not just ULODA that you are dealing with, but also the Major operators. We constantly consult and support each other and we speak WITH ONE VOICE (The true meaning of working together in partnership).

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

#### Statement of Barry Drinkwater

Mr Leader, Members of the Cabinet. I'm Barry Drinkwater, Chairman of ULODA, Uttlesford's taxi trade association open to all licensed operators, proprietors and drivers since 2004. It's a pleasure to be taking the baton from our esteemed President, who's been such a valued and valuable asset to me and my executive committee colleagues over the past five months since we invited him to take on his Honorary role.

Let me wind back the clock to 17 November 2015 when the Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group to consider the functioning of enforcement within the council. Cllr Chambers was the first to alert us. Given the strong interest of the taxi and private hire trade, we seized the chance to have our say - and asked to contribute to its ongoing work - at the Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 9 February 2016, when we were warmly welcomed by Cllr Dean. We attended two further Scrutiny Committee meetings to listen to progress reports and the one on 6 September 2016 when the final report of the ETG was presented. We should add here that during the course of the ETG's work, our senior trade representatives including the Managing Directors of our largest operators, 24x7 and Acme Transport, plus ULODA's Vice Chairmen, met with Cllr Jones as Lead Member for Enforcement to speak fully and frankly about the old "draconian" enforcement regime.....

At your Cabinet Meeting on 12 January this year, Cllr Howell presented his report on the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations. We were very disappointed that four of these (including one which supported new enforcement policies for Licensing, taxis and private hire operators) were approved but without a timed schedule for implementation - when Scrutiny had stipulated "by 1 April 2017". The final recommendation on taxi forums was referred to the Licensing & Environmental Health Committee.

We are also disappointed that the Scrutiny Committee has made no attempt to give us feedback about these outcomes - which we were naturally expecting in the interests of transparency and respect for the trade.

Cllr Howell in his report says "Under the better regulation agenda, the council needs to engage effectively with local taxi drivers and operators". We continue to wait patiently to be consulted properly ahead of any changes in policy and practice which may be being planned.

Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Statement of Michael Young

See the document appended to these minutes.

## UDC Cabinet

### 30 March 2017 Item 10

By signing the Memorandum of Understanding UDC is in effect endorsing and supporting the figure for housing need. Of course the government plans to introduce a standard method for calculating need but for the moment we have to work with the figures we have.

Throughout the Local Plan process we have been repeatedly assured that the conclusions would be evidence-based. But it is here that the problems start. The evidence offered to support the figures has, at best, been sketchy and, at worst, non-existent.

A colleague, Ken McDonald, and I have been asking the same questions for the last 18 months but no answers have been forthcoming. It seems that no-one within the council understands how the figures have been arrived at.

Some of our concerns related to job growth figures at the airport, the market signals uplift percentage, the high rate of growth for Uttlesford and most importantly the complete lack of audit trail within the reports. There was no transparency.

But recently many of our concerns have been echoed by paid advisors.

A consultant from the Planning Advisory Service has stated that “the method of apportionment between the authorities is not clear” and that he could find “no explanation”. But to understand apportionment it is first necessary to understand how the totals were calculated. He went on to comment that the most significant gap was the lack of evidence on the increased housing need identified in the latest DCLG household projections. A further narrative was essential to explain the final strategy.

Uttlesford’s own QC has stressed that work needed to be strengthened so that it was more explicit as to how the figures were derived.

And the Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate stressed the need for the figures to be defensible when robustly challenged at Examination. He made the point that the Spatial Options Study “didn’t show its workings, not that the conclusions were necessarily right or wrong, but the process wasn’t clear”. You simply couldn’t tell.

It now appears that many of these concerns are possibly being addressed. UDC has acknowledged uncertainty regarding the scale of housing and has asked consultants “to produce a clear explanation for the scale of housing apportionment with a clear and logical explanation of the calculations showing workings”. Meanwhile the four SHMA districts have commissioned AECOM to do a technical update to their report explaining the workings and processes.

So there is work still to be done. But by signing this Memorandum you are effectively endorsing the current figures. I would submit that it is only when all the outstanding questions have been answered that you can be satisfied with such a document.

Michael Young



**Committee: Cabinet**

**Agenda Item**

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

**6**

**Title: Discretionary Rate Relief Policy 2017/18**

**Author: Councillor Simon Howell and Howard Ryles** Item for decision

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## **Summary**

1. The Government has undertaken a national revaluation of all commercial premises. From 1 April 2017, all premises will have been assigned a new 'rateable value' used to calculate business rates bills. The last time there was a revaluation was in 2010. This will be based on a valuation date of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015

The revaluation has resulted in the business rate bills charged on many businesses and companies in Uttlesford increasing significantly. Business rate bills have increased on average by 16% for most high street shops and premises within the district.

In this year's Spring Budget 2017, the Government announced additional discretionary reliefs which would be brought in under the S47 regulations, to support those businesses facing steep rises in their business rates following the revaluation.

### ***Local Business Rate Discount – funded locally***

*Section 69 of The Localism Act 2011 amends Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and allows Councils to grant locally determined business rate discounts (in addition to the already available discretionary rate reliefs).*

*The new power recognises that the current business rates scheme is broadly prescribed by Central Government and its aim is to provide increased flexibility to local authorities to support organisations, recognising variations in economic conditions across and within local authority boundaries.*

These new reliefs would be implemented without legislation, and would be fully funded by Central Government under a S31 grant subject to qualifying criteria.

## Recommendations

2. The Cabinet is recommended to approve the following as set out in the main report and Appendix A
  - a. New discretionary rate reliefs
    - i. Supporting Small Businesses Relief
    - ii. Pub Relief
  - b. Revised criteria for Local Rural Rate Relief

## Financial Implications

3. The new reliefs proposed to be included policy are funded by S31 grant. There is an overall reduction in cost in the local scheme to be amended compared to 2016/17.

## Background Papers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/business-rates-information-letters>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/discretionary-business-rates-relief-scheme>

## Impact

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	No specific implications
Equalities	An EQIA is included with the main report
Health and Safety	No specific implications
Human Rights/Legal Implications	No specific implications
Sustainability	No specific implications
Ward-specific impacts	No specific implications
Workforce/Workplace	No specific implications

## Mandatory amendments

4. Government have amended the criteria for the mandatory Small Business Rate Relief. Previously 50% relief was given to businesses with a Rateable Value (RV) below £6,000. For businesses between £6,000 and £12,000 a sliding scale of 1% for every £120 RV was applied.
5. The criterion has now been amended to allow 100% relief on all businesses with an RV of less than £12,000. For businesses over £12,000 RV, the sliding scale has been amended to 1% for every £30 of RV up to a maximum RV of £15,000.
6. In previous years the Council 'topped up' the relief to 100% for businesses with an RV below £6,000 and this was funded from S31 grant.

## Discretionary Rate Reliefs

7. The Council has an approved discretionary rate relief policy which has been in place since 2014; however this now needs amending to include the new discretionary reliefs and proposed amendments to current reliefs. The updated policy is shown in full in Appendix A.
8. The 2017 revaluation has had a significant impact on many businesses and in particular on our smaller local businesses.
9. The Government has provided transitional relief centrally where the rateable value exceeded a certain cap depending on the size of the business. They have also reduced the multiplier for all and amended the Small Business Rate Relief (point 5) to mitigate the impact of the revaluation. But this still left many businesses struggling with their new rateable values.

### New Discretionary Reliefs

10. In the spring budget, Government announced proposals for further new reliefs to support businesses; these are discretionary and will be funded through the S31 grant subject to meeting the prescribed criteria and members approval.
  - **Supporting Small Businesses Relief** – for businesses who are losing some or all of their small business or rural rate relief. This relief will limit the amount of rates payable in each year to the greater of
    - Cash value of £600
    - or
    - The matching cap on increases for small properties in the transitional relief scheme.

The cash minimum increase will stay flat in each year which means that under this scheme by year 5 the eligible ratepayer's bill will not exceed more than £3,000 increase from their 2016/17 bill.

- **Pub Relief** – For Public Houses with a rateable value below £100,000.
    - Eligible Public Houses will receive £1,000 discount
11. The impact of the revaluation has meant 12 businesses have now received rates bills between £4,665 and £9,747, where prior to the revaluation they received full relief from either the Small Business or Rural Rate relief of which they now no longer qualify.
  12. By including the two new reliefs as detailed in point 7 all the worst affected businesses will receive either full or part relief.
    - 46 small businesses will be entitled to Supporting Small Businesses relief, with relief awards ranging from £38 to £9,147
    - 34 businesses will receive the Pub Relief

### **Current transitional reliefs to be amended**

13. The Local Rural Rate Relief is discretionary and funded locally. It is proposed that due to the increased rateable values the upper level criteria is increased proportionally from £25,000 to £27,500.
14. The increase in the Local Rural Rate Relief is offset due to the Government increasing the RV eligibility for Small Business Rates Relief plus increasing relief from 50% to a mandatory 100% (point 4-6).
15. In 2016/17 the Council supported 7 businesses via the Local Rural Rate Relief scheme; the cost of this to the Council was £57,403.
16. Due to changes in the Small Business Rates Relief, 3 of the 7 businesses supported through the Local Rural Rate Relief in 2016/17 now receive Small Business Rates Relief.
17. In 2017/18 if the upper limit remains at £25,000 this reduces the number of businesses eligible from the remaining 4 down to 2, the 2 non-eligible businesses would receive no support.
18. If the eligibility is increased to £27,500 all of the remaining 4 businesses would still qualify for Local Rural Rate Relief.

	<b>Cost of Relief</b>	<b>Funded by S31</b>	<b>Funded by UDC</b>
Supported Small Business Rates	£124,000	£124,000	
Pub Relief	£ 35,000	£ 35,000	
Rural Rate Relief @ £25,000	£ 15,378		£ 15,378
Increased cost of Rural Rate Relief @ £27,500	£ 15,378		£ 15,378
<b>Total cost of reliefs</b>	<b>£189,756</b>	<b>£159,000</b>	<b>£ 30,756</b>

### **Revaluation Relief Fund**

19. The Government has announced that £300 million Transitional Relief funding will be allocated for local councils to finance business rates relief for revaluation support.
20. The Government's extra funding will only support relief schemes targeted at businesses facing an increase in their business rate bills following the 2017 revaluation.
21. The revaluation support scheme is a locally determined scheme and the Council is required to consult the major preceptors on any proposed scheme.

22. This funding is available for 4 years on a reducing basis and Uttlesford's share of this funding is shown in the table below

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
£311,000	£151,000	£62,000	£9,000	£533,000

23. The Revenues team are carrying out detailed data analysis on all businesses that either fall outside of the current reliefs or are still in financial hardship after all other reliefs have been applied. This analysis will enable Members to establish a scheme that is fair and targets those businesses who are facing financial hardship due to their revaluation.

24. It is anticipated that the scheme criteria will cover a 2 year period

25. The eligibility criteria will be set on a reducing basis in line with the funding available this will allow qualifying businesses time to plan ahead for future years as their relief award reduces.

26. The Business Rates Team will work closely with the Economic Development Team on providing support and guidance to local businesses.

27. A full report with detailed analysis and proposed options for a scheme will be presented to Cabinet on the 10<sup>th</sup> July.

## Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
If these reliefs are not implemented this would cause significant financial hardship to local small businesses	2	2	To implement all reliefs as above, there is minimal financial risk as the majority of reliefs are funded by S31

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



**BUSINESS RATES - DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY**

**EFFECTIVE 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2014**

**UPDATED 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

**Policy objectives**

1. To support the local economy by providing incentives for occupation of empty premises, encourage business start-up and business expansion within Uttlesford.
2. To support rural communities by providing assistance to businesses operating in rural locations.
3. To contribute to maximising the Council's financial position under the business rates retention scheme by encouraging longer term rateable value growth.

**Administration**

4. The policy will be administered by the Council's Revenues service, who will determine the relief application process.
5. The Revenues service will determine applications for relief, using the criteria set out in this policy. Applications for the Business Development category of relief will be assessed by the Council's Economic Development Officer who will notify the Revenues service of decisions made. The Council will have discretion to backdate awards of relief to the beginning of the current billing period.
6. Eligibility for relief will typically be based upon objective criteria such as the rateable value, location and nature of an organisation's business. A business's profitability will not ordinarily be a relevant factor for determining eligibility. The intention is for a streamlined process that is simple to administer for both applicants and the Council. The Council shall have the right to request any additional information it considers necessary to determine an application.
7. The over-riding consideration in the determination of any application is that the granting of relief must be judged to be in the wider interests of the Uttlesford community and its council tax payers.
8. Appeals against unsuccessful applications for relief will be determined by the Section 151 Officer, whose decision shall be final. There shall be no further right of appeal.
9. The granting of discretionary relief will typically be on a rolling one-year basis so that the Council has the agility to adjust the policy to reflect changing needs and circumstances. However the Council reserve the right to make in year adjustments should the businesses circumstances change and the qualifying criteria for the award are no longer met.
10. The policy will be subject to annual review and approval by the Cabinet.

**State Aid Limitations**

11. All granting of discretionary rate relief is subject to limitations under applicable State Aid legislation and associated De Minimis Regulations.
12. The Regulations currently allow a business to receive up to 200,000 Euros of state aid over a rolling three year period.
13. In practice, this means that smaller, independent businesses are more likely to be eligible for relief and larger, national businesses (e.g. chain stores) less likely.

CATEGORY OF RELIEF	ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS	MANDATORY RELIEF	DISCRETIONARY RELIEF
<b>Supporting Small Businesses relief</b>	For small businesses who are losing some or all of their small business or rural rate relief	Not applicable	<p>To support ratepayers by limiting the amount of rates payable in each year to the greater of ;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cash value of £600 or</li> <li>• The matching cap on increases for small properties in the transitional relief scheme.</li> <li>• The cash minimum increase will stay flat in each year which means that under this scheme by year 5 the eligible ratepayer will not be paying more than £3,000 than they did in 2016/2017</li> </ul> <p>LA's will be fully reimbursed under s31 grant</p> <p>Eligibility will <u>not</u> be lost with a change of occupier but will be lost if the property becomes vacant or is occupied by a charity or Community Amateur sports Club</p>
<b>PUB RELIEF</b>	For Pubs with rateable value below £100,000	Not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All eligible pubs will receive a £1000 discount on their bill.</li> <li>• The government will compensate Local Authorities for the cost of granting the relief through a section 31 grant</li> <li>• Currently subject to government consultation</li> </ul>
<b>Local Newspaper Relief</b>	Local newspapers occupying office space	Not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One discount per newspaper title</li> <li>• Discount of £1500</li> <li>• 2 years only from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017</li> <li>• S31 grant</li> </ul>
<b>Rural Rate Relief</b>	Within a rural settlement with a population below 3,000, a sole general store, post office, food shop, public house or petrol station	<p>Within a rural settlement with a population below 3,000, the following will receive 100% mandatory rate relief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sole general store, post office or food shop with a RV of less £8,500</li> <li>• A sole public house or petrol station with a RV of less than £12,500</li> </ul>	<p>Within a rural settlement with a population below 3,000:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sole general store, post office, food shop, public house or petrol station with an RV exceeding the stated thresholds, but with an RV of up to £16,500, may be considered for up to 100% discretionary rate relief.</li> </ul>

CATEGORY OF RELIEF	ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS	MANDATORY RELIEF	DISCRETIONARY RELIEF
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NEW FOR 2017/18:</b> A sole general store, post office, food shop, public house or petrol station with an RV of between £16,501 and £27,500 may be considered for 100% discretionary rate relief up to the value of the £16,500 RV level. For example, a qualifying business with an RV of £18,500 would receive 100% relief up to £16,500 RV and have to pay rates on the remaining £2,000 RV.</li> <li>Discretionary local rural rate relief will be applied after any other applicable reliefs have been deducted.</li> </ul>
<b>Charitable relief</b>	Registered charities  Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs  Community Interest Companies	Charities and Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs are entitled to 80% relief where the property is occupied by the Charity or Club and is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes or as a Registered Community Amateur Sports Club.	Charities and Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs may be considered for up to 20% discretionary rate relief.  <b>From 2014/15:</b> Community Interest Companies that have charitable aims (and use profits for charitable purposes) may be considered for up to 100% discretionary rate relief.
<b>Business Development relief</b>	New non-retail SME businesses starting up, operating from new premises or premises that have been unoccupied for 12 months*  Expanding non-retail SME businesses who enlarge their existing premises, or occupy an additional premises that is new or has been unoccupied for 12 months*  *including the conversion of former agricultural buildings	Not applicable	<b>From 2014/15:</b> Qualifying businesses can be considered for discretionary rate relief of 50% for the first year and 25% for the second year. In the case of enlarged premises, the relief would be on the difference between the rates payable on the original premises and the rates payable on the extended premises.  This is subject to demonstrating that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum three year lease / occupancy commitment exists*</li> <li>The business will endeavour to ensure that at least 50% of the business's employees are Uttlesford residents</li> <li>The business will endeavour to ensure that at least 25% of the business's supplies and services expenditure is with Uttlesford businesses.</li> </ul>

CATEGORY OF RELIEF	ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS	MANDATORY RELIEF	DISCRETIONARY RELIEF
			*In the event of the business vacating the premises within the first three years, the Council reserves the right to clawback the rate relief granted.
<b>Small Business Rate Relief</b>	Qualifying Businesses with a rateable value of up to £14,999 will receive small business rate relief  For properties from 15,000 – 50,999 will have their business rates calculated with the small business rate multiplier	From 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2017 Businesses with an Rateable Value up to £12,000 will receive 100% relief  RV £12,000 to £14,999 – 100% relief decreases on a sliding scale by 1% for every £ 30 of RV between £12,000 and £ 14,999. RV £15,000 to £ 51,999 – no relief is allowed but the bill is calculated using the small business multiplier	None
<b>Flooding Rate Relief</b>	Businesses whose premises were flooded due to bad weather between 1 December 2013 and 31 March 2014	Not applicable	100% rate relief for three months from the date of the first flooding. (approved by Full Council 27 February 2014)
<b>Unoccupied property rating</b>	Any business	Business rates are not payable in the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain industrial properties.  Certain definitions and exemptions apply – please see the website.	None
<b>Hardship Relief</b>	Businesses who are suffering financial hardship because of a one-off event demonstrably beyond their control.	Not applicable	UDC local scheme Discretionary rate relief of up to 100% for a limited period depending on circumstances. Consideration would also be given to deferring payment due dates.

**Committee: Cabinet**

**Agenda Item**

**Date: 30 March 2017**

**7**

**Title: Planning Performance Agreements**

**Portfolio Holder: Cllr Susan Barker, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services**

**Key decision: No**

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## **Summary**

1. This report recommends Planning Performance Agreements be endorsed as an option for major or strategic applications. The development management service has been approached by two large developers to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement. However, to date the authority has not taken a view on whether to offer Planning Performance Agreements. A PPA will improve the customer service for applicants because the council will commit to a bespoke project timetable for pre application advice, determination of a planning application, and dealing with post decision matters.

## **Recommendation**

2. To endorse the offer to applicants for major development the option of a Planning Performance Agreement.
3. To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning to negotiate terms for and to enter into Planning Performance Agreements with individual developers

## **Financial Implications**

4. Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) will be based on the recovery of costs of providing a bespoke service for the assessment of major or strategic applications, including the start up costs of introducing the option such as training requirements. Income from PPA fees will be reinvested in the planning service.

## **Background Papers**

5. Draft Charter for Planning Performance Agreements – attached.

## **Impact**

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	Appropriate publicity and marketing of PPAs will be undertaken. The concept will be explained to communities to help it to be understood.
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Community Safety	No specific implications
Equalities	No specific implications
Health and Safety	No specific implications
Human Rights/Legal Implications	No specific implications
Sustainability	No specific implications
Ward-specific impacts	No specific implications
Workforce/Workplace	In the event of the receipt of a number of major applications at the same time, or if a strategic major application would have a disproportionate impact upon staffing resources, there may be a requirement to procure external consultancy resource to provide agreed standards of service for Development Management, or recruit interim staff on a temporary basis to accommodate increased service workload.

## Planning Performance Agreement

7. A framework for Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) has been introduced by Government to assist local planning authorities and developers in delivering high-quality decisions on strategic, major planning applications.
8. A PPA allows both a developer and the local planning authority to agree a Project Plan and Programme for major planning applications, from the first pre-application discussions through to applications of discharge of conditions of any eventual planning application. **It must be stressed that signing up to a PPA does not fetter the planning authority in determining the outcome of any planning application** – it is effectively a more collaborative project management method for considering strategic planning applications.
9. Government strongly advise that if PPAs are to be used by a local planning authority, a formal process should be enshrined in a Charter setting out the authority's general approach.
10. Government has also confirmed that any planning applications that use the PPA process are effectively removed from the current national performance

indicators (currently 13 and 16-week timescales for decision-making). They will instead be measured against the timescale agreed by both the local planning authority and the developer, which will be stated in the PPA Project Programme.

11. This process cannot be imposed by either party. Both the local planning authority and the developer have to agree to a PPA. The final decision on any eventual planning application will continue to depend upon the planning merits of the case, regardless of whether a PPA exists or not.
12. The proposal has to constitute 'major' development, as defined by Government. The thresholds for 'major' are:
  - a. Applications for 10 or more dwellings (or where the number of dwellings is not yet determined, the site area exceeds 0.5 hectare); or
  - b. Applications proposing a building which has a floorspace of 1,000 sqm or greater; or,
  - c. Applications which comprise development on a site which has an area of 1 hectare or greater
13. Once a PPA has been agreed an initial meeting is set. The initial meeting is simply to identify both parties' position(s) on the objectives and aspirations for development; whether it accords with national, regional and local planning policies; and whether there is evidence that the development is required (physically, environmentally, socially and economically). It will also be the stage where the local planning authority advises the developer about the involvement of statutory agencies, relevant community/resident groups and Elected Members.
14. Following on from this initial contact, the parties will arrange a formal Development Meeting. This is where draft proposals are critically and openly considered by all relevant statutory bodies (usually one representative per organisation). The purpose of the meeting is to try to agree the vision for the development, identify all the relevant issues before submission of the planning application. Exceptionally, these meetings may be independently chaired by the Government's Advisory Team for Large-Scale Applications (ATLAS). Otherwise they will be chaired by the local planning authority.
15. The Project Programme shall then be published and be publically available. It is anticipated that the Programme will be signed by the Assistant Director Planning and a Project Manager for the developer. Any critical third parties (e.g. key statutory consultees) may also be expected to sign the document, with a commitment to producing their formal observations on the planning application on time.
16. Following publication, the Programme is then implemented. It is for the Project Managers on both sides to ensure implementation remains on time, so that a planning decision can be delivered at Planning Committee and there is

sufficient time for conclusion of any legal agreements (should planning permission be forthcoming).

### **PPA fees**

17. A PPA involves additional expenditure and the proposal is to charge a bespoke fee. The fee would be calculated using the hourly cost of each relevant officer and any additional external resource which may be required e.g. specialist consultants to review and comment on documentation.

### **Options considered**

18. The council could decide not offer the option of a Planning Performance Agreement, and continue with the current arrangements for dealing with pre-application discussions for major applications. Officers would continue to arrange informal meetings to discuss proposals but potentially without the benefits of a development team approach. Opportunities would be lost during early stages when developers' plans are still fluid to enable them to respond to consultation suggestions, and to consider the wider scope of their proposals. In the absence of a Planning Performance Agreement the timescales for determining major planning applications would remain at 13 and 16 weeks (unless an extension of time is agreed between both parties), rather than agreed application-specific timescales. This could mean that the time to determine major planning applications could go beyond their national performance indicator target date.
19. Adopting the principle of Planning Performance Agreements would introduce a consistent procedure for the consideration and negotiation of major planning applications and addressing their strategic implications. This would provide greater opportunity for statutory consultees to be involved earlier in the development process, and would give greater certainty to all parties regarding timescale of submission and determination of planning applications.
20. Observers have commented that PPAs will not, by themselves, solve the inherent challenges facing the national planning system. Indeed they will not be appropriate for all major development proposals. But if they are adopted for schemes which are complex and most challenging, then they are already acknowledged as having the potential to achieve greater collaboration and transparency between all parties involved in the development process. Formalisation of the process through the adoption in principle of Planning Performance Agreements is therefore considered necessary.

### **Risk Analysis**

21.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
By not having an agreed PPA, the	2 The number of major	3 Opportunities	The proposed PPA takes into account

pre-application process does not take into account all of the statutory consultee concerns which could extend the determination of a planning application. Potentially Government set performance standards would not be met.	applications expected could mean that applicants/ developers do not agree to extensions of time.	for place making lost and delays to appropriate projects delivering economic growth	good practice and sets out an agreed format.
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1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



**Committee: Cabinet**

**Agenda Item**

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

**8**

**Title: Private Sector Housing Strategy**

**Portfolio Holder: Cllr Julie Redfern**

**Key decision: Yes**

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### **Summary**

1. This report seeks Cabinet approval of the council's Private Sector Housing Strategy.
2. The strategy outlines the council's plans to meet peoples housing needs by maintaining and improving the existing private housing stock in the district and has been influenced by feedback from consultation carried out with the partners, interested stakeholders and members.

### **Recommendations**

3. Cabinet is requested to approve the Private Sector Housing Strategy, attached as Appendix A to this report, to be implemented with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017.

### **Financial Implications**

4. None currently. The Private Sector Housing Strategy and associated Action Plan will need to take account of existing resources currently made available by the Council and Essex County Council.

### **Background Papers**

5. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the council's website:
  - UDC's Housing Strategy 2016
  - Uttlesford District Council Housing Assistance Repairs Policy
  - BRE Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database for Uttlesford District Council – 2015
  - BRE A Quantitative Health Impact Assessment: The cost of private sector housing and prospective housing interventions in Uttlesford District Council - 2015
  - UDC's Corporate Plan 2017 – 2021

### **Published Papers:**

- The District Council Contribution To Public Health: A Time Of Challenge And Opportunity – The Kings Fund – 2015

### **Impact**

Communication/Consultation	Consultation has taken place with relevant stakeholders
Community Safety	There will be a benefit to Community Safety through housing improvements
Equalities	Equality Impact Assessment has been made
Health and Safety	No impact on employee health and safety
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Housing Act 1985 (s.8) requires local housing authorities to consider housing conditions in their area and the needs of their area with respect to the provision of housing accommodation.
Sustainability	The proposal will aim to target those in greatest need, maintain the private sector housing stock & improve energy efficiency.
Ward-specific impacts	No specific impact
Workforce/Workplace	Housing Health and Communities – within existing resources

### **Situation**

6. The Private Sector Housing Strategy (PSHS) has been prepared in response to recent housing stock profiling and a need for a strategy that sought to complement the wider strategic housing functions of the Council.
7. The strategy has been influenced by feedback from consultation carried out with the partners, interested stakeholders and members.
8. The PSHS takes into consideration key findings on the condition of the district's private sector housing stock, key objectives of the Council's Housing Strategy adopted by the Council in 2016 and links with the Council's Corporate Plan and Health and Wellbeing agenda.

9. The Strategy sets out a number of key priorities that seek to maintain and improve the condition of private homes across the owner - occupier and the private rented sector. The key priorities are listed under the following headings:
- 1. Raise standards in the private sector by encouragement and support to owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from category 1 hazards**
  - 2. Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents to provide safe and well managed properties, free from category 1 hazards**
  - 3. Help older and vulnerable people remain in their own homes**
  - 4. Maximise use of the existing private sector housing stock**
  - 5. Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty**
10. The first key priority looks at ways to encourage those owner- occupiers who may be on low income or limited means to invest in their homes, and remove serious hazards. Giving priority to the most vulnerable people in society, we will engage with these members of our community and support them through a range of grants & offers to improve their living conditions.
11. Key priority two looks at strengthening our relationships with private sector landlords, to encourage high standards of management and to deal with the small minority of poor landlords within the district.
12. With more people living longer and linked together with key priority one, the third key priority is designed to improve housing conditions to support independence. The current model to deliver DFGs will be updated to reduce timescales. It is also proposed to increase the scope of the service with approval from Essex County Council.
13. Key priority four requires the Council to take action wherever possible to bring back into use empty dwellings in order to make best use of the existing private sector stock.
14. Finally, key priority five aims to work with our partners to tackle cold homes and fuel poverty, a significant housing problem within the District.
15. Evidence supporting the priority aims of the strategy are based on UDCs Building Research Establishment (BRE) stock modelling report and associated Health Impact Assessment.
16. Accompanying the PSHS is a series of actions set against a timeframe that will lead to a number of outcomes. A key component for delivery will be the council's

engagement with partner agencies on initiatives that will help deliver on the council's health and wellbeing agenda.

17. Commentary on the progress of the action plan given within the strategy will be presented to the council's Housing Board on an annual basis.

### **Risk Analysis**

18.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
There are no risks associated with this report			

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



# **UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY 2017 – 2022**

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## Foreword by lead portfolio holder

*Uttlesford District Council is passionate about looking after its residents and has a duty to help those most vulnerable in society.*

*The built environment is of great importance to us all and the links to the wider determinants of health are well established. With the introduction of the Care Act we are looking to work closely with our partners and residents to embrace changes to the public health regime and ultimately improve health and wellbeing.*

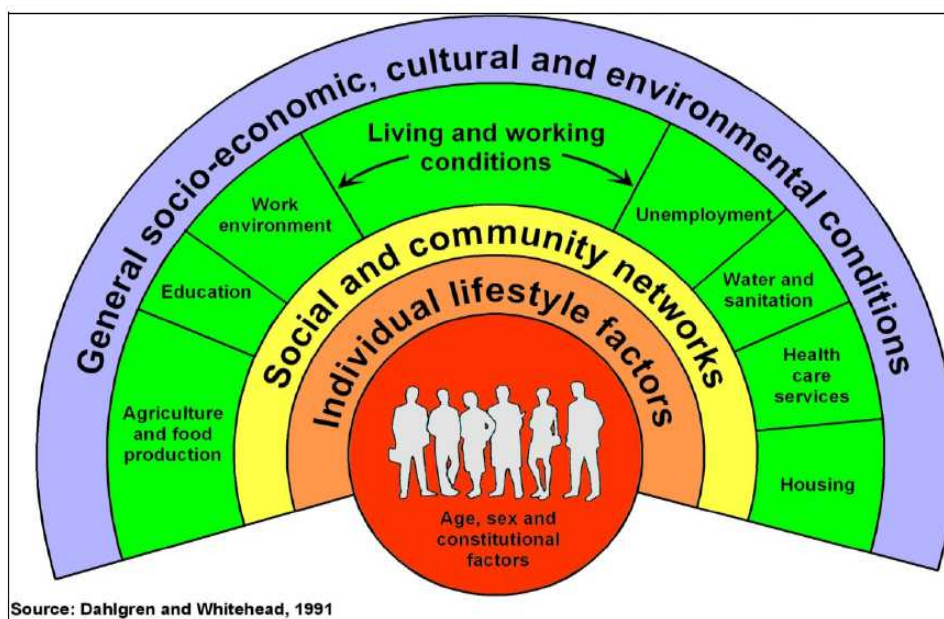
*In general the standard of housing in Uttlesford is good. There are relatively low numbers of houses with Category 1 hazards. There is little overcrowding and we work hard to reduce the number of empty homes. However, there are significant problems with cold homes and problems of poor housing do exist.*

*There is a lot the Council can do to address these problems. This strategy will underpin the Councils work with the private sector for the next five years. Linking in with the Councils' Corporate Plan and Health and Wellbeing agenda, the task is to improve poor housing with a particular emphasis on protecting the vulnerable.*

**Cllr Julie Redfern**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a strategy to deal with housing issues in the private sector, both for homeowners and the private rented sector. Its primary focus is to ensure that homes in the district are healthy, which will support Uttlesford District Council's health and wellbeing agenda. It has been developed by the Council in order to set service priorities for the next five years.
- 1.2 The strategy builds on the stock modelling data delivered in 2015 by the Building Research Establishment (BRE). This data identified and highlighted the extent of the poor housing, in particular, Category 1 hazards found in homes in Uttlesford. It also highlighted the health impacts of poor housing and the likely costs they present to the NHS and to society.
- 1.3 Category 1 hazards are defined within the provisions of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This risk-based evaluation tool was introduced under the Housing Act 2004. There are 29 categories of housing hazards identified with HHSRS and when assessed they can be judged to be 'serious', with a 'high score', deemed to be a Category 1 hazard. All other 'non-serious' hazards are called Category 2 hazards. The risk assessment looks at the likelihood of an incident arising from the condition of the property and the likely harmful outcome. If a local authority discovers Category 1 hazards in a home, it has a duty to take the appropriate action. The most numerous Category 1 hazards in UDC are falls and excess cold.
- 1.4 The link between housing and health is well defined. The quality of a home can have a significant impact on our lives impacting on both physical and mental health. Poor housing conditions have an adverse effect on public health and wellbeing and contribute to health inequalities. Making modifications to improve a home can lead to enhanced health and wellbeing that can bring benefits not only to individuals but also wider social economic benefits.



1.5 Investment in our homes and ensuring standards are maintained delivers a wide range of positive outcomes:

- Fewer homes that pose a risk to health and well being
- Improved outcomes for families and young people
- More independence for older or vulnerable households
- Lower carbon emissions improved energy efficiency and reduced fuel poverty
- Less anti-social behaviour relating to derelict or nuisance properties
- Communities that are more attractive and economically vibrant

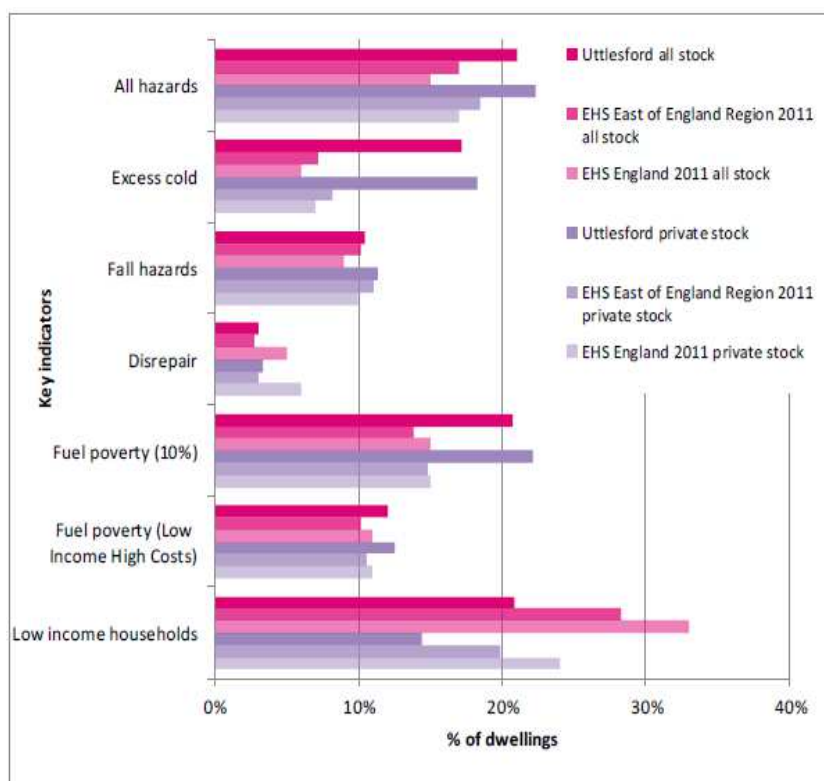
1.6 This strategy does not stand alone. It has been developed in line with the key objectives listed within UDCs Housing Strategy published in 2016 and has regards to the Corporate Plan priorities and delivery plan for 2017/18. It sets out what Environmental Health and other service areas will do to support good standards within the private sector. It sets out the challenges we know exist and our proposed actions to deal with them.

1.7 UDCs housing market made up of a private, private rented and a social sector. There are around 31,316 (2011 census data) dwellings in UDC. Of these 74% of homes are owner occupiers, which equates to 22,746 dwellings, 12% or 3961 dwellings are listed as social housing and 14%, namely 4609 dwellings are rented from a private landlord. For all stock Uttlesford performs better than the English Housing Survey (EHS 2011) average for various indicators such as disrepair, low income households, however performs slightly worse for falls and fuel poverty. Levels of excess cold are considerably higher in Uttlesford compared to EHS average.

1.8 The table to the right provides estimates of the percentage of dwellings meeting the key indicator criteria assessed by the housing stock models for all stock and private sector stock.

It compared Uttlesford property stock with the East of England and England (EHS 2011).

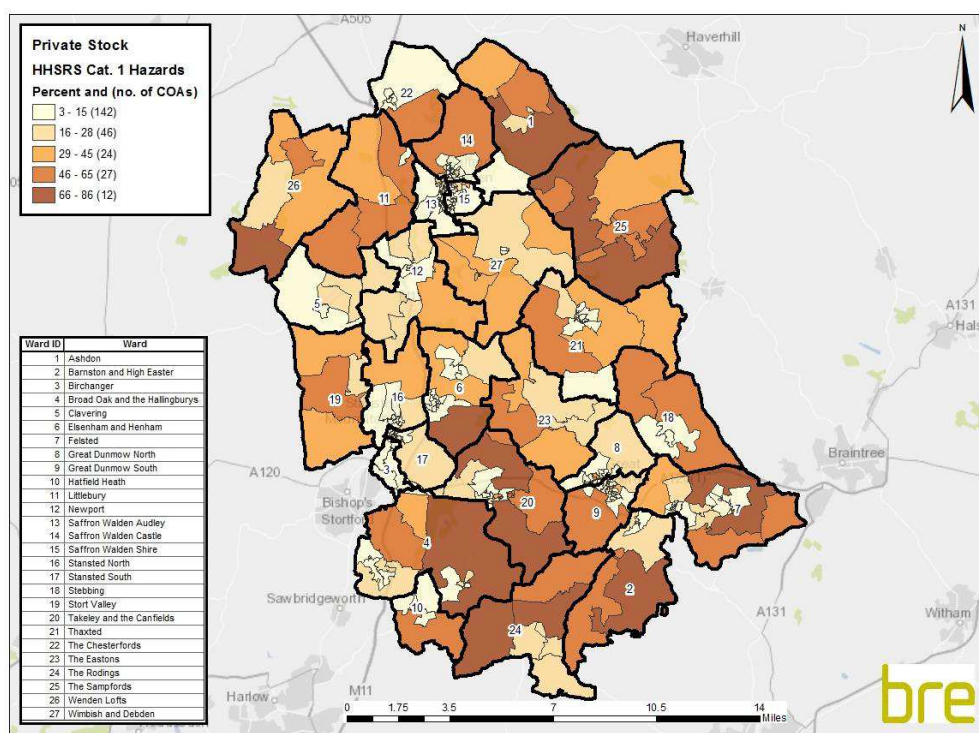
It is clear that there are some significant challenges with some homes clearly below standard.



- 1.9 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 provides local housing authorities with a general permissive power to provide assistance to occupiers for the purpose of improving living conditions. It is government's view that the responsibility to maintain privately owned homes rest first and foremost with their owners, however the legislation is intended to enable the Council to provide assistance and resources for the most vulnerable should it wish to do so.
- 1.10 In order to exercise this power a local authority must first adopt a policy for the provision of assistance. The current policy on homes repairs assistance was agreed by the Council in 2003 and does not reflect current knowledge. We will look to amend this policy alongside the strategy to target known problems and link works to improvements in health outcomes.
- 1.11 It is estimated that there are 6,314 dwellings in the private sector with a Category 1 hazard, which equates to 22% of all private properties, compared with 19% regionally and 17% nationally. 1,186 dwellings in the private rented sector have Category 1 hazards. This equates to 27% of properties in the private rented sector.
- 1.12 Collectively, it is estimated that poor housing conditions within the private sector are responsible for over 286 harmful events requiring medical intervention each year. These range from respiratory diseases like COPD associated with cold homes, to fractures and injuries associated with homes containing fall hazards. It would cost £27.7million to mitigate all of these serious housing hazards, but would return savings to the NHS of £1.6 million per year, with further savings to wider society of £3.8 million per year.
- 1.13 The Climate Change Act 2008 legislated for a reduction in our carbon emissions, compared to 1990, of 34% by 2020 and on our way to 80% by 2050. It set legally-binding carbon budgets for our country for the next 12 years across all sectors of the UK economy - including our homes and communities, and our workplaces. Reducing demand for energy through eliminating waste cost effectively is one of the best ways to reduce emissions. Three quarters of the energy we use in our homes is for heating our rooms and water, most of which comes from gas-fired boilers. Together this accounts for 13% of the UK's CO2 emissions.
- 1.14 To do this we need to make our homes, more energy efficient, and heat and power them from low carbon sources. The Council and its partners are well placed to provide advice and energy company funded grants to improve the energy efficiency of the owner occupier and private rented sector.
- 1.15 Clearly, it is not the Councils position nor does it have the resources to introduce an intervention programme to resolve these problems. However, there are areas where targeted intervention would help those most in need and where the costs associated with the intervention would demonstrate positive outcomes with relatively low payback periods.

- 1.16 With the introduction of the Care Act, there is now a legislative obligation as well as a moral argument to improve the health and wellbeing of those most vulnerable in society. It is recognised that improvements to living conditions will fulfil some of these responsibilities. We will therefore look at innovative cost effective solutions to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in society. Alongside this work we will work proactively with our landlords, promoting better standards and raise awareness. We shall also take decisive enforcement action against landlords who capitalise on the vulnerable
- 1.17 The purpose of this document is to provide a clear direction for the Council and its private sector housing service to address the following five 5 key priorities:
- 1. Raise standards in the private sector by encouragement and support to owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from Category 1 hazards**
  - 2. Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents to provide safe and well managed properties, free from Category 1 hazards**
  - 3. Help older and vulnerable people remain in their own homes**
  - 4. Maximise use of the existing private sector housing stock.**
  - 5. Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty**
- 1.18 The accompanying action plan provided within Appendix A addresses how we will deliver these priorities and the timeframe for progressing this work. However, we recognise that new issues will arise and national policies may change during the lifetime of the strategy and there may be a need to renew the action plan as and when deemed necessary to ensure it remains relevant.

## 2. Key priority 1 - Raise standards in the private sector by encouragement and support to owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from Category 1 hazards



*Percentage of private sector dwellings in Uttlesford with the presence of a HHSRS Category 1 hazard*

- 2.1 There are estimated 22,746 owner occupied homes in UDC. Approximately 5128 dwellings have Category 1 hazards. The main hazards are excess cold (4190) and falls (2581). The estimated costs of mitigating these hazards are £23m for excess cold and £3m for falls.
- 2.2 The highest concentrations of fuel poverty in the private sector are found in the wards of The Sampfords, Littlebury and Wendens Lofts. For excess cold, the highest concentrations are in the wards of The Sampfords, Wendens Lofts and The Rodings. The highest concentrations of all HHSRS hazards in the private sector are found in the wards of The Sampfords, Wendens Lofts and The Rodings.
- 2.3 The key challenge is to encourage those owner occupiers who may be on low income or limited means to invest in their homes, and remove Category 1 hazards. Some of the main obstacles are likely to be the costs involved in carrying out the works, confidence and trust in the services and builders they use and willingness to engage.
- 2.4 In UDC 21% of all households are considered to be on low incomes. With limited grant funding available to support the vulnerable, the Council will prioritise vulnerable households for assistance and will change the current policy to include a range of grants, offers and loans to encourage uptake and assist those in greatest need.

## Proposed Actions

- Develop a comprehensive range of offers and grants with the limited resources available that will reduce hazards in the home.
- Devise and implement a campaign to target promotional measures to those in greatest need.
- Increase public awareness of the range of services available to encourage and support owner occupiers
- Report on the improvements made using the Housing Health Cost Calculator to demonstrate the savings to the NHS and wider society

### **3. Key priority 2 - Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents to provide safe and well managed properties, free from Category 1 hazards**

- 3.1 In UDC, the private rented sector accounts for 14% of all households (4609 dwellings). There has been significant growth in the private rented sector in recent years and new measures are being developed to deal with poor landlords. Such measures encourage local authorities to make full use of enforcement powers to tackle dangerous and poorly maintained dwellings. With high property values and limited social rented homes, the sector looks set to grow and will continue to remain an important source of housing.
- 3.3 In the majority of cases the rented sector provides high quality housing opportunities, but there are some challenges. The private rented stock is generally worse than the owner occupied stock for indicators relating to hazards; disrepair, fuel poverty and energy efficiency. It is also worse than the owner occupier stock for low income households and for the low income high cost definition of fuel poverty. 27% of the private rented stock is thought to have one or more Category 1 hazards.
- 3.4 The council has a statutory duty and a range of powers to address sub-standard conditions such as Category 1 hazards. It can also intervene in cases of illegal eviction and harassment. Last year we received 47 reports from tenants regarding poor conditions. Demand for action is largely initiated by the tenant and is therefore reliant on high levels of public awareness. Over the course of the strategy we will aim improve public awareness tenants' rights and responsibilities and the services we provide. We will also update our enforcement policy to ensure that it reflects current legislative and government thinking.
- 3.5 We also acknowledge that the majority of landlords are not career landlords and own one or two properties. We proposed to engage with our landlords further and keep them updated on legislative changes and good practice. The landlord

forum in one attempt to do this, however, we will look to do more to whilst still operating a robust enforcement regime.

- 3.6 The Council does not have many mandatory licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) within the District. However, during the lifetime of the strategy we anticipate that the government will change the current definition of mandatory HMOs. If this occurs we will look at ways of identifying HMOs and engage with landlords to improve conditions and reduce the health and safety risks to tenants.
- 3.7 In recent years the Government also announced a range of measures aimed at improving standards in the sector, including the requirement to install Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms, measures to prevent retaliatory eviction, the requirement for letting agents to publicise their fees and to join a government approved redress scheme. The recent Housing and Planning Act 2016 has also introduced a number of measures to tackle poor landlords including banning orders, rogue landlord database, and rent repayment orders. All these powers will enable the council to take action against bad landlords. The service will look at adopting good practice methods to implement and enforce these changes.

### **Proposed Actions**

- Encourage and support landlords and agents to reduce number of Category 1 hazards in private rented homes with a particular focus on HMOs and poorest performing areas
- Respond to changes to government policy on HMOs
- Improve the sector by ensuring that all landlords and agents have access to up to date information
- Regulate robustly and take action against the worst landlords and agents
- Increased awareness of tenants' rights, responsibilities and support available.

## **4. Key priority 3 – Help older and vulnerable people remain in their own homes**

- 4.1 UDC has a growing number of older households, people with disabilities and complex needs. Much of the existing housing stock is not designed with the needs of these groups in mind.
- 4.2 With people expected to live longer, the need for home adaptations to support independence is set to increase. The main types of adaptations needed include adapted bathrooms and toilets, lifts and level or ramped access. The Council has a statutory duty under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration

Act 1996 to provide Disabled Facilities Grants. The grants are available up to a maximum of £30,000 and are means tested. Grant funding is sourced from the Better Care Fund managed by Essex CC. However, often this is not enough and each year the Council supports the service by meeting the shortfall in expenditure. In 2016/17 £295,500 was spent on DFGs. UDCs contribution was £135,500 to this service. In 2017/18 the Council will receive £179,000 from Essex CC to support the DFG service.

- 4.3 It is becoming increasingly clear that the benefits of DFG adaptations are far wider than the provision of assistance to disabled people at home. They allow the individual to maintain a level of dignity, prevent falls and other complications. Without these measures an individual would be put at greater risk of accident or illness. Recent research (Foundations - Local Government Ombudsman Report) indicates that the cost of residential care is around £29,000 per year, whereas the average cost of providing adaptations is less than £7,000. Therefore effective adaptations can result in clear savings to local government.
- 4.4 There is increasing recognition that the current delivery model is outdated and needs to be streamlined to reduce delays that can place additional health related complications onto the customer.
- 4.5 We will explore new innovative ways to deliver DFGs with the main aim to improve delivery times and provide a comprehensive service for all. We will also investigate whether it's possible to increase the scope of the service to assist with earlier hospital discharge and /or to move people out of residential care and back into their homes.
- 4.6 We will also take a wider look at the homes of disabled persons to see if there is a need for low level intervention and practical help to remove hazards and improve health and safety. We will work with partner agencies with existing support schemes on the best ways to deliver this service across UDC.

### Proposed Actions

- Improve the DFG service delivery to reduce complications, increase the speed of adaptations and reduce costs
- Ensure that those who need adaptations get help to remain in or return to their accommodation and receive the appropriate level of advice, support and assistance
- Improve customer relations throughout the DFG process
- Reduce number of Category 1 hazards relating to falls in households with older people/children to prevent early and/or unnecessary admissions of residents to hospital, nursing care and or residential care

## **5. Key priority 4. Maximise use of the existing private sector housing stock**

- 5.1 Homes which are left empty for prolonged periods can have an impact on the appearance and the vibrancy of the area, as well as taking housing out of use when there are more and more people in need of accommodation. Dwellings suffering long-term neglect can blight a neighbourhood, increase prevalence of nuisance, pests and ASB. They can even present a danger to the public.
- 5.2 In recent years the council has stepped up pressure on owners who keep their properties empty for long periods. Much of this has involved effective dialogue and persuasion with owners. However the threat of enforcement such as compulsory purchase continues to be a useful tool in the armoury against empty homes. The Council has been rewarded for this work through the New Homes Bonus Scheme and additional Council Tax receipts. Although the government has announced changes to the NHB scheme, the work of Council in bringing empty homes continues to be a key outcome in delivering the Councils Housing Strategy.
- 5.3 In recent years the numbers of empty dwellings within UDC as a direct result of officer intervention has reduced significantly. UDC has some of the lowest levels of Empty Dwellings in Essex with 168 empty dwellings recorded in 2015 compared with an Essex average of 305.
- 5.4 UDC is part of the PLACE scheme (Private Lease Agreements Converting Empties). The scheme allows UDC to provide grants of up to £50,000 to carry out repairs in exchange for a lease agreement. Under the scheme the property would be leased and managed as an affordable home for a period of three years before being returned to the owner in sound condition.
- 5.5 Throughout the lifetime of this strategy we will raise awareness of the PLACE scheme and where appropriate take enforcement action.

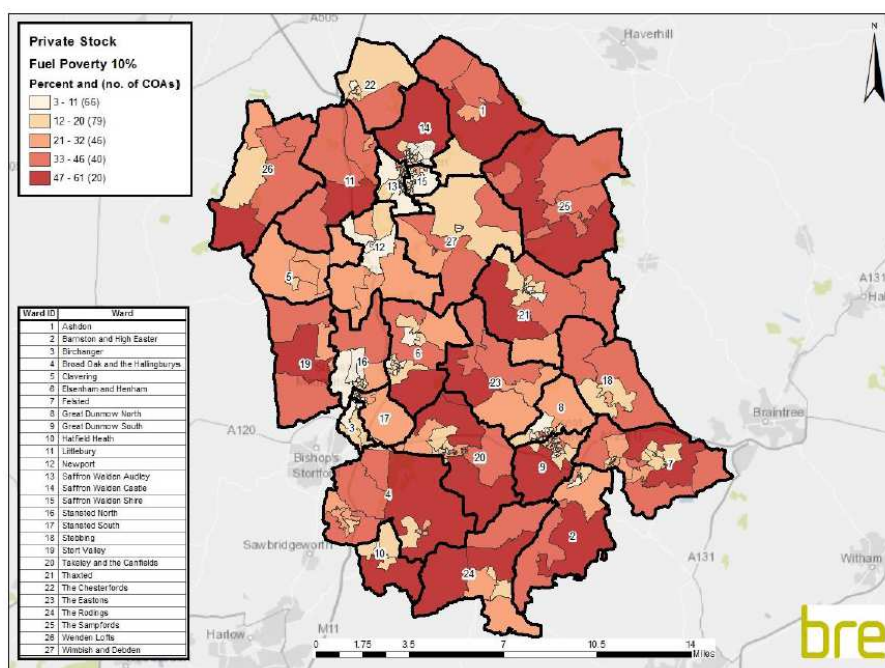
### **Proposed Actions**

- Maintain accurate information about the numbers of long-term empty properties.
- Encourage owners of privately owned empty homes to bring them back into use using the PLACE scheme.

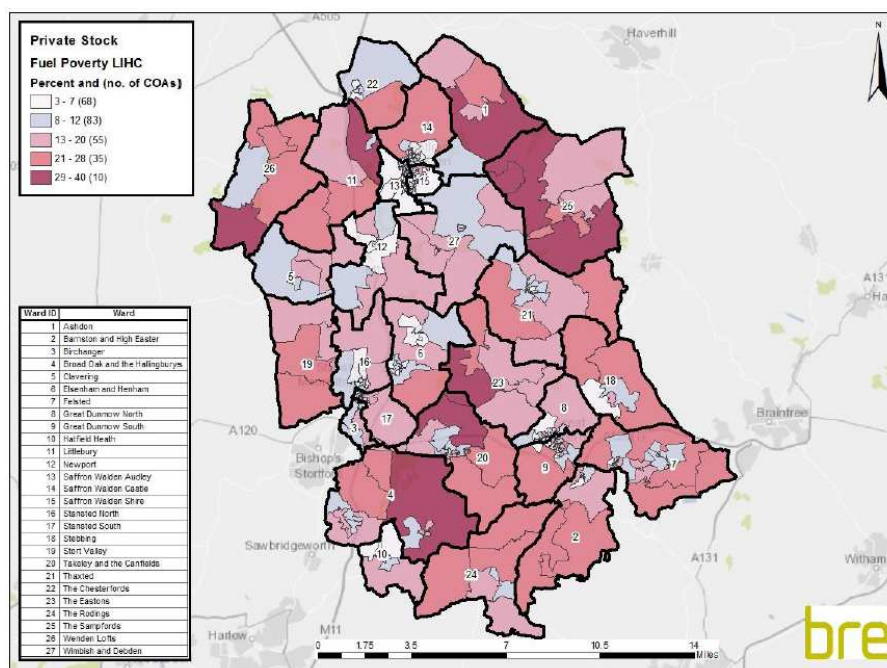
## **6. Key priority 5. Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty**

- 6.1 Fuel poverty and excess winter death are issues in Uttlesford. Being able to afford heating bills and ensuring homes are warm and not damp or draughty reduces ill health and demands put on health services.

- 6.2 UDC's private sector housing stock shows lower than average overall levels of energy efficiency when compared to other areas. The estimated average Simple SAP for the private sector stock in Uttlesford is 50 which correspond to an EPC rating of E. The number of private sector dwellings with an EPC rating below band E is estimated to be 6,882 (24.3%). The number of private rented dwellings in Uttlesford with a rating below band E (i.e. bands F and G), is estimated to be 1,273 (28.8%). By comparison, in 2014, the national average was 61 points (ref English Homes Survey).
- 6.3 A significant amount of work has been done in recent years to improve the energy efficiency of private sector homes in UDC. A number of initiatives have been running that vary according to governmental grants made available. In addition we are actively promoting oil clubs and working with the CAB on the winter warmth campaign. The Council is rolling out the Government's energy efficiency ECO programme to target energy inefficient properties to reduce carbon emissions, reduce fuel poverty and deliver better health outcomes essential to reduce cold weather related illness and winter mortality
- 6.5 UDC wide excess cold is the most common Category 1 hazard, found in 18% of owner occupied stock and 22% of private rented dwellings. 21% of all housing stock is estimated to be fuel poor, compared to 14% regionally and 15% nationally. 28 % of households living in the private rented sector are thought to be living in fuel poverty.
- 6.6 The highest concentrations of fuel poverty in the private sector are found in the wards of The Sampfords, Littlebury and Wendens Lofts. For excess cold, the highest concentrations are in the wards of The Sampfords, Wendens Lofts and The Rodings. We have mapped fuel poverty 'hot spots' around the Uttlesford and will use this to target future interventions.



Percentage of private sector dwellings in Uttlesford occupied by households in fuel poverty - 10% definition



Percentage of private sector dwellings in Uttlesford occupied by households in fuel poverty – Low Income High Costs definition

- 6.7 Tackling fuel poverty by enabling residents to heat their homes and creating warm zones where adequate temperatures can be sustained has a direct impact on residents that maintains their health.
- 6.8 We have already mentioned that we will be reviewing our grants policy to provide a more comprehensive range of grants, loans and offers to create and live in warmer, healthier homes, reduce CO2 emissions and cost of fuel bills.
- 6.9 Throughout the lifetime of the strategy we will continue to work with our partners to reduce incidents of excess winter deaths and fuel poverty. This work will be rolled out in parallel with our approach to tackle the poorest housing within the district, providing an integrated holistic approach to improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable UDC residents.

## Proposed Actions

- Improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions by targeted work and maximise funding opportunities in the worst performing areas and property types.
- Reduced incidence of fuel poverty through targeted work in the poorest performing areas and property types.
- Ensure priority rooms are adequately heated and insulated to create warm zones.

## **7. How will we deliver – Objectives and Outcomes**

- 7.1 The action plan contained within Appendix A provides information on the work and targets required to meet the outcomes of the strategy. These will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure delivery.
- 7.2 In addition the strategy will be reviewed in accordance with legislative and central government guidance to ensure that the strategy remains relevant and responsive to emerging needs.
- 7.3 Each year we will present a report to the Housing Board on the work of the service area to ensure a level of scrutiny
- 7.4 Effective delivery requires the right level of resource and commitment. Partnerships will be key to securing many of the outcomes and we will work to improve and expand our relations with these groups

### **Further information**

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this strategy, provide comments or ask any questions, please contact the Environmental Health Service at [Environmentalhealth@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:Environmentalhealth@uttlesford.gov.uk) Tel 01799 510482.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### Key Priorities - Action Plan

<b>Key priority 1</b>	Raising standards in the private sector by encouragement and support owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from Category 1 hazards
<b>Key priority 2</b>	Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents to provide safe and well managed properties, free from Category 1 hazards
<b>Key priority 3</b>	Helping older and vulnerable people remain in their own homes.
<b>Key priority 4</b>	Maximise use of the existing private sector housing stock
<b>Key priority 5</b>	Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty.

Key Priority	Action	Reason for action	Timescale for delivery	Outcome/measure	Resources
1	Develop a comprehensive range of offers, grants and loans that that will reduce hazards in the home.	UDCs existing housing assistance policy needs to be amended to deliver a range of services that will improve living conditions for vulnerable people	April 2017	Identified reduction in Cat 1 and 2 hazards following intervention  Energy Efficiency improvements	Existing UHRA/DFG capital funding
	Devise and implement a campaign to identify and target those in greatest need.	Eligible persons may not be aware or have access to information that could assist them. A promotional campaign will be necessary to ensure take up of offers to improve housing conditions.	June 2017	Increase in uptake of available offers	From existing resource

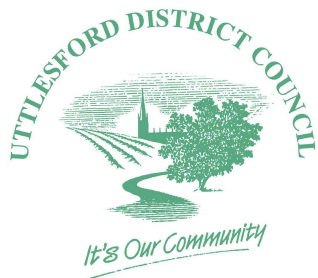
	Increase public awareness of the range of services available to encourage and support owner occupiers	Many owner occupiers are unaware of services and advice UDC can provide	Oct 2017	Delivery of a comprehensive range of leaflets and factsheets + improve website material.	From existing resource
	Report on the improvements made using the Housing Health Cost Calculator to demonstrate the savings to the NHS and wider society	There is an increasing need to quantify and report on the performance of the service.	On-going throughout the life of the strategy	Improved quantitative performance reporting for the service.	From existing resource
2	Encourage and support landlords and agents to reduce number of Category 1 hazards in private rented homes with a particular focus on HMOs and poorest performing areas	The private rented sector is growing and is thought to have some of the worse housing conditions. UDC has few ties with landlords. There is a desire to engage with landlords and improve lines of communication to encourage a high standard of rental accommodation	February 2018	Build up a database of landlords in the district from which to communicate and distribute information	From existing resource
	Respond to changes to housing legislation and government policy on HMOs	The Council licenses few HMOs. The potential change in government policy is likely to lead to a substantial increase in licensable HMOs. The EH service will need to consider and act on these changes	Upon release of statutory guidance	Implement a targeted campaign to licensed more HMOs	Additional resources may be required. It is expected that the costs of additional work will be met in part by the

					licensing fee
	Regulate robustly and take action against the worst landlords and agents	For those landlords and agents that are not fit for purpose – to robustly act against those flouting the law in accordance with UDCs enforcement policy	April 2017	Review and implement the PSH enforcement policy	From existing resource
	Increase awareness of tenants' rights, responsibilities and support available through website and community based publications	Many tenants are unaware of their rights, and what action is available for them to take.	February 2018	Develop and implement a coms strategy to inform tenants of their rights and responsibilities	From existing resources
3	Improve DFG service delivery to reduce complications, increase the speed of adaptations and reduce costs	Delays to adaptations are known to lead to, uncertainty, stress and increasing physical complications for the applicant	June 2017	To bring service in house	Additional resource has been identified and approved to assist service users
	Ensure that those who need adaptations get help to remain in or return to their accommodation and receive the appropriate level of advice,	Improve lines of communication and develop sound working practices with partners to ensure effective delivery of services	June 2017 – Ongoing	Officers to receive and maintain appropriate levels of training to provide excellent levels of service. Document procedures with partner agencies	From existing resource

	support and assistance			Report on performance and satisfaction ratings	
	Improve customer relations throughout the DFG process	There is a need to readily update customers and ensure that they fully engaged with the process from applications to the completion of the adaptation	June 2017 - Ongoing	Develop and implement a strategy with UDC coms to inform service users of the DFG process.	From existing resource
	Reduce number of Category 1 hazards relating to falls in households with older people/children to prevent early and/or unnecessary admissions of residents to hospital, nursing care and or residential care	There is increasing support to broaden DFG service provision to provide other support and assistance that may prevent accidents and reduce care packages	June 2017 - Ongoing	To promote other housing assistance offers, grants and loans, encourage referrals to partner agencies and to work with partners to assist in delivery of campaigns	From existing resource
4	Maintain accurate information about the numbers of long-term empty properties and target owners whose empty homes cause a significant detrimental impact to the neighbourhood	UDC has some of the lowest levels of empty properties in Essex. UDC has been rewarded for this through the New Homes Bonus scheme and CT receipts. We will continue to work proactively to ensure empty home levels within UDC remain low.	Ongoing during the lifetime of the strategy	Ensure that we measure the % of private sector dwellings that are been vacant for more than 6 months and returned to occupation through local authority intervention	From existing resource

	Encourage owners of privately owned empty homes to bring them back into use using the PLACE scheme	Owners often face resource issues and are unable to afford the costs of works to bring property back into a good state of repair. We will promote the PLACE scheme that provides grants of up to £50,000	Ongoing during the lifetime of the strategy	Ensure that all owners of empty properties are informed of the PLACE scheme	UDC subscribes to the PLACE Scheme Consortium. No additional funding is required to support existing grant funding
5	Improve energy efficiency by targeting work and maximise funding opportunities in the worst performing areas and property types	The average simple SAP rating is lower in UDC than the national average. We will continue to promote national initiatives, governmental grants and offer loans to the occupiers of 'cold homes'	Ongoing during the lifetime of the strategy	Record the number of properties seeking assistance + the number of hazards removed relating to energy efficiency	From existing resource
	Reduced incidence of fuel poverty through targeted work in the poorest performing areas and property types	Using a range of information sources we are able to target campaign material at those in greatest need	Ongoing	Record the number of properties seeking assistance and the number of hazards removed relating to energy efficiency.	From existing resource
	Ensure priority rooms are adequately heated and insulated to create warm zone	Utilising grants and other assistance, work to ensure that living rooms, key bedrooms and kitchens are warm	Ongoing	Reduce the number of Category 1 hazards	From existing resource





# Uttlesford District Council

## Fast-track equality impact assessment (EqIA) tool

### What is this tool for?


This tool will help you to assess the impact of existing or new strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions on residents and staff. It will help you to deliver excellent services, by making sure that they reflect the needs of all members of the community and workforce.

### What should be equality impact assessed?

You only need to equality impact assess strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions that are **relevant** to equality. If you are not sure whether your activity is relevant to equality take the 'relevance test' on Page 9.

### How do I use the tool?

This tool is easy to use and you do not need expert knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgments based on evidence.

The tool uses a system of red flags  to give you an indication of whether or not your responses are identifying potential issues. Getting a red flag does not necessarily indicate a problem, but it does mean that your assessment is highlighting issues or gaps in data that may require further investigation or action.

*If there is insufficient space to answer a question, please use a separate sheet.*

General information	
1	Name of strategy, policy, project, contract or decision.
2	What is the overall purpose of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?
3	Who may be affected by the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?
4	Responsible department and Head of Division.
5	Are other departments or partners involved in delivery of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?
Gathering performance data	
6	Do you (or do you intend to) collect this monitoring data in relation to any of the following <u>diverse groups</u> ?

Private Sector Housing Strategy

Outlines the councils plans to maintain & improve PSH stock

- ☒ Residents
- ☐ Staff
- ☒ A specific client group/s e.g. linked by geographical location, social economic factors, age, disabilities, gender, transgender, race, religion or sexual orientation (please state)

Department: Environmental Health Service

Head of Division: Roz Millership

- ☐ No
- ☒ Yes (please state):
- Planning Policy Services UDC Property Services CAB/ ECC (Adult Social Care) Housing Board

- ☒ Age


☒ Disability
- ☐ Sex





☐ Race
- ☐ Gender Reassignment

☐ Sexual Orientation
- ☐ Religion & Belief




☐ Pregnancy and Maternity
- ☐ Marriage and Civil Partnerships

☒ Rural Isolation

7	How do you (or how do you intend to) monitor the impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<p>A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators or targets</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> User satisfaction</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uptake</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Consultation or involvement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce monitoring data</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> External verification</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligibility criteria</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None </p>

Analysing performance data	
8	<p>Consider the impact the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision has already achieved, measured by the monitoring data you collect. Is the same impact being achieved for diverse groups as is being achieved across the population or workforce as a whole?</p> <p> <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes *  <input type="checkbox"/> No*  <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient   <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable  </p> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p> <p>The strategy is broad and its impact will be the same for diverse groups and the wider population</p>
9	<p>Is uptake of any services, benefits or opportunities associated with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision generally representative of <u>diverse groups</u>?</p> <p> <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes *  <input type="checkbox"/> No*  <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient   <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable  </p> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p> <p>In the context of DFG, these apply to registered disabled persons only. Assistance &amp; other grants are available for those meeting eligibility criteria.</p>


## Checking delivery arrangements

10	<p>You now need to check the accessibility of your delivery arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlinks for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.</p> <p><i>If assessing a proposed strategy, policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.</i></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Yes</th> <th style="text-align: center;">No </th> <th style="text-align: center;">N/A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why giving details of any legal justification.</p> <p>Consultation – occurred in 2016 with stakeholders &amp; specialist staff. The draft strategy and outcome of the consultation was brought to the attention of the Housing Board.</p>		Yes	No 	N/A	The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>														

## Checking information and communication arrangements

11 You now need to check the accessibility of your information and communication arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlink for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.

*If assessing a proposed strategy policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.*



	Yes	No 	N/A
<a href="#">Customer contact</a> mechanisms are accessible to all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic, web-based and paper information is accessible to all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publicity campaigns are inclusive of all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Images and text in documentation are representative and inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why, giving details of any legal justification. The strategy will be made available on the Councils' website and hard copies will be available on request.











## Future Impact

12 Think about what your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision is aiming to achieve over the long term and the ways in which it will seek to do this. This is your opportunity to take a step back and consider the practical implementation of your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision in the future. As well as checking that people from diverse groups will not be inadvertently excluded from or disadvantaged by any proposed activities, it is also an opportunity to think about how you can maximize your impact, reach as many people as possible and really make a difference to the lives of everyone in Uttlesford regardless of their background or circumstances.

Is it likely to inadvertently exclude or disadvantage any diverse groups?

- ☒ No
- ☐ Yes \* 
- ☐ Insufficient evidence 

\*Please state any potential issues

	Identified.										
<b>Improvement actions</b>											
13	<p>If your assessment has highlighted any potential issues or red flags, can these be easily addressed?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  <input type="checkbox"/> No*   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable         </p> <p><i>*If Yes, please describe your proposed action/s, intended impact, monitoring arrangements implementation date and lead officer:</i></p>										
<b>Making a judgement – conclusions and next steps</b>											
14	<p>Following this fast-track assessment, please confirm the following:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified         </td> <td>  </td> <td>No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above</td> </tr> <tr> <td> <input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.         </td> <td>  </td> <td>Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).</td> </tr> <tr> <td> <input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.         </td> <td>  </td> <td>Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).</td> </tr> </table>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified		No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above	<input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.		Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).	<input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.		Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified		No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above									
<input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.		Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).									
<input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.		Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).									
15	<p>If you have any additional comments to make, please include here.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> None									

<b>Completion</b>		
16	Name and job title (Assessment lead officer)	Marcus Watts, Principal Environmental Health Officer
	Name/s of any assisting officers and people consulted during assessment:	Faye Butler, Senior Health Improvement Officer
	Date:	16/5/17
	Date of next review:	16/5/18
	<i>For new strategies, policies, projects,</i>	

contracts or decisions this should be one year from implementation.	
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**When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.**

### Additional evidence gathering and action planning

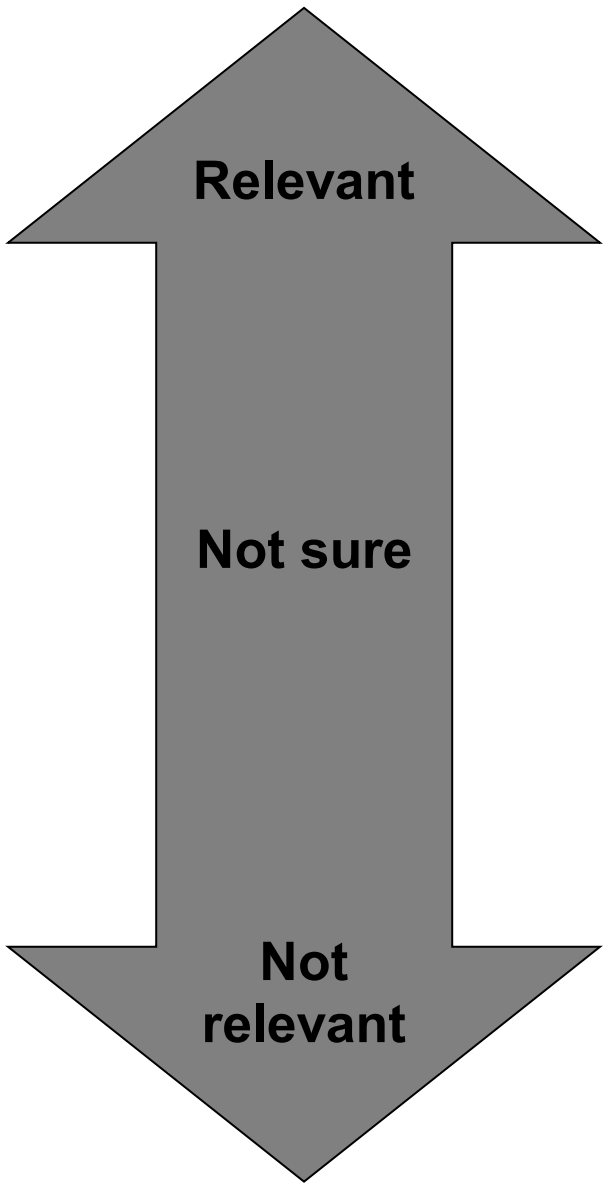
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 17 | <p>If your fast-track assessment indicated that <b>complex issues</b> or <b>inequalities</b> were identified which could not be easily addressed, or you had <b>insufficient evidence</b> to make a judgement, you need to undertake an additional evidence gathering and action planning process. This is described below:</p> <p>(a) Gather and analyse relevant additional evidence (which may include engagement with diverse groups), to address gaps in your knowledge, enhance understanding of the issues and inform options for addressing these. Additional evidence is likely to include any or all of the following:</p> <p><b>Data gathering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Demographic profiles of Uttlesford</li> <li>■ Data about the physical environment, e.g. housing market, workforce, employment, education and learning provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces</li> <li>■ Results of local needs analysis</li> <li>■ Results of staff surveys</li> <li>■ Research reports on the needs/experience of diverse groups</li> <li>■ National best practice/guidance</li> <li>■ Benchmarking with other organisations</li> </ul> <p><b>Consultation and involvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Existing consultation findings that may provide insight into the issues</li> <li>■ New, specially commissioned engagement with diverse groups</li> <li>■ Expert views of stakeholders/employers organisations representing diverse groups</li> <li>■ Advice from experts or national organisations</li> <li>■ Specialist staff/in-house expertise.</li> </ul> <p>(b) For advice on evidence gathering or engagement with diverse groups please contact your departmental equality lead officer. Discuss any proposed consultation with your departmental equality lead officer to ensure it is coordinated with related exercises across the Council as a whole.</p> <p>(c) Use your evidence gathering, analysis and engagement with diverse groups to develop options for addressing inequalities or unmet need, consulting with relevant management teams, Members, strategic groups/partners where necessary to confirm proposed actions and resource issues.</p> <p>(d) When options for addressing any issues are agreed, if these cannot be implemented immediately integrate them into the appropriate service plan/strategic plan/multi-</p> |
|----|---|

	<p>agency strategy, so that it is clear how they will be delivered, when they will be delivered, by whom and how this will be monitored.</p> <p>(e) Identify how the continuing implementation and impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision on diverse groups in Uttlesford will be monitored.</p> <p>(f) Having gathered evidence re-evaluate this assessment.</p> <p>(g) Following completion of the above, please confirm the following:</p>	
18	<p><b>The conclusions and agreed proposals:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Summary of evidence gathered, including any internal and external consultation (please include full document titles and dates of publication and consultation for audit purposes):</b></p>	
	<p><b>Date proposals to be implemented and lead officer:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Where implementation is not immediate, please state in which service plan or strategy the proposed actions will be integrated:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Monitor arrangements (please include full details for audit purposes):</b></p>	
<p><b>Additional Comments</b></p>		
19	<p><b>If you have any additional comments to make, please include here:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p>
<p><b>Completion</b></p>		
20	<p><b>Name and job title (Lead Officer):</b></p> <p>Name/s of other assisting officers:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Date of next review (if any):</p>	
<p>When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of</p>		



# The relevance test

Use the quick guide below to decide whether or not your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision is relevant to equality:

	<p><b>Relevant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The strategy, policy, project contract or decision will impact on ‘people’ (residents, staff, or people who work in or visit the area)’.</li> <li>■ It may benefit some people or communities and not others (community cohesion)</li> </ul> <p><b>Not sure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The service is a support function or administrative</li> <li>■ There is no obvious impact on ‘people’ but the strategy, policy, project contract or decision is of major scale and or significance to the Council’s activities</li> <li>■ Insufficient evidence</li> </ul> <p><b>Not relevant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No discernable impact on people.</li> <li>■ The service is a support function or administrative</li> </ul>
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If you are not sure whether your strategy, project or decision is relevant to equality, ask , a member of the Council’s Equality Standard Working Group Officer for advice.  
Tel.

## Ensuring your premises for delivery are easily accessible

**In order to ensure that your premises for delivery are accessible to disabled customers and staff, older people and people with small children you should comply with the principles of accessible design summarised below.**

In some cases, and for legitimate reasons, this may not be possible. Where this is the case you can still ensure your premises are accessible if you make appropriate reasonable adjustments. For guidance on reasonable adjustments see the 'Key contacts' section at the foot of this page.

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### Level access

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Is there level access into and inside your premises? This means no steps, steep slopes or lips on doorways.

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### Ramp or lift

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If there are steps, can you fit a ramp or install a lift so disabled customers and staff and parents with pushchairs can get in? To be safe ramps must:

- Have a gradient of 1:20 or less
- Have a handrail
- Be firmly fixed to the ground

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### Bell or buzzer and alarms

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Can you install a bell or buzzer outside and go out to disabled customers or staff when they ring? Do you have a visual as well as audible alarm?

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### Door handles

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Are door handles easy to grip and easy to reach for customers or staff who are wheelchair users?

- Use an easy grip handle in a contrasting colour
- Install a magnetic device to hold doors open
- Are door locks easy to handle (not fiddly)?

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### Doormats

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Are any doormats flush with the floor? Avoid bristle matting – it can be difficult for customers or staffs who are wheelchair users.

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## **Colour contrast**

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Is there a colour contrast between your floors, walls, ceilings and doors? Use matt paint in contrasting colours or different tones.

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## **Corridors and aisles**

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Are corridors and aisles clear enough for a wheelchair or pushchair to pass through?

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## **Seating**

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Is there somewhere to sit down if customers or staffs have to queue or wait?

- Have seating with and without armrests, if possible.
- Leave space for a wheelchair user to pull up alongside a seated companion.

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## **Height**

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Are all key facilities on the main floor? Are popular products on a mid-height shelf, and easy to reach from a wheelchair? Provide a lap tray or clipboard if a lower counter section is not available.

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## **Lighting**

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Is it easy for visually impaired customers or staff to see everything they need to?

- Make sure your premises are well lit.
- Mark corners, steps and counter edges with high visibility tape so they can be easily seen.
- Keep highly reflective surfaces away from signs to avoid glare.

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## **Guide dogs**

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If you normally ban animals, you should consider relaxing this for assistance dogs. Remember, it is not just visually impaired people who use assistance dogs.

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## **Signs and labels**

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Are signs and labels short and easy to read? Are Induction loops available?

- Use large clear text (for example, 24-point text for shelf bar labels)
- Use contrasting colours (for example, black text on a white or yellow background)
- Make sure signs are at a suitable height.

Use visual or picture symbols as well as words, if appropriate.

## Key contacts

For further advice or information please contact Kerry Vinton.

Email: [kvinton@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:kvinton@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01799 510449

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017

**9**

**Title:** Home Repairs Assistance Policy

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Julie Redfern

**Key decision:** Yes

---

### **Summary**

1. This report seeks Cabinet approval of the new Home Repairs Assistance policy.
2. The new policy sets out how the council intends to provide a range of assistance for homeowners and has been influenced by feedback from consultation carried out with the partners, interested stakeholders and members.
3. The policy changes the primary focus of assistance from grants to loan products. It also provides a wider range of assistance and gives officers greater flexibility to address poor housing conditions for the most vulnerable in society.

### **Recommendations**

4. Cabinet is requested to:
  - a) approve the new Home Repairs Assistance Policy 2017, attached as Appendix A to this report, to be implemented with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017
  - b) approve transition arrangements for customers who are being dealt with under the existing Policy that will ensure applications submitted prior to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 are honoured in accordance with the former policy conditions

### **Financial Implications**

5. None – The policy seeks to maximise the use of existing resources made available through the capital programme and does not require additional resource. Over time it is anticipated that the increased recycling of loans back into the housing capital pot will serve to increase available resources.
6. In addition, the service area will look to measure outcomes of its intervention and apply for additional funding streams to support additional work.

### **Background Papers**

7. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the council's website:
  - Uttlesford District Council Housing Assistance Repairs Policy

- BRE Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database for Uttlesford District Council – 2015
- BRE A Quantitative Health Impact Assessment: The cost of private sector housing and prospective housing interventions in Uttlesford District Council - 2015
- Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy 2017-2021
- UDC's Corporate Plan 2017-2021

### Published Papers

- The District Council Contribution To Public Health: A Time Of Challenge And Opportunity – The Kings Fund – 2015

### Impact

8.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation with partners and interested stakeholders has taken place
Community Safety	A positive impact on community safety will arise from the adoption of the policy
Equalities	Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out
Health and Safety	No impact on employee health and safety
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Home Repairs Assistance Policy fulfils the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002, for the Council to publish a policy regarding the types of grants it will award and their criteria, amounts and the circumstances under which they might have to be repaid. The approach proposed will also help to meet the requirements of the Care Act 2014. Offers of assistance will be carried out in accordance with the Policy and existing legislative framework
Sustainability	The policy is in keeping with government and Council's strategic aims to improve private sector housing stock
Ward-specific impacts	No specific impact - information is available

	for all wards.
Workforce/Workplace	Housing Health and Communities – within existing resources

## Situation

9. The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 ('RRO') gives the Council wide discretionary powers to provide financial and other assistance for repair, improvement and adaption of homes. Local authorities can provide assistance, directly or indirectly, in any form, and this can be unconditional or subject to certain conditions that the authority wishes to impose.
10. The local authority may not exercise the power unless they have adopted a policy for the provision of assistance and given public notice of the adoption of the policy. The local authority must then exercise the power in accordance with their written policy.
11. The existing Home Repairs Assistance Policy was first published in 2003 and offers discretionary grant assistance to homeowner occupiers to carry out essential repairs. All applicants need to be on a means tested benefit to receive the grant, which is up to £3,000. A further loan is available for £7,000. The policy was amended in 2008 to include thermal insulation and energy efficiency measures in mobile homes, and to increase the maximum grant in circumstances where repair works are also undertaken from £3,000 to £5,000.
12. With the changes brought about by the Care Act 2014 and recent evidence on the cost of poor quality housing on the NHS (Estimated to be 2.5 billion per year), the existing policy does not reflect current thinking. A change in policy will broaden the Council's ability to work with partners and deliver on a variety of schemes and initiatives to improve poor housing that ultimately aims to improve the health and wellbeing of residents.
13. There is a growing body of evidence detailing the many ways that inadequate housing adversely affects health. The condition of a property has the potential to have both direct and indirect impacts on physical, social and mental health. From indoor dampness and mould, physical injuries from falls, cold homes, overcrowding to household carbon monoxide poisoning, the links between poor housing and health are many and complex.
14. Government has made it clear that it expects homeowners to look after their properties and maintain them, as their properties are likely to be their most valuable asset. However, it accepts that intervention will be necessary in certain circumstances, such as to protect health and safety where owners cannot afford to carry out the works
15. In delivering this policy, resources are to be targeted at those most disadvantaged in society through social deprivation, disability, age, vulnerability or infirmity. Giving priority to low income and vulnerable persons, the policy

provides a degree of flexibility to make the most efficient use of available resources and allows the Council to offer a greater range of assistance.

16. The Policy sets out a range of offers to assist private sector homeowners and links in with the Corporate Plan, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Private Sector Housing Strategy.
17. In delivering the Policy, the Council aims to work with our partners, utilise stock modelling information and target the most disadvantaged people in society with the poorest housing conditions.
18. The draft policy document was circulated to a range of partners and interested stakeholders. No adverse comments were received about the policy.
19. The policy makes provision for a number of types of assistance, namely:

<b>Assistance Title</b>	<b>Value</b>
<b>Safety, Security and Emergency Repair Grant</b>	<b>£500</b>
<b>Home Improvement Loan</b>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>Winter Resilience Assistance Service Grant</b>	<b>£500</b>
<b>Winter Resilience Assistance Loan</b>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>PLACE Scheme Assistance</b>	<b>Up to £50,000</b>
<b>Disabled Facilities Grant (mandatory)</b>	<b>£30,000</b>
<b>Disabled Facilities Loan (discretionary top up loan assistance)</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>Disabled Garden Service Grant</b>	<b>£300</b>
<b>Park Homes Energy Efficiency Grant</b>	<b>£3,000</b>

20. The main change is the introduction of a range of interest free loans, which will cover home improvement works up to £5,000 and will result in a charge being placed on the property.
21. In the case of Disabled Facilities Grants (the only mandatory grant remaining) any costs, which exceed the mandatory maximum statutory limit (currently £30,000), will be provided by means of an interest free loan and will result in a charge being placed on the property.
22. It is anticipated that recycled loans will, in future, provide additional resources for the improvement of the private sector stock, although in reality the individual loans will be paid back over a period of several years as properties are sold.
23. The Council is required to give public notice of the adoption of the policy. It is proposed that the new policy will be implemented with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017.

24. A detailed set of procedures for applying the various elements of the policy will be prepared, together with standard documentation including application forms and letters that meet the good standards of customer care. In addition, a suite of information leaflets will be produced which aim to give information on all of the proposed forms of assistance. This information will also be available on the Council's web site.
25. The transition between the existing and the new policies will need to be managed as there are residents currently making applications under the existing policy. It is proposed to allow residents who are already in discussion with the Council about potential assistance until the end of June 2017 to make a valid application, which can then be considered under the terms of the existing Policy. Any applications received after 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 will be considered under the new policy.
26. Commentary on the level of assistance awarded and health outcomes will be presented to the Council's Housing Board on an annual basis.
27. The policy will be reviewed annually and if necessary updated to reflect changing priorities.

## **Risk Analysis**

28.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Current policy does not reflect changes brought about by the Care Act 2014	2 The policy has been regularly reviewed however it now needs a full re-write	3 Vulnerable people continue to live in poor housing	The policy has been fully reviewed and re-written introducing new deliverable initiatives to improve poor housing

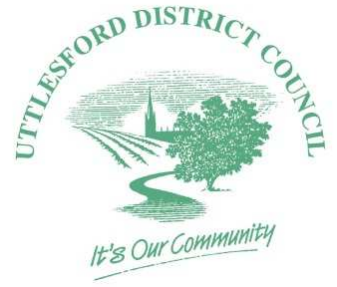
1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.





# **UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **HOME REPAIRS ASSISTANCE POLICY**

## **Executive Summary**

This policy makes use of the powers provided under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 to offer a range of assistance measures to better meet the needs of low income and vulnerable groups.

The Council's view is that it is primarily the responsibility of homeowners to maintain their own property but accepts some homeowners, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable, do not have the necessary resources to keep their homes in safe and good repair. This policy reflects this safety net approach and provides a range of flexible offers of assistance to support the Council's Health and Wellbeing agenda.

In particular it focuses on:

- Providing a range of adaptations to meet individual residents needs to enable them to live safely and independently at home.
- Maximising the housing stock to enable long term empty homes to be brought back in to use.
- Improving the energy efficiency of properties and ensuring the maximum use of the private sector housing stock.

All grants, loans & assistance are available subject to the eligibility criteria and conditions. The Director of Housing Health and Communities will consider exceptional circumstances outside the scope of the policy.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 requires local authorities to develop a policy for providing households with financial assistance to improve their homes.
- 1.2 This policy sets out what assistance UDC is able to offer to support residents, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable, who do not have resources to live in decent and suitable properties for their needs. Assistance is available to support the existing statutory Disability Facilities Grant (DFG), make homes safer for vulnerable people, improve substandard homes and improve heating and energy efficiency.
- 1.3 To ensure the longevity of this policy and in keeping with on-going financial pressures facing the Council, the assistance provided in this policy will be a combination of grants and loans. By providing more loans, it ensures sustainability, allowing assistance to be recovered and re-used at some point in the future.
- 1.4 This policy updates and replaces the Uttlesford Housing Repair Assistance policy approved by Cabinet in 2003, then amended in 2008 to include thermal insulation and energy efficiency measures in mobile homes.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 There is a growing body of evidence detailing the many ways that inadequate housing adversely affects health. The condition of a property has the potential to have both direct and indirect impacts on physical, social and mental health. From indoor dampness and mould, physical injuries from falls, cold homes, overcrowding to household carbon monoxide poisoning, the links between poor housing and health are many and complex.
- 2.2 According to the British Research Establishment (BRE), it is now widely accepted that the calculated cost of poor housing to the NHS is approximately £1.4 billion. This represents first year treatment costs of those living in the poorest 15% of the housing stock. If expanded to include all homes the figure rises to approximately £2.5 billion.
- 2.3 In May 2015 the Council commissioned the BRE to report on the condition of housing stock within the district. The resulting stock model combined information on property type, age, construction, insulation and heating method to give an overall assessment of the condition of property down to street level. The model also provides the Council with information on the economic status of the residents.
- 2.4 An indication of the condition of the housing stock can be gained by the number of category 1 hazards estimated to be in the district. Category 1 hazards are defined within the provisions of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This risk based evaluation tool was introduced under the Housing Act 2004. There are 29 categories of housing hazards identified with HHSRS and when assessed separately they can be judged to be 'serious', with a 'high score', deemed to be a category 1 hazard. All other 'non serious' hazards are

called category 2 hazards. The risk assessment looks at the likelihood of an incident arising from the condition of the property and the likely harmful outcome. If a local authority discovers category 1 hazards in a home, it has a duty to take the appropriate action.

- 2.5 Based on 2015 modelled data, 22% (6314) of private sector dwellings in the district have category 1 hazards present, this compares with 19% regionally and 17% nationally. 27% of properties in the private rented sector are thought to have category 1 hazards.
- 2.5 Excess cold is the most common category 1 hazard found in 18% of owner occupied stock and 22% of private rented dwellings.
- 2.6 In recognition of the range of housing problems within the private sector, there is a need to take a long term strategic view to help to improve the health, safety, and wellbeing of residents.
- 2.7 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 requires local authorities to develop a policy for providing households with financial assistance to improve their homes. Every local authority is required to adopt and publish such a policy. This policy contains the assistance that the Council provides together with the key conditions. Eligibility criteria are also outlined. However, due to on-going changes to benefit systems and methods of means testing, the criteria will not be set within this policy but will be determined by officers and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it meets the needs of those considered most vulnerable.
- 2.8 The aim of this policy is to support residents in improving their health and wellbeing by addressing problems with substandard and/or unsuitable homes that do not meet individual needs. The Housing Assistance function has a role in supporting the wider adult social care prevention agenda; specifically, those aims of the Care Act 2014 to promote wellbeing, independence and prevent or delay care and support needs.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1 Legislation does not restrict policy or its forms of assistance to private sector homeowners alone. However, no forms of discretionary assistance are available for Council or housing association tenants, as other mechanisms are in place to improve their homes.

### **4. Policy Detail**

- 4.1 Uttlesford District Council is required to meet its mandatory requirements in respect of Disabled Facilities Grant and will seek to maximise resources to assist as many eligible clients as possible in obtaining the necessary and appropriate adaptations to their homes. To meet this objective, the Council will place charges upon the property where the grant exceeds £5,000, up to a charge limit of £10,000. This only applies to owner occupied households and the charge will last for 10 years.

- 4.2 The withdrawal of support in delivering disabled adaptations by the Papworth Trust in April has created a need to offer assistance for individuals that wish to pursue privately funded adaptations. The Council will offer assistance to these individuals and will look to recover the costs associated with these works. For those applying for assistance, a fee of 15% of the total cost of works is applied to oversee these adaptations.
- 4.3 The Council will also provide discretionary assistance to meet priorities outlined below. However, the availability of discretionary assistance from Uttlesford District Council will always be dependent upon resources being available. In recognition of the above and the findings of the BRE stock profiles, this policy has prioritised assistance to:
1. The safety and security of older persons and other vulnerable groups, living in their home
  2. Reduction in the cases of fuel poverty
  3. Reduction of category 1 hazards, (with associated health related benefits) & major adaptations for people with disabilities
  4. Reduction in the number of non-decent homes, primarily with loan assistance
  5. Reduction of empty homes
  6. The improvement in the thermal efficiency of the housing stock
- 4.4 One of the driving forces of this policy will be to promote independence, enabling people to remain in their own homes. Continuing from the existing good work of the Council, this policy will link in with the Disabled Facilities Grants system and will look to diversify the work of the service and forge closer links with the NHS and adult social care. This policy also provides assistance to remedy fall hazards in the home and to provide adaptations to allow safe access in and around the home.

## 5. Assistance Summary

- 5.1 The table below provides the list and value associated with this Home Repairs Assistance Policy. A summary of the specific forms of assistance within this policy is in more detail within Appendix A.

Assistance Title	Value
Safety, Security and Emergency Repair Grant	£500
Home Improvement Loan	£5,000
Winter Resilience Assistance Service Grant	£500
Winter Resilience Assistance Works Loan	£5,000
PLACE Scheme Assistance	Up to £50,000

<b>Disabled Facilities Grant (mandatory)</b>	<b>£30,000</b>
<b>Disabled Facilities Loan (discretionary top up loan assistance)</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>Disabled Gardening Service</b>	<b>£300</b>
<b>Park Homes Energy Efficiency Grant</b>	<b>£3,000</b>

- 5.2 Specific housing assistance eligibility and conditions are available separately on request from the Environmental Health Service. The key grant and loan conditions are detailed below.

## **6. Grant and Loan Conditions**

- 6.1 Due to on-going financial pressures on the Council, the majority of assistance will be provided as a loan, as this will be recovered or recycled in time.
- 6.2 The repayment conditions are at zero% interest rate, in the form of a land registry charge. Financial assistance is normally returned to the Council when the applicant is in a better position to do so, such as through the sale of the property. Alternative payments can also be arranged by agreement. There may be exemptions to repayment conditions where the property is sold to enable the client to move into a care home or with relative carers. Decisions will be based on a case for case basis and will be agreed by the Principal Environmental Health Officer.
- 6.3 There are exceptions to the repayment of assistance. Firstly, where the Council provides funding for the most urgent cases, to help the most vulnerable households to resolve safety or security issues. The second is the provision of winter resilience services to tackle immediate problems associated with the onset of winter and disabled gardening support services. Under these situations, the Council will define the level of assistance and will look at delivery through handyman/gardening services. Exceptions will also be awarded to Park Homes to top up other publically funded grant schemes. Grants of up to £3,000 are to be made available for eligible households on Park Homes as loans cannot be charged to Park Homes. Although charges cannot be placed against Park Homes, recipients of assistance will be required to sign an undertaking to repay the funding provided if they sell their home within 5 years. There will be exemptions where moving for health or care reasons.
- 6.4 To administer all types of assistance under this policy, fees will be charged for the assistance provided. In most cases, fees are included in the assistance moneys as a percentage of the assistance amount. Fees will be applied at 5% of the full costs of the awarded grant where application, tendering and works are managed by the applicant. For all other applications, where overseen by Council Officers a fee of 10% for the costs of the works will be applied to the grant. Land registry fees are also included in the assistance moneys.

## **7. Capital Resources**

- 7.1 The availability of assistance from the Council will always be dependent upon the finite resources available. These resources are available from the Housing Assistance Budget and the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant Budget. Both budgets are dependent on capital funding, being a combination of Council Home Repairs Assistance funding and ECC Capital grant funding taken from ECC Better Care Fund.
- 7.2 PLACE grants and loans are paid from a fund held by a consortium of six local authorities as part of a scheme to refurbish and renovate empty homes so that they are suitable for re-occupation. The money available for grants is finite and may not be available for the duration of this policy. Loan moneys will be recirculated as available.

## **8. Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant Budget**

- 8.1 Legislation enables some recovery of DFG assistance in specific circumstances under the provisions of Disabled Facilities Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008. Under this legislation, the Council imposes a charge upon the property for ten years in all owner occupation cases where the grant exceeds £5,000 (for the part of the grant that exceeds £5,000), up to a charge limit of £10,000.
- 8.2 Upon sale of the property within ten years of the grant completion, the presumption will be to recover the cost of the adaptation. However, in accordance with formal government guidance, the individual circumstances of the owner will be considered.

## **9. Applicant Support**

- 9.1 The Council does not have the resources to replicate services provided by Home Improvement Agencies. However, it is recognised that there is a need for a level of client support in helping complete the various forms required for financial assistance. Many applicants are vulnerable and/or elderly and officers will look to provide an appropriate level of support to ensure that the process for applying for assistance progresses in a satisfactory manner.

## **10. Complex Cases and Hardship**

- 10.1 It is considered that most cases will be overseen by officers. However, on occasion, unforeseen problems associated with complex cases arise that may require an alternative approach. These cases as well as particular cases of hardship may require support and assistance beyond the assistance outlined within this policy. Where such unusual cases occur, the details will be discussed with officers and team managers and the Assistant Director Housing Health and Communities. Only in exceptional circumstances will assistance be considered beyond that set out within Appendix A.

## **11. Appeals about Decisions in Individual Cases**

11.1 Appeals about how the policy is operated in individual cases, for example, where an enquiry or application for assistance is refused, will be considered initially by the service manager. Where this does not resolve the case in question to the satisfaction of the person concerned, the appeal case will subsequently be considered by the appeal panel consisting of the Assistant Director Housing Health and Communities, the Service Manager and an Environmental Health Officer.

11.2 Appeals will be considered only on the following grounds:

- That the policy has not been applied correctly in the case in question, for example there has been a mistake, or
- That the case in question is exceptional in some way that justifies an exception to the general policy.

11.3 Appeals will not be considered on the grounds that the appellant simply disagrees with the policy. However, any written comments and complaints about the policy will also be considered by the service manager.

11.4 The decision of the Appeal Panel is final. Decisions will be notified to appellants in writing within 14 days from receipt of the written appeal.

## **12. Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements**

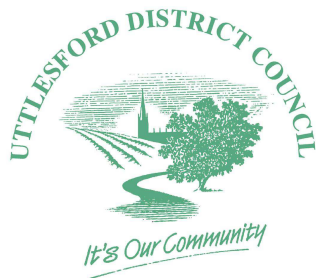
12.1 The success of this policy is monitored through performance indicators relating to category 1 hazards reported to the Housing Board on an annual basis.

12.2 Satisfaction surveys are also to be sent to clients to understand the quality of the service provided, outcomes achieved and to monitor the diversity of clients.

## Appendix A – Summary of Assistance

Assistance Title	Grant Loan or Assistance	Brief Outline of Assistance	Max Awarded	Availability	Eligibility
<b>Safety &amp; Security &amp; Emergency repair grant</b>	Grant/Assistance	To make a property, secure and to pay for emergency works. Primarily aimed to address urgent/distressing circumstances.	Works up to the value of £500.00	Once every 3 years	Eligible for income related benefit or in receipt of income related benefit
<b>Home Repairs</b>	Loan	To remedy Category 1 hazards, serious disrepair and/or essential works	£5,000.00	Once every 3 years	Eligible for income related benefits or in receipt of income related benefits.
<b>Winter Resilience Assistance Service</b>	Assistance	A series of quick fix measures provided by a handyman service to tackle immediate problems associated with the onset of winter. Measure to combat fuel poverty and/or poor thermally efficient homes. To include 50% discount contribution towards boiler servicing	Works up to the value of £400.00	Once every 3 years	In receipt of income related benefit or based on fuel poverty assessment
<b>Winter Resilience Assistance Works</b>	Loan	To pay for energy efficiency works such as central heating boilers, radiators, insulation works etc. Intended to remedy fuel poverty. Works may attract external funding.	£5,000.00	One off	Constrained to those on income related benefits or based on fuel poverty assessment.
<b>Disabled Facilities Grants</b>	Grant/Loan	Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants will be assessed and paid under the provisions of Chapter 1 of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 as amended	£30,000	One each year	The DFG is subject to a test of financial resources. The grant for the adaptation is a maximum of £30,000, less any financially assessed contribution. Repayment conditions apply, in particular where the grant is for more than £5,000 but only for a maximum charge of £10,000.
<b>Disabled Facilities Grants (Discretionary top up loan)</b>	Loan	Discretionary repayable grant to “top up” the DFG.	£10,000	One off	Available for owner occupiers only. Assessed on individual basis with recommendation from Adult Social Care
<b>Disabled Gardening Services</b>	Grant	Grant contribution towards gardening services to facilitate accessibility & prevent crime	£300	One each year	Eligible for or in receipt of income related disability benefit
<b>Park Homes Energy Efficiency grant</b>	Grant	To address cat 1 disrepair and/or energy efficiency measures	£3000	One off	Subject to means testing
<b>PLACE Scheme</b>	Lease agreement (Grant) or Loan	Grant available to bring the dwelling up to the government's Decent Homes Standard in return for a lease arrangement.  Loan to allow a dwelling to be renovated for sale, whereupon the loan is repaid, or made available for letting, repaying the loan through rental income. The owner has full control over future occupation of the dwelling	Up to £50,000	One off	Any home owner in possession of a property vacant for a period greater than 6mths. PLACE terms and conditions apply





# Uttlesford District Council

## Fast-track equality impact assessment (EqIA) tool

### What is this tool for?


This tool will help you to assess the impact of existing or new strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions on residents and staff. It will help you to deliver excellent services, by making sure that they reflect the needs of all members of the community and workforce.

### What should be equality impact assessed?

You only need to equality impact assess strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions that are **relevant** to equality. If you are not sure whether your activity is relevant to equality take the 'relevance test' on Page 9.


### How do I use the tool?





This tool is easy to use and you do not need expert knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgments based on evidence.




The tool uses a system of red flags  to give you an indication of whether or not your responses are identifying potential issues. Getting a red flag does not necessarily indicate a problem, but it does mean that your assessment is highlighting issues or gaps in data that may require further investigation or action.

*If there is insufficient space to answer a question, please use a separate sheet.*

General information			
1	Name of strategy, policy, project, contract or decision.	Uttlesford Home Repairs Assistance Policy	
2	What is the overall purpose of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	Provides information on the level of housing assistance UDC will provide to improve housing conditions for low income and vulnerable households	
3	Who may be affected by the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A specific client group/s e.g. linked by geographical location, social economic factors, age, disabilities, gender, transgender, race, religion or sexual orientation (please state)	
4	Responsible department and Head of Division.	Department: Environmental Health Service Head of Division: Roz Millership	
5	Are other departments or partners involved in delivery of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (please state): Planning Policy Services(Climate Change Manager) UDC Property Services CAB/ ECC (Adult Social Care)	
Gathering performance data			
6	Do you (or do you intend to) collect this monitoring data in relation to any of the following <u>diverse groups</u> ?	<div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age           <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability         </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex           <input type="checkbox"/> Race         </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment           <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation         </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Religion &amp; Belief           <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and Maternity         </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage and Civil           <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural Isolation         </div>	

7	How do you (or how do you intend to) monitor the impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators or targets</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> User satisfaction</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uptake</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Consultation or involvement</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Workforce monitoring data</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Complaints</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> External verification</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligibility criteria</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state):</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> None </div>

Analysing performance data	
8	<p>Consider the impact the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision has already achieved, measured by the monitoring data you collect. Is the same impact being achieved for diverse groups as is being achieved across the population or workforce as a whole?</p> <p> <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes *  <input type="checkbox"/> No*  <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient   <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable  </p> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p> <p>Subject to eligibility criteria, concerning financial status &amp; disability, the Policy is open to all groups &amp; population.</p>
9	<p>Is uptake of any services, benefits or opportunities associated with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision generally representative of <u>diverse groups</u>?</p> <p> <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes *  <input type="checkbox"/> No*  <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient   <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable  </p> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p> <p>The Policy is designed to provide assistance for vulnerable groups. Therefore, eligibility criteria has been set. Those qualifying for assistance will need to provide evidence in support of their application.</p>


<b>Checking delivery arrangements</b>																							
10	<p>You now need to check the accessibility of your delivery arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlinks for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.</p> <p><i>If assessing a proposed strategy, policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.</i></p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th>Yes</th> <th>No </th> <th>N/A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why giving details of any legal justification.</p> <p>Consultation – Open consultation occurred using the consultation UDCs 'Your Council' website service. Specific engagement occurred with nominated stakeholders &amp; specialist staff.</p> <p>Participation – Assistance policy available to all, subject to meeting eligibility criteria.</p>	Yes	No 	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.			
Yes	No 	N/A																					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>																					
The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.																							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.																							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																					
<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.																							

## Checking information and communication arrangements

11 You now need to check the accessibility of your information and communication arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlink for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.

*If assessing a proposed strategy policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.*

[Customer contact](#) mechanisms are accessible to all.

Yes	No 	N/A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Electronic, web-based and paper information is accessible to all.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Publicity campaigns are inclusive of all.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Images and text in documentation are representative and inclusive of all.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why, giving details of any legal justification. Subject to eligibility, the assistance outlined within the Policy is available to all at any time, however to manage resources in delivering the assistance, a targetted approach will be adopted to deliver campaign material.


## Future Impact


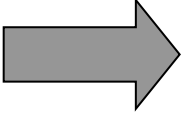
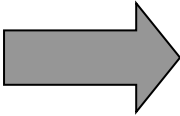
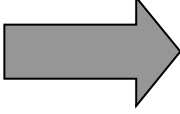
12 Think about what your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision is aiming to achieve over the long term and the ways in which it will seek to do this. This is your opportunity to take a step back and consider the practical implementation of your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision in the future. As well as checking that people from diverse groups will not be inadvertently excluded from or disadvantaged by any proposed activities, it is also an opportunity to think about how you can maximize your impact, reach as many people as possible and really make a difference to the lives of everyone in Uttlesford regardless of their background or circumstances.

Is it likely to inadvertently exclude or disadvantage any diverse groups?

☒ No

☐ Yes \* 

☐ Insufficient evidence 

	*Please state any potential issues identified.	
<b>Improvement actions</b>		
13	If your assessment has highlighted any potential issues or red flags, can these be easily addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No*  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <i>*If Yes, please describe your proposed action/s, intended impact, monitoring arrangements implementation date and lead officer:</i>
<b>Making a judgement – conclusions and next steps</b>		
14	Following this fast-track assessment, please confirm the following:	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified	 No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above
	<input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.	 Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.	 Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).
15	If you have any additional comments to make, please include here.	<input type="checkbox"/> None

<b>Completion</b>		
16	Name and job title (Assessment lead officer)	Marcus Watts, Principal Environmental Health Officer
	Name/s of any assisting officers and people consulted during assessment:	Faye Butler, Senior Health Improvement Officer
	Date:	16/5/17
	Date of next review:	16/5/18

*For **new** strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions this should be one year from implementation.*

**When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.**

### **Additional evidence gathering and action planning**

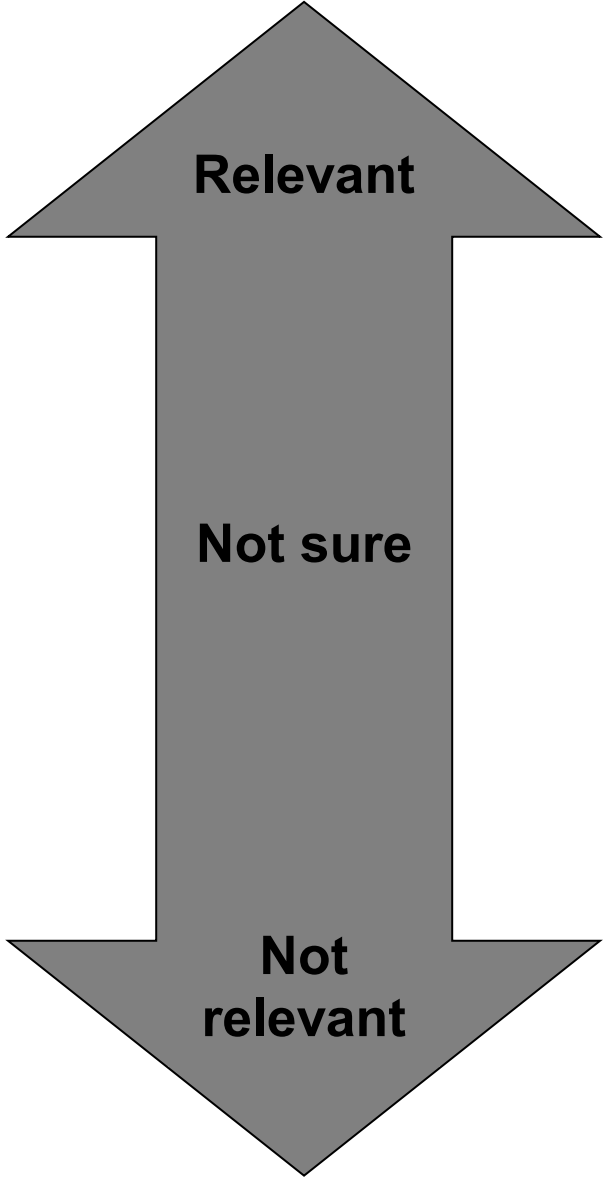
- 17 If your fast-track assessment indicated that **complex issues** or **inequalities** were identified which could not be easily addressed, or you had **insufficient evidence** to make a judgement, you need to undertake an additional evidence gathering and action planning process. This is described below:
- (a) Gather and analyse relevant additional evidence (which may include engagement with diverse groups), to address gaps in your knowledge, enhance understanding of the issues and inform options for addressing these. Additional evidence is likely to include any or all of the following:
- Data gathering**
- Demographic profiles of Uttlesford
  - Data about the physical environment, e.g. housing market, workforce, employment, education and learning provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces
  - Results of local needs analysis
  - Results of staff surveys
  - Research reports on the needs/experience of diverse groups
  - National best practice/guidance
  - Benchmarking with other organisations
- Consultation and involvement**
- Existing consultation findings that may provide insight into the issues
  - New, specially commissioned engagement with diverse groups
  - Expert views of stakeholders/employers organisations representing diverse groups
  - Advice from experts or national organisations
  - Specialist staff/in-house expertise.
- (b) For advice on evidence gathering or engagement with diverse groups please contact your departmental equality lead officer. Discuss any proposed consultation with your departmental equality lead officer to ensure it is coordinated with related exercises across the Council as a whole.
- (c) Use your evidence gathering, analysis and engagement with diverse groups to develop options for addressing inequalities or unmet need, consulting with relevant management teams, Members, strategic groups/partners where necessary to confirm proposed actions and resource issues.
- (d) When options for addressing any issues are agreed, if these cannot be implemented

	<p>immediately integrate them into the appropriate service plan/strategic plan/multi-agency strategy, so that it is clear how they will be delivered, when they will be delivered, by whom and how this will be monitored.</p> <p>(e) Identify how the continuing implementation and impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision on diverse groups in Uttlesford will be monitored.</p> <p>(f) Having gathered evidence re-evaluate this assessment.</p> <p>(g) Following completion of the above, please confirm the following:</p>	
18	<p><b>The conclusions and agreed proposals:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Summary of evidence gathered, including any internal and external consultation (please include full document titles and dates of publication and consultation for audit purposes):</b></p>	
	<p><b>Date proposals to be implemented and lead officer:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Where implementation is not immediate, please state in which service plan or strategy the proposed actions will be integrated:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Monitor arrangements (please include full details for audit purposes):</b></p>	
<p><b>Additional Comments</b></p>		
19	<p><b>If you have any additional comments to make, please include here:</b></p>	<p><input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> None</p>
<p><b>Completion</b></p>		
20	<p><b>Name and job title (Lead Officer):</b></p> <p>Name/s of other assisting officers:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Date of next review (if any):</p>	
<p><b>When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project,</b></p>		

contract or decision's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

# The relevance test

Use the quick guide below to decide whether or not your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision is relevant to equality:

 <p><b>Relevant</b></p> <p><b>Not sure</b></p> <p><b>Not relevant</b></p>	<p><b>Relevant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The strategy, policy, project contract or decision will impact on ‘people’ (residents, staff, or people who work in or visit the area)’.</li> <li>■ It may benefit some people or communities and not others (community cohesion)</li> </ul> <p><b>Not sure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The service is a support function or administrative</li> <li>■ There is no obvious impact on ‘people’ but the strategy, policy, project contract or decision is of major scale and or significance to the Council’s activities</li> <li>■ Insufficient evidence</li> </ul> <p><b>Not relevant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No discernable impact on people.</li> <li>■ The service is a support function or administrative</li> </ul>
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If you are not sure whether your strategy, project or decision is relevant to equality, ask , a member of the Council’s Equality Standard Working Group Officer for advice.  
Tel.

## Ensuring your premises for delivery are easily accessible

**In order to ensure that your premises for delivery are accessible to disabled customers and staff, older people and people with small children you should comply with the principles of accessible design summarised below.**

In some cases, and for legitimate reasons, this may not be possible. Where this is the case you can still ensure your premises are accessible if you make appropriate reasonable adjustments. For guidance on reasonable adjustments see the 'Key contacts' section at the foot of this page.

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### Level access

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Is there level access into and inside your premises? This means no steps, steep slopes or lips on doorways.

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### Ramp or lift

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If there are steps, can you fit a ramp or install a lift so disabled customers and staff and parents with pushchairs can get in? To be safe ramps must:

- Have a gradient of 1:20 or less
- Have a handrail
- Be firmly fixed to the ground

---

### Bell or buzzer and alarms

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Can you install a bell or buzzer outside and go out to disabled customers or staff when they ring? Do you have a visual as well as audible alarm?

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### Door handles

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Are door handles easy to grip and easy to reach for customers or staff who are wheelchair users?

- Use an easy grip handle in a contrasting colour
- Install a magnetic device to hold doors open
- Are door locks easy to handle (not fiddly)?

---

### Doormats

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Are any doormats flush with the floor? Avoid bristle matting – it can be difficult for customers or staffs who are wheelchair users.

---

## **Colour contrast**

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Is there a colour contrast between your floors, walls, ceilings and doors? Use matt paint in contrasting colours or different tones.

---

## **Corridors and aisles**

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Are corridors and aisles clear enough for a wheelchair or pushchair to pass through?

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## **Seating**

---

Is there somewhere to sit down if customers or staffs have to queue or wait?

- Have seating with and without armrests, if possible.
- Leave space for a wheelchair user to pull up alongside a seated companion.

---

## **Height**

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Are all key facilities on the main floor? Are popular products on a mid-height shelf, and easy to reach from a wheelchair? Provide a lap tray or clipboard if a lower counter section is not available.

---

## **Lighting**

---

Is it easy for visually impaired customers or staff to see everything they need to?

- Make sure your premises are well lit.
- Mark corners, steps and counter edges with high visibility tape so they can be easily seen.
- Keep highly reflective surfaces away from signs to avoid glare.

---

## **Guide dogs**

---

If you normally ban animals, you should consider relaxing this for assistance dogs. Remember, it is not just visually impaired people who use assistance dogs.

---

## **Signs and labels**

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Are signs and labels short and easy to read? Are Induction loops available?

- Use large clear text (for example, 24-point text for shelf bar labels)
- Use contrasting colours (for example, black text on a white or yellow background)
- Make sure signs are at a suitable height.

Use visual or picture symbols as well as words, if appropriate.

## Key contacts

For further advice or information please contact Kerry Vinton.

Email: [kvinton@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:kvinton@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01799 510449

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017

**10**

**Title:** Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Strategy

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Vic Ranger

**Key decision:** Yes

---

## **Summary**

1. This report seeks Cabinet endorsement and support for the Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
2. The Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Strategy (UHWS) is a partnership document, which sets a direction for the council and its partners to address a number of key health and wellbeing priorities for the district. These priorities have been identified, and will consequently be overseen, by the Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board. A delivery plan will be developed with partners in order to tackle the key areas of work in which the Health & Wellbeing Board has agreed to focus its attention.

## **Recommendations**

3. Cabinet is requested to endorse and support the Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Strategy, attached as Appendix A to this report, to be implemented with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017.

## **Financial Implications**

4. None currently. However, projects that are agreed to be taken forward by Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board will need to take account of existing resources currently made available by the Council and funding made available by Essex County Council Public Health.

## **Background Papers**

5. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the council's website. Priorities were identified using data and information captured within some of these documents as well as local partners.
  - Uttlesford Public Health Portrait, 2016
  - Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2016
  - Public Health England's Public Health Profile for Uttlesford, 2016
  - UDC's Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy, 2017
  - UDC's Housing Strategy, 2016
  - Building Research Establishment (BRE): A Quantitative Health Impact Assessment: The cost of private sector housing and prospective housing interventions in Uttlesford District Council, 2015

- Rural and Social Isolation in Uttlesford, CVSU, 2016
- Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action, Department of Health, 2016
- Improving the Public's Health: A Resource for Local Authorities, The King's Fund, 2013

## Impact

6.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation has taken place with relevant stakeholders
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	The strategy is likely to make a significant contribution to advancing equality for those with protected equality characteristics and address health inequality. Priorities for action are based on evidence and focus on improving health outcomes.  The Strategy has been equality impact assessed
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	Potential targeted work in identified Wards
Workforce/Workplace	Housing Health and Communities – within existing resources

## Situation

7. The UHWS has been prepared on behalf of Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board in response to increasing recognition that numerous organisations, including the council, can influence numerous factors associated with ill health and thus work collaboratively to prevent future health-related issues.
8. The strategy has been influenced by feedback from consultation carried out with the partners, interested stakeholders and members.
9. The UHWS, and subsequently the work of the board, focuses on preventative health measures. It takes into consideration key points raised within the Council's Housing Strategy adopted by the Council in 2016 and links with the Council's Corporate Plan and proposed Private Sector Housing Strategy.

10. The Strategy sets five key health and wellbeing priorities that seek to improve public health and wellbeing and prevent ill health via the work of the board:

- 1. Reduce and prevent overweight and obese children and adults**
- 2. Increase physical activity for all (particularly getting the inactive more active)**
- 3. Enable people to age well in Uttlesford (particular focus on falls prevention and dementia)**
- 4. Combat social and rural social isolation**
- 5. Combat winter pressures and fuel poverty**

11. Evidence supporting the priorities and aims of the strategy have been identified within the Uttlesford Public Health Portrait (2016) and trend data according to the Public Health Outcomes Framework.

12. The work that is undertaken by the board in order to address these priorities will, at times, overlap. It has also been recognised that key principles must be considered when focusing on particular projects:

- 1. Tackling inequalities – ensuring that key services are targeting those most in need**
- 2. Improving mental wellbeing – ensuring that mental health and wellbeing is regarded across all streams of work**
- 3. Focusing on prevention and early intervention**
- 4. Promoting self-care – encouraging and empowering individuals to take more responsibility for changing their own health-related behaviours**
- 5. Working in partnership and promoting community resilience**

13. The Council has received grant funding from Essex County Council Public Health in order to recognise the impact that working collaboratively to prevent ill health can have, and to subsequently take this work forward through local partnerships.

14. This Strategy sets the local direction for health prevention in order to shape the delivery plans, which will be agreed and taken forward by a range of key partners.

15. The development of a strategy is a key step in recognising the importance of working collaboratively towards preventative health matters.

## Risk Analysis

16.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Not having a strategy/delivery plan in place	1, The Strategy has already been developed in partnership with all interested parties. Work on the delivery plan is ongoing	3, By not having a strategic direction/focus in place, concentrated efforts and subsequent effectiveness of Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board may be reduced	Agreed strategy with a delivery plan that partners have signed up to in place
Uncertainty around future Public Health Grant funding	2 There could be a reduction in funding due to the uncertain economic climate	2 A reduction in funding could impact future commissioning intentions	Mitigating actions are being devised to minimise the effect on service delivery

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project

# Health and Wellbeing in Uttlesford



A Strategy for 2017-2022

Page 107

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**“Health is a state of complete physical,  
mental and social wellbeing and not  
merely the absence of disease or infirmity”**

**World Health Organisation, 1948**

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# Foreword

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As chair of the Local Strategic Partnership, I have pleasure in presenting Uttlesford's first Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

In Uttlesford, we are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities by working collaboratively with partners and local organisations and ensuring people feel empowered to achieve and maintain good health.

This new Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Uttlesford will be instrumental in initiating a clear direction for the Council and its partners to address a number of key health and wellbeing priorities for the district.

In Uttlesford, we are proud that the majority of our residents lead healthy, active and fulfilling lives, but as this document demonstrates, this good health is not geographically shared across the entire district.

Uttlesford has particular health issues, and contains pockets of deprivation that are detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the whole community. Rising levels of obesity are increasing pressures on local clinical and frontline services. In addition, according to our most recent Public Health Profile (2016), we are predicted to see a 32% rise in over 65s by 2025, which in itself will mean a greater need for social and clinical service provision.

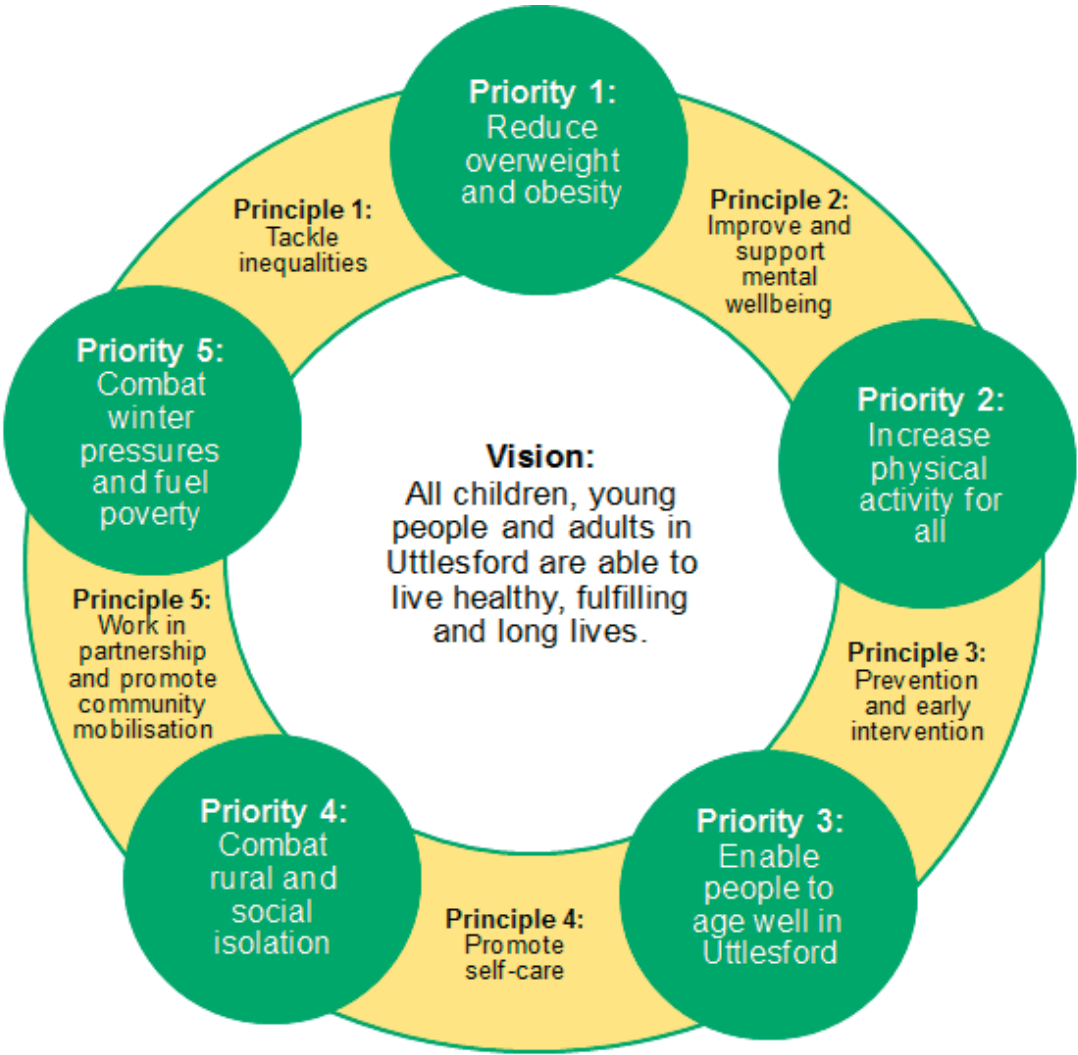
Never has it been more pertinent for the promotion of prevention, self-care and personal responsibility in regards to caring for our own health and wellbeing. Furthermore, more than ever before there is a need to focus our efforts to work in a more streamlined and joined-up manner, to strengthen our communities and address our local population's health and wellbeing needs.

Cllr Howard Rolfe  
Chair of Uttlesford Local Strategic Partnership

# Summary

The Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2017-2022) has been developed in partnership with members of the Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board. The Strategy presents a direction for the Council and partners to address an

agreed set of five key health and wellbeing priorities, with a particular focus on preventative health. The following diagram represents the key information as set out within this Strategy:



# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear direction for the Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board and its partners to address a number of key health and wellbeing priorities for the district.

Numerous factors can affect our health and wellbeing; issues such as unemployment, poor housing and feeling unsafe can impact upon our physical and mental health. Furthermore, our social networks, local economy and natural environments also play a key role.

These are collectively known as the wider determinants of health, as depicted in figure 1.

Our lifestyles influence the way our health develops over our lifetime. Research indicates that people who practice four key 'healthy' behaviours - not smoking, taking regular exercise, eating five portions of fruit and vegetables a day and drinking alcohol within recommended limits, stay healthy for longer and live on average 14 years more than people with none of these behaviours<sup>1</sup>.

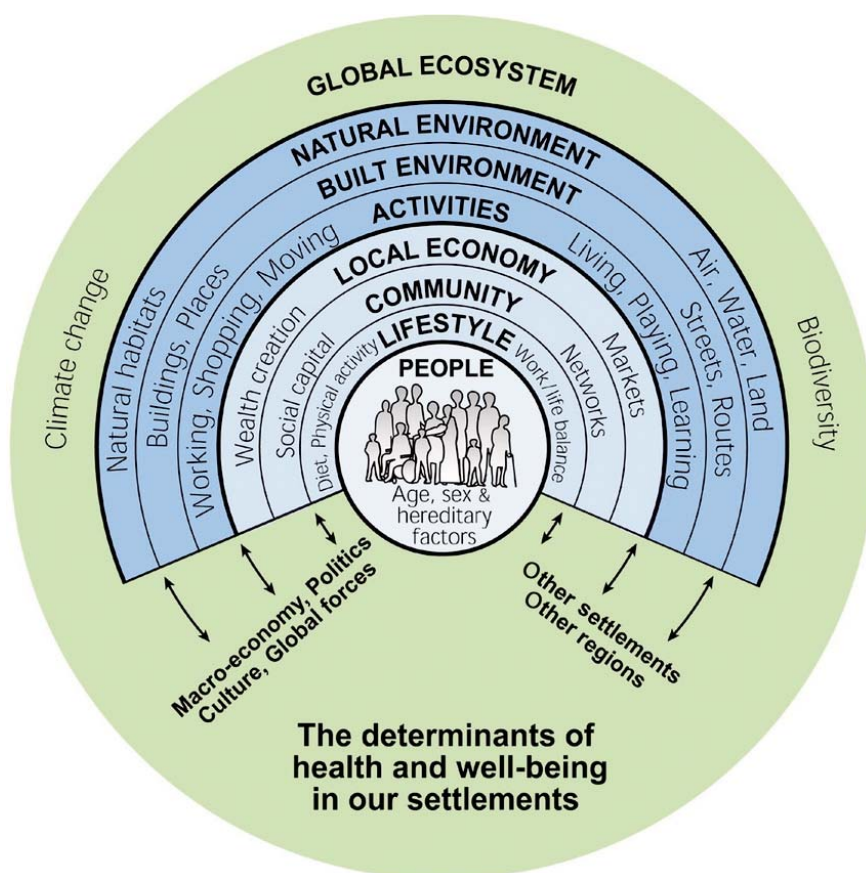


Figure 1: A health map of the local human habitat, Barton & Grant (2006)

<sup>1</sup> Khaw et al. (2008). Combined Impact of Health Behaviours and Mortality in Men and Women: The EPIC-Norfolk Prospective Population Cohort Study. PLoS Medicine 5 (1)

# 2 Background

Uttlesford is a relatively healthy and affluent area. However, with sufficient homes needed to meet the district's significant housing need, our population is predicted to increase significantly over the next ten years, with an estimated 12,000 more people between now and 2025 (Public Health Portrait, 2016). It is important to recognise the significance and long-term effects of new development design, including considerations with regards to air quality, in shaping healthy communities, now and in the future.

Whilst currently many Uttlesford residents lead healthy, active and prosperous lives, the district does have particular health and social problems, including:

- Increasing excess weight and obesity amongst children and adults.
- Low levels of physical activity - only 22% of adults are doing enough physical activity to benefit their health (i.e. exercising three or more times per week).
- Increasing issues related to an ageing demographic, including high levels of hip fractures in the over 65s as a result of falls and increasing levels of people living with dementia.
- Elevated levels of rural and social isolation.
- High levels of winter deaths, exacerbated by winter pressures and fuel poverty.

Our aim is to mitigate such factors, as well as encourage and empower people to take a more active role in their own and others physical and mental health and wellbeing.

We will do this by collaborating and working with partners to deliver targeted interventions within areas of need, as well as supporting people to find local, existing services that are appropriate and helpful; this includes those associated with reducing fuel bills, and services designed to help individuals lead healthier lifestyles. Furthermore, we will work closely with Essex County Council's Public Health team, planning teams and other partners to assist with planning for healthy new communities.

The **Uttlesford District Health & Wellbeing Board**, which forms part of Uttlesford's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - "Uttlesford Futures" - will be the strategic partnership for the coordination, communication and commissioning of health improvement and wellbeing services for the local population. We will monitor the work that is being delivered to address our key health and wellbeing priorities. This will include working collaboratively with other member organisations of the Uttlesford LSP and partners across west and wider Essex. These partnerships will regularly review our approach to ensure evidence-based best practice is achieved.

# 3 Our Vision

## Vision

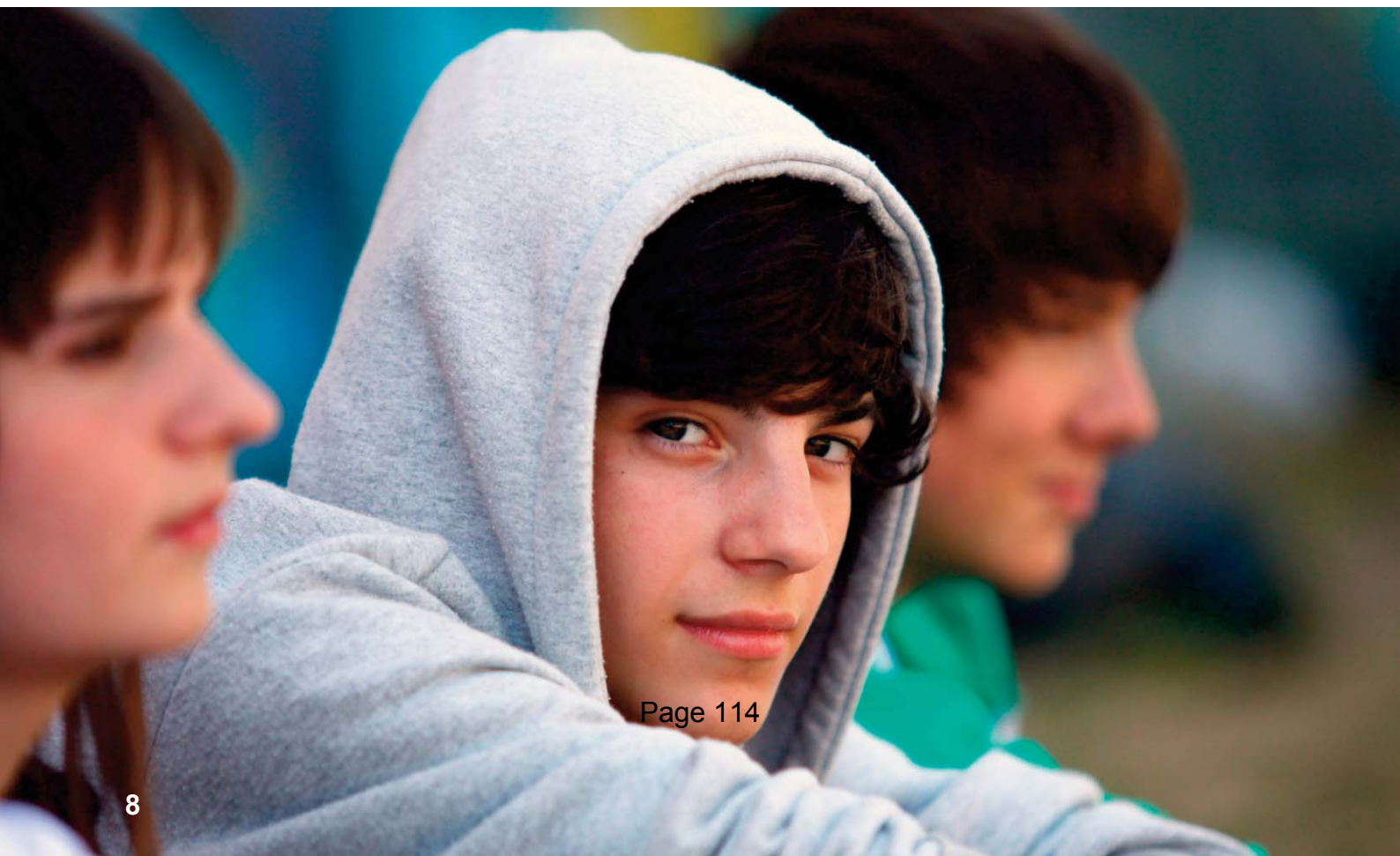
**All children, young people and adults in Uttlesford are able to live healthy, fulfilling and long lives.**

We will achieve our vision by working collaboratively with partners to support and empower communities and residents to take control of their own health and wellbeing and enable further opportunities for people to live well within the district.

Furthermore, we will encourage and promote “Making Every Contact Count” (MECC), which is an approach to behaviour change that utilises the millions of day to day interactions that

organisations and people have with others in order to encourage changes in behaviour that have a positive effect on the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and populations.

This vision links in with Uttlesford District Council’s corporate vision: “Working together for the wellbeing of our community and to protect and enhance the unique character of the District”.



# Overarching Principles

Improving child and adult mental health and ensuring it is considered to be of equal importance to physical health is fundamental to unlocking the power and potential of our communities. It is therefore important to facilitate holistic approaches that benefit health and wellbeing in its widest sense.

As this document highlights, we must shift the focus of health-related work and care to prevention, early

intervention and resilience in order to facilitate and work towards a sustainable health system.

In order to achieve our vision, we have identified five overarching principles.

These principles will be central to the work we undertake to address the key health and wellbeing priorities that have been identified for the district.

## 1. Tackling inequalities

**Ensure key services are provided for all residents, but that resources and interventions are targeting those most in need.**

## 2. Improving mental wellbeing

**Ensure that mental health and wellbeing is regarded across all streams of work.**

## 3. Prevention and early intervention

**Prevent and tackle the wider causes of ill health, poor lifestyle choices and health conditions.**

## 4. Promoting self-care

**Encourage and empower individuals to take more responsibility for changing their own health related behaviours.**

## 5. Working in partnership and promoting community mobilisation

**Enable statutory, voluntary and faith organisations to work collaboratively with communities to improve health and wellbeing within the district.**

# 4 Key Health and Wellbeing Priorities in Uttlesford

Five key priorities have been identified for the district using the data and information captured within the local Public Health Portrait (2016), which forms part of the Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2016), and Public Health England's Public Health Profile (2016). These priorities have also been established following consultation with local partners in order to gain an understanding of local issues as well as a sense of particular areas of need within the district.

With a focus on prevention, a delivery plan will coexist alongside this document indicating how we will address these priorities, outlining the timeframe for progressing this work.

However, we recognise that new issues will arise and national policies may change during the lifetime of the Strategy, and there may be a need to renew the delivery plan as and when deemed necessary to ensure it remains relevant.

**Five key health and wellbeing priorities identified for Uttlesford District include:**

- 1. Reducing overweight and obesity in children and adults**
- 2. Increasing physical activity for all**
- 3. Enabling people to age well in Uttlesford**
- 4. Combating rural and social isolation**
- 5. Combating winter pressures and fuel poverty**

# Priority 1:

## Reducing and Preventing Overweight and Obese Children and Adults

The number of overweight and obese people in England has been rising sharply for the best part of 20 years.

According to the Health Survey of England, one in four adults is obese (BMI  $\geq 30$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>), compared to less than 15 per cent in 1993.

Rising levels of excess weight in children is a key concern now being measured on a regular basis in primary-aged children as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The Government’s strategy, Childhood Obesity:

A Plan for Action (2016) indicates that a third of children aged two to 15 years are either overweight or obese, highlighting the need to significantly reduce this increasing trend.

According to local health data, more than 60 per cent of adults living in Uttlesford are classified as either overweight or obese. When comparing this with local NCMP data, a pattern becomes apparent (see figure 2). This has major long term implications and could mean that today’s children will have a lower life expectancy than their parents.

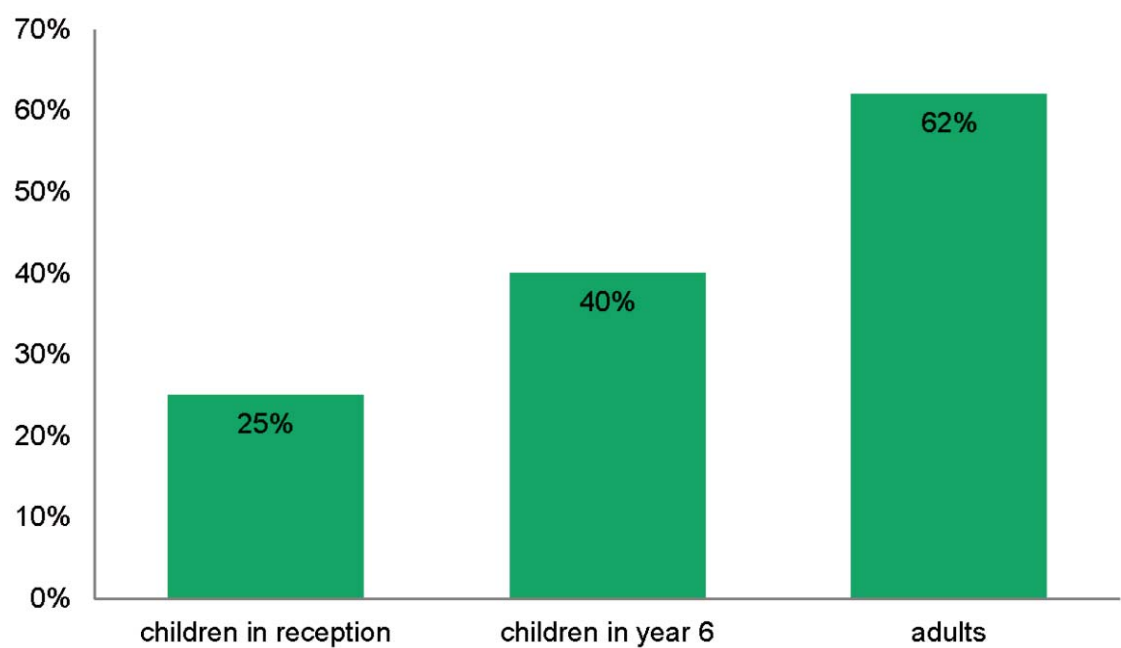


Figure 2: Levels of overweight and obesity in children and adults within Uttlesford (Public Health England, 2013-2015)

## Risk Factors Associated with Excess Weight

Being obese can increase the risk of developing a range of diseases and health problems. The physical changes caused by increased fat cause musculoskeletal problems, from wear and tear on the joints to back pain; this in turn can lead to or exacerbate mental health issues, including depression and anxiety.

Other effects are linked to invisible changes, such as increased fat in the blood and an altered response to insulin, increasing the risk to type 2 diabetes. Whilst significantly lower than national levels, recorded rates of

diabetes in Uttlesford are increasing year-on-year (see figure 3), supporting the requirement to work together with our partners to address one of the biggest risk factors - excess weight.

Obesity is a complex problem with many drivers, including our behaviour, environment, genetics and culture. However, at its root, obesity is caused by an energy imbalance: taking in more energy through food than we use through activity.

Prevention is fundamental. Long-term, sustainable change will only be achieved through the active engagement of a range of partners including schools, communities, families and individuals.

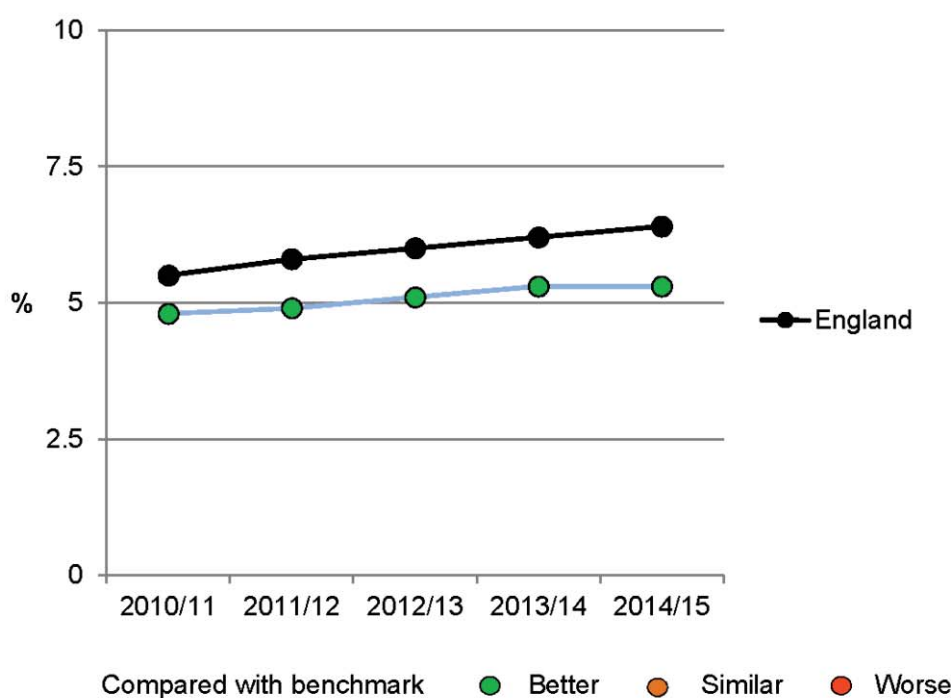


Figure 3: Recorded diabetes (Uttlesford and England), Public Health England (2016)

## Priority 2:

# Increasing Physical Activity for All

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An active lifestyle is crucial for improving and maintaining both physical and mental health and wellbeing. There is strong evidence to support the benefits of daily activity, including reducing the risk of major illnesses, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer by up to 50 per cent (NHS, 2016).

According to a report by Sport England (2016), approximately 23 per cent of adults (16+) in Uttlesford are inactive, compared to the national average of 28 per cent. The estimated health costs associated with inactivity in the district is £1.4 million.

A survey of residents published in 2015 indicated that 49 per cent of Uttlesford residents are most likely to cite lack of time as the main reason for not taking more exercise. Other reasons included lack of motivation, transport/access and lack of childcare. This highlights the importance of raising awareness of the types of activities that can be undertaken as part of busy modern lifestyles, as well as the need to work with local employers to encourage workplace wellbeing, including providing opportunities to be active during work time.

Encouraging activities that are feasible with current infrastructure will be central to our work within this Strategy. It is important to ensure that people have access to provisions that are right for

them in order to reduce the barriers associated with being active, including those with disabilities. This may include providing the right opportunities that build confidence, motivate and encourage people - particularly women and girls who are less likely to participate in sport and activity - to try new activities, such as clubs for parents and children to enjoy together, and by providing activities appropriate for varying abilities.

The Uttlesford Cycling Strategy, published in 2014, sets out some clear recommended priorities for investment in order to encourage and increase cycling within the three largest settlements in the district: Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted Mountfitchet. Furthermore, the recent Sports Facilities Development Strategy, adopted by Uttlesford District Council in 2016, provides further details on the potential future needs of sports facilities within the area, and aims to provide context for future funding applications for new facilities and inform planning teams on facility requirements in new developments.

We will work in partnership with Active Essex, a funded organisation hosted by Essex County Council, to form our own network of partners - Active Uttlesford - who are interested in increasing physical activity levels, and in particular, getting the inactive more active, within the district.

## Priority 3:

# Enabling People to Age Well in Uttlesford

According to the most recent Public Health Portrait (2016), Uttlesford is expected to see a 32 per cent increase in over 65s between 2015 and 2025, which equates to 5,200 more people. Our ageing population will put greater demand on health, social care services and housing needs. It is therefore important for us to help people to age well and remain independent for as long as possible. Some areas of work that can help with this might include working together to enable people to live well with dementia and help to prevent falls among those at risk.

### Enabling people to live well with dementia

Dementia is an umbrella term that is used to describe a group of progressive symptoms such as memory loss, changes in personality and difficulties in day-to-day living.

Dementia can have a significant impact on an individual's health and quality of life. It can result in a range of health and social problems which can be challenging for the person with dementia, their carers, and health and social care professionals. Research shows that large proportions of people with dementia feel unsupported and do not feel part of their community. They often experience anxiety and depression and three quarters do not feel society is geared up to deal with dementia (Alzheimer's Society, 2012).

Whilst dementia is a terminal condition, people can live with it for 7-12 years after diagnosis, so it is important that people are able to live well with dementia for as long as possible.

Recent data from Public Health England (2016) indicates that 1,070 people living in Uttlesford aged over 65 are thought to have dementia, and this figure is expected to rise by 79 per cent to 1,920 by 2030. Increasing numbers of people with dementia will have an impact on health services.

In the current health and social care climate there is much emphasis on sustainability through better community care, keeping people out of hospital and enabling people to live independently within their own homes for as long as possible. This focus is particularly salient when applied to the needs of people with dementia.

'Persons living with dementia are usually capable of more than we can imagine'

Bob DeMarco,  
Alzheimer's caregiver

Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board will strive to work collectively with partners to enable people to live well with dementia. We will work to raise public and professional awareness of dementia in order to increase public understanding of how our ageing population is affected by it and the impact it has on daily lives.

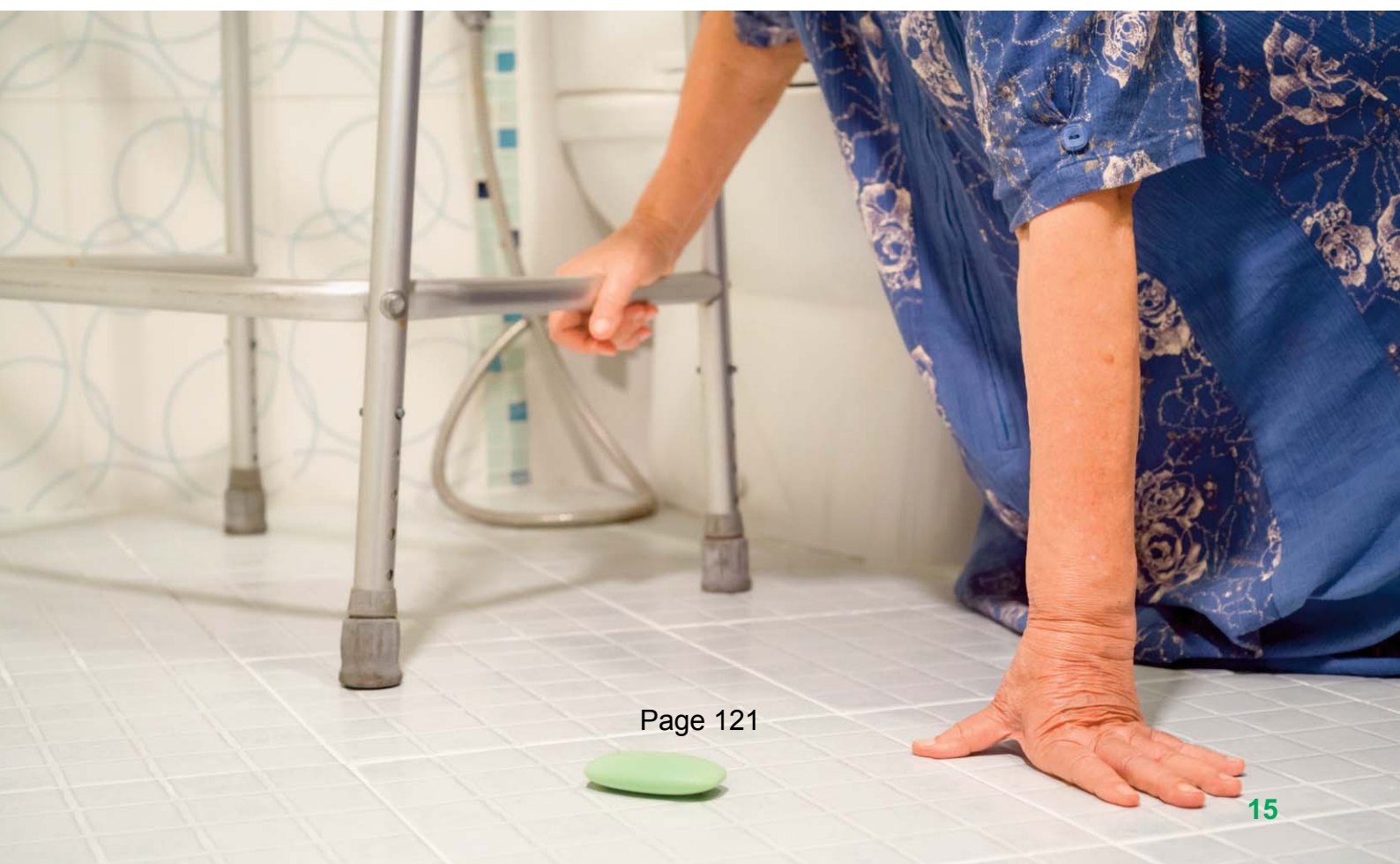
## Working together to prevent and reduce falls

Falls among older people are a major and growing concern. A fall is a symptom, not a diagnosis. It can be a marker for the onset of frailty, the first indication of a new or worsening health problem and/or can represent a tipping point in a person's life, triggering a downward decline in independence and confidence; the effects of which can be isolating and give way to fear of the outdoors.

In 2014/15, there were 508 hospital admissions for hip fractures in those

living in Uttlesford and aged 65 years and older. This is similar to the national figure of 571 per 100,000 population (Public Health Profile, 2016).

Many falls and fractures can be prevented by well organised services, including those within the community, and organisations working in partnership. As part of these support services, care is not only extended to the person suffering from falls but to their carer should they have one. The consequences of falls therefore cut across all agencies working with older people, and all agencies can be part of the solution.



## Priority 4:

# Combating Rural and Social Isolation

Social isolation is defined as:

*'The inadequate quality and quantity of social relations with other people at the different levels where human interaction takes place (individual, group, community and the larger social environment)'*

PHE, 2015

Uttlesford is a large, yet sparsely populated district. Its rural nature is an additional factor which can determine that people live in pockets rather than whole communities. This can contribute to loneliness and/or social isolation, especially if you are a younger or older person with limited access to transport.

The Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board has prioritised social isolation because it recognises that it is a serious problem for many Uttlesford residents and it can have far reaching consequences for individuals of any age, as well as wider communities.

Anyone can experience social isolation and loneliness. While social isolation is more commonly considered in later life, it can occur at all stages of the life course. Particular individuals or groups may be more vulnerable than others, depending on factors like physical and mental health, level of education, employment status, wealth, income, ethnicity, gender and age or life-stage.

At present, there is limited data available that robustly measures social

isolation. However, according to a recent report conducted by the Council for Voluntary Service Uttlesford (CVSU) on 'Rural and Social Isolation in Uttlesford' (April 2016), there appears to be a high proportion of women over 75 years living with limiting sight conditions (Macular Degeneration, retinal damage from diabetes, untreated cataracts and glaucoma) within the district.

The key issues they face in regards to social isolation are loss of hobbies, inability to manage practically at home, fear of moving outdoors, and loss of control over their circumstances and private affairs (e.g. banking), which in turn can contribute to mental health issues, including depression.

A range of services provided by the public sector, private sector, third sector and community and voluntary services may have the potential to impact on social isolation, even if this is not their primary aim. For example, aspects of the built and natural environment and transport infrastructure can help or hinder efforts to enhance social connections.

To help alleviate social isolation there are numerous befriending services that already exist in Uttlesford. We aim to work together with these services to ensure there is greater awareness of what is already available. We also plan to determine where people may be at

risk of being socially isolated and reduce the barriers that prevent individuals from accessing social activities across our district, providing further opportunities for people where appropriate, and communicating effectively in order to reduce any duplicated efforts.



## Priority 5:

# Winter Pressures and Fuel Poverty

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The relationship between housing and health is a recognised association but a complex one. A number of elements in and around the home can impact on health and wellbeing and will be influenced by other factors.

Specific housing related issues affecting health are indoor pollutants, cold and damp, housing design, overcrowding, accessibility, neighbourhood safety, social cohesion and housing availability.

Uttlesford's housing market is made up of private, private rented and social sectors. There are around 31,316 dwellings in Uttlesford (2011 census data). Of these, 74 per cent of homes are owner occupied (22,746 dwellings), 12 per cent (3,961 dwellings) are listed as social housing, and 14 per cent (4,609 dwellings) are rented from a private landlord. For all stock, Uttlesford performs better than the English Housing Survey (EHS 2011) average for various indicators such as disrepair and low income households. However, it performs slightly worse for falls and fuel poverty, and levels of excess cold are considerably higher in Uttlesford compared to the EHS average.

A cold home can have a significant impact on an individual's health and wellbeing; it can increase the risk of falls and cause stress and worry. It can also

increase the risk of pneumonia and exacerbate existing conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) indicator. Under the LIHC, a household is considered to be fuel poor if they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level), and if they were to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

According to a recent Health Impact Assessment on housing interventions in Uttlesford (2015), 21 per cent of all households in Uttlesford are considered to be on low incomes and 9.4 per cent of the district's households were deemed fuel poor in 2012.

This is less than the national average (10.4 per cent ), but the highest in Essex. To add to this, there were 54 excess winter deaths in Uttlesford between 2011 and 2012. This is around 30 per cent additional deaths, and this figure is higher than the national average of 16 per cent.

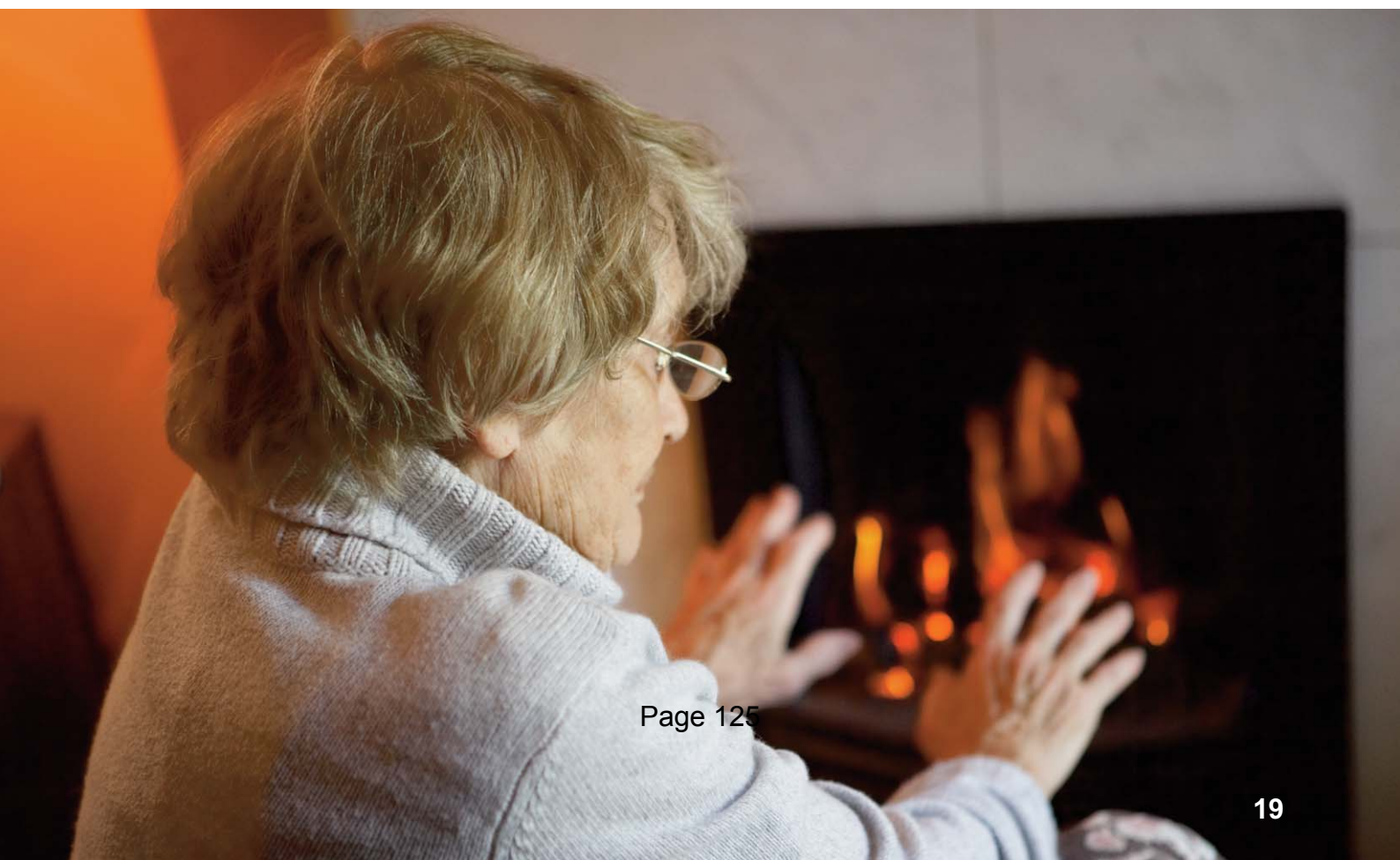
The highest concentrations of fuel poverty in the private sector are found in The Sampfords, Littlebury and Wendens Lofts wards.

For excess cold, the highest concentrations are in The Sampfords, Wendens Lofts and The Rodings wards.

With limited grant funding available to support the vulnerable, the Council aims to prioritise vulnerable households and will change the current policy to include a range of assistance measures and loans. This will include creating warm areas - or “zones” -

within larger, less energy efficient properties, as specified within the Private Sector Housing Strategy (2017-2022).

Furthermore, the Council will work in partnership with local organisations in order to raise awareness of the opportunities available to reduce fuel bills and stay warm throughout winter months.



# 5 Strategic Themes

Working in partnership is central to this Strategy in order to drive local delivery and identify local needs. It is also important to recognise wider support and add value to the health improvement work across the district's borders, including the west Essex area which covers Uttlesford, Epping Forest and Harlow. We will collaborate with the West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, the West Essex Children and Young People's Board and the West Essex Public Health Partnership as well as Essex County Council, in which its Public Health Strategic Approach document (2017) will offer guidance on what we aim to achieve.

It is essential to understand the

degrees of influence in order to tailor appropriate initiatives to specific audiences when focusing on our five key priority areas. With obesity, for example, children are largely influenced by their family as well as their school, and thus initiatives and interventions must take this into consideration.

Given that our lives, and subsequent health, can be influenced by numerous factors (see figure 4), a life-course approach has been fostered by numerous partners across west Essex, categorising health improvement work under three key themes: Early Help & Start Well, Be Well & Work Well, and Age Well.

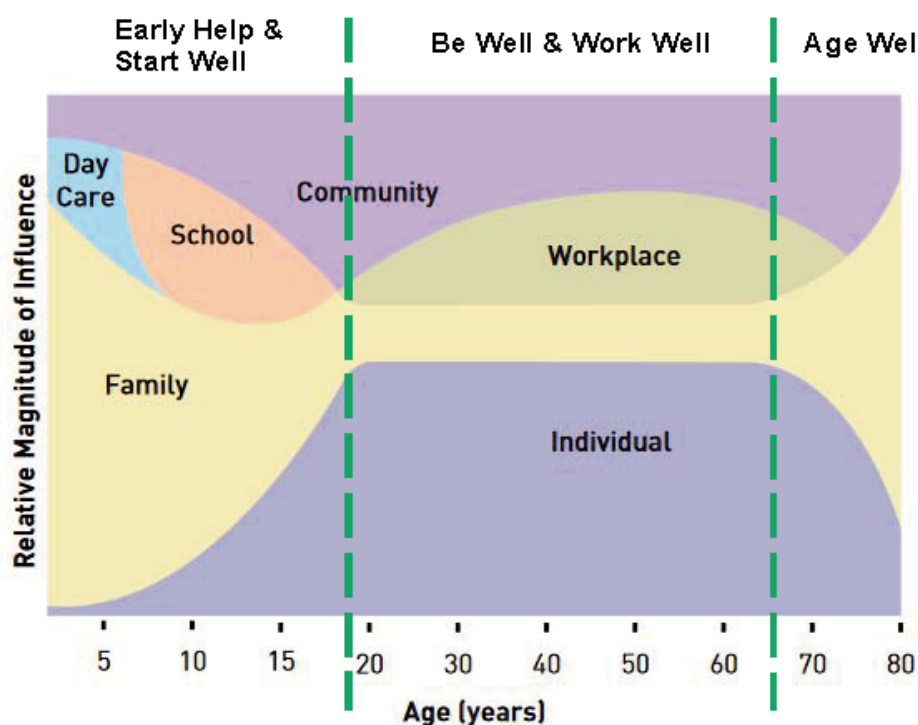


Figure 4: Influence of health status across the life course, incorporating strategic themes. Adapted from North Essex Local Health and Care Needs Assessment 2018-2023. Needs in Child and Maternal Care

# 6 Livewell in Uttlesford

To enable consistency across Essex in regards to promoting health and wellbeing activities, initiatives, campaigns and marketing, we have adopted “Livewell” as part of a joined-up approach and shared platform. Livewell will be used to communicate similar health and wellbeing interests which are shared by other districts,

boroughs and cities across the county.

The Livewell brand contains strong themes that enable the promotion of healthy messages and behaviours via social marketing. Through this we will develop “Livewell in Uttlesford” and use this as our outward facing communications tool.

**The Livewell brand consists of the following strands:**

## **startwell**

- Supporting children and families to get the best start in life.

## **eatwell**

- Promoting messages to support healthy eating, including increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and reducing sugar intakes.

## **bewell**

- Encouraging people to be physically active through sport and everyday activities to support healthy physical and mental health and wellbeing.

## **feelwell**

- Increasing awareness of the importance of mental health and wellbeing, and facilitating and promoting opportunities for people to engage with others to reduce social isolation.

## **staywell**

- Raising awareness of services that may offer support to individuals in relation to their lifestyle or health needs.

## **agewell**

- Helping to support people to live a healthy later life via appropriate sign-posting and health promotion



# 7 Taking Health and Wellbeing Forward in Uttlesford

We aim to ensure that the outcomes of health and wellbeing efforts will be effectively evaluated. Success will be measured by key performance indicators and the delivery of targets for each of the priorities as set out within the biennial delivery plan.

We will use a robust evidence base in order to enable successful projects to continue and use the Public Health Outcomes Framework as guidance for this.

Furthermore, through close partnership work, and the collaboration of ideas within our local Health & Wellbeing Board, we will continue to explore opportunities in order to implement new and innovative schemes that effectively promote good health and wellbeing.

The work we deliver will be continually monitored via the Uttlesford Health & Wellbeing Board.

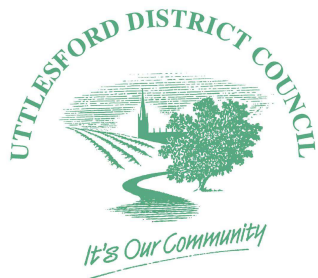


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**“Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much”**

**Helen Keller**





# Uttlesford District Council

## Fast-track equality impact assessment (EqIA) tool

### What is this tool for?


This tool will help you to assess the impact of existing or new strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions on residents and staff. It will help you to deliver excellent services, by making sure that they reflect the needs of all members of the community and workforce.

### What should be equality impact assessed?

You only need to equality impact assess strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions that are **relevant** to equality. If you are not sure whether your activity is relevant to equality take the 'relevance test' on Page 9.

### How do I use the tool?

This tool is easy to use and you do not need expert knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgments based on evidence.

The tool uses a system of red flags  to give you an indication of whether or not your responses are identifying potential issues. Getting a red flag does not necessarily indicate a problem, but it does mean that your assessment is highlighting issues or gaps in data that may require further investigation or action.

*If there is insufficient space to answer a question, please use a separate sheet.*

General information	
1	Name of strategy, policy, project, contract or decision.
2	What is the overall purpose of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?
3	Who may be affected by the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?
4	Responsible department and Head of Division.
5	Are other departments or partners involved in delivery of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?
Gathering performance data	
6	Do you (or do you intend to) collect this monitoring data in relation to any of the following <u>diverse groups</u> ?


- ☒ Residents
- ☒ Staff
- ☒ A specific client group/s e.g. linked by geographical location, social economic factors, age, disabilities, gender, transgender, race, religion or sexual orientation (please state)





Department: Communities

Head of Division: Roz Millership




- ☐ No
- ☒ Yes (please state):
- Members of Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Board
- UDC Planning Policy Services
- UDC Housing and Environmental Health

- ☒ Age
- ☒ Disability
- ☒ Sex
- ☐ Race
- ☐ Gender Reassignment
- ☐ Sexual Orientation
- ☐ Religion & Belief
- ☒ Pregnancy and Maternity
- ☐ Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- ☒ Rural Isolation

7	How do you (or how do you intend to) monitor the impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators or targets</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> User satisfaction</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uptake</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation or involvement</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce monitoring data</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> External verification</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligibility criteria</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state):</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> None </div>

Analysing performance data	
8	<p>Consider the impact the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision has already achieved, measured by the monitoring data you collect. Is the same impact being achieved for diverse groups as is being achieved across the population or workforce as a whole?</p> <p> <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes *  <input type="checkbox"/> No*  <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient   <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable  </p> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p> <p>The Strategy is open to all groups &amp; population</p>
9	<p>Is uptake of any services, benefits or opportunities associated with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision generally representative of <u>diverse groups</u>?</p> <p> <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes *  <input type="checkbox"/> No*  <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient   <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable  </p> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p> <p>The Strategy is designed to tackle inequalities and target those most in need</p>


## Checking delivery arrangements

10	<p>You now need to check the accessibility of your delivery arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlinks for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.</p> <p><i>If assessing a proposed strategy, policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.</i></p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No </th> <th>N/A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why giving details of any legal justification.</p> <p>Consultation occurred through the Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Board and interested parties. Specific engagement occurred with nominated stakeholders &amp; specialist staff.</p>		Yes	No 	N/A	The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes	No 	N/A														
The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>														
<a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>														
<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>														

## Checking information and communication arrangements

11 You now need to check the accessibility of your information and communication arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlink for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.

*If assessing a proposed strategy policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.*



	Yes	No 	N/A
<a href="#">Customer contact</a> mechanisms are accessible to all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic, web-based and paper information is accessible to all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publicity campaigns are inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images and text in documentation are representative and inclusive of all.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why, giving details of any legal justification.











## Future Impact

12 Think about what your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision is aiming to achieve over the long term and the ways in which it will seek to do this. This is your opportunity to take a step back and consider the practical implementation of your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision in the future. As well as checking that people from diverse groups will not be inadvertently excluded from or disadvantaged by any proposed activities, it is also an opportunity to think about how you can maximize your impact, reach as many people as possible and really make a difference to the lives of everyone in Uttlesford regardless of their background or circumstances.

Is it likely to inadvertently exclude or disadvantage any diverse groups?

- ☒ No
- ☐ Yes \* 
- ☐ Insufficient evidence 

\*Please state any potential issues Identified.

<b>Improvement actions</b>										
13	<p>If your assessment has highlighted any potential issues or red flags, can these be easily addressed?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  <input type="checkbox"/> No*   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable         </p> <p><i>*If Yes, please describe your proposed action/s, intended impact, monitoring arrangements implementation date and lead officer:</i></p>									
<b>Making a judgement – conclusions and next steps</b>										
14	<p>Following this fast-track assessment, please confirm the following:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified</td> <td></td> <td>No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.</td> <td></td> <td>Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.</td> <td></td> <td>Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).</td> </tr> </table>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified		No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above	<input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.		Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).	<input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.		Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).
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<input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.		Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).								
15	<p>If you have any additional comments to make, please include here.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None         </p>									

<b>Completion</b>	
16	<p>Name and job title (Assessment lead officer)</p> <p>Faye Butler, Senior Health Improvement Officer</p>
	<p>Name/s of any assisting officers and people consulted during assessment:</p> <p>Lourdes Madigasekera</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>16/5/17</p> <p>Date of next review:</p> <p>16/5/18</p> <p><i>For <b>new</b> strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions this should be</i></p>

one year from implementation.

**When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.**

### Additional evidence gathering and action planning

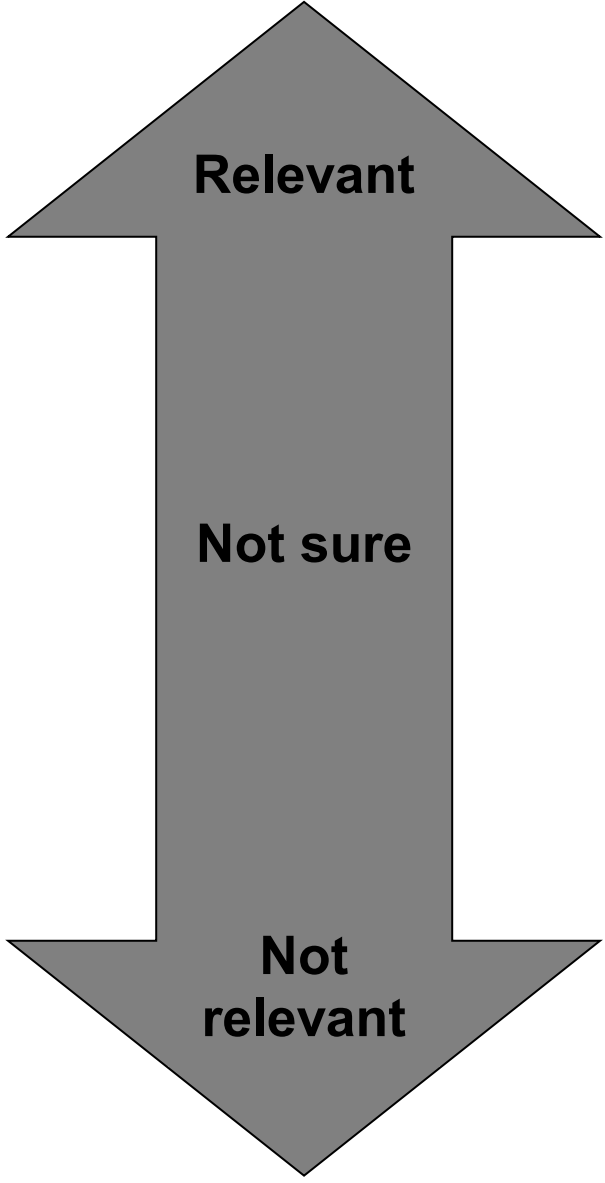
- 17 If your fast-track assessment indicated that **complex issues** or **inequalities** were identified which could not be easily addressed, or you had **insufficient evidence** to make a judgement, you need to undertake an additional evidence gathering and action planning process. This is described below:
- (a) Gather and analyse relevant additional evidence (which may include engagement with diverse groups), to address gaps in your knowledge, enhance understanding of the issues and inform options for addressing these. Additional evidence is likely to include any or all of the following:
- Data gathering**
- Demographic profiles of Uttlesford
  - Data about the physical environment, e.g. housing market, workforce, employment, education and learning provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces
  - Results of local needs analysis
  - Results of staff surveys
  - Research reports on the needs/experience of diverse groups
  - National best practice/guidance
  - Benchmarking with other organisations
- Consultation and involvement**
- Existing consultation findings that may provide insight into the issues
  - New, specially commissioned engagement with diverse groups
  - Expert views of stakeholders/employers organisations representing diverse groups
  - Advice from experts or national organisations
  - Specialist staff/in-house expertise.
- (b) For advice on evidence gathering or engagement with diverse groups please contact your departmental equality lead officer. Discuss any proposed consultation with your departmental equality lead officer to ensure it is coordinated with related exercises across the Council as a whole.
- (c) Use your evidence gathering, analysis and engagement with diverse groups to develop options for addressing inequalities or unmet need, consulting with relevant management teams, Members, strategic groups/partners where necessary to confirm proposed actions and resource issues.
- (d) When options for addressing any issues are agreed, if these cannot be implemented immediately integrate them into the appropriate service plan/strategic plan/multi-agency strategy, so that it is clear how they will be delivered, when they will be

	<p>delivered, by whom and how this will be monitored.</p> <p>(e) Identify how the continuing implementation and impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision on diverse groups in Uttlesford will be monitored.</p> <p>(f) Having gathered evidence re-evaluate this assessment.</p> <p>(g) Following completion of the above, please confirm the following:</p>	
18	<p><b>The conclusions and agreed proposals:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Summary of evidence gathered, including any internal and external consultation (please include full document titles and dates of publication and consultation for audit purposes):</b></p>	
	<p><b>Date proposals to be implemented and lead officer:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Where implementation is not immediate, please state in which service plan or strategy the proposed actions will be integrated:</b></p>	
	<p><b>Monitor arrangements (please include full details for audit purposes):</b></p>	
<p><b>Additional Comments</b></p>		
19	<p><b>If you have any additional comments to make, please include here:</b></p>	<p><input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> None</p>
<p><b>Completion</b></p>		
20	<p><b>Name and job title (Lead Officer):</b></p> <p>Name/s of other assisting officers:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Date of next review (if any):</p>	
<p>When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.</p>		



# The relevance test

Use the quick guide below to decide whether or not your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision is relevant to equality:

 <p><b>Relevant</b></p> <p><b>Not sure</b></p> <p><b>Not relevant</b></p>	<p><b>Relevant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The strategy, policy, project contract or decision will impact on ‘people’ (residents, staff, or people who work in or visit the area)’.</li><li>■ It may benefit some people or communities and not others (community cohesion)</li></ul> <p><b>Not sure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The service is a support function or administrative</li><li>■ There is no obvious impact on ‘people’ but the strategy, policy, project contract or decision is of major scale and or significance to the Council’s activities</li><li>■ Insufficient evidence</li></ul> <p><b>Not relevant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ No discernable impact on people.</li><li>■ The service is a support function or administrative</li></ul>
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If you are not sure whether your strategy, project or decision is relevant to equality, ask \_\_\_\_\_, a member of the Council’s Equality Standard Working Group Officer for advice.  
Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

## Ensuring your premises for delivery are easily accessible

**In order to ensure that your premises for delivery are accessible to disabled customers and staff, older people and people with small children you should comply with the principles of accessible design summarised below.**

In some cases, and for legitimate reasons, this may not be possible. Where this is the case you can still ensure your premises are accessible if you make appropriate reasonable adjustments. For guidance on reasonable adjustments see the 'Key contacts' section at the foot of this page.

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### Level access

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Is there level access into and inside your premises? This means no steps, steep slopes or lips on doorways.

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### Ramp or lift

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If there are steps, can you fit a ramp or install a lift so disabled customers and staff and parents with pushchairs can get in? To be safe ramps must:

- Have a gradient of 1:20 or less
- Have a handrail
- Be firmly fixed to the ground

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### Bell or buzzer and alarms

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Can you install a bell or buzzer outside and go out to disabled customers or staff when they ring? Do you have a visual as well as audible alarm?

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### Door handles

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Are door handles easy to grip and easy to reach for customers or staff who are wheelchair users?

- Use an easy grip handle in a contrasting colour
- Install a magnetic device to hold doors open
- Are door locks easy to handle (not fiddly)?

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### Doormats

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Are any doormats flush with the floor? Avoid bristle matting – it can be difficult for customers or staffs who are wheelchair users.

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## **Colour contrast**

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Is there a colour contrast between your floors, walls, ceilings and doors? Use matt paint in contrasting colours or different tones.

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## **Corridors and aisles**

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Are corridors and aisles clear enough for a wheelchair or pushchair to pass through?

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## **Seating**

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Is there somewhere to sit down if customers or staffs have to queue or wait?

- Have seating with and without armrests, if possible.
- Leave space for a wheelchair user to pull up alongside a seated companion.

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## **Height**

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Are all key facilities on the main floor? Are popular products on a mid-height shelf, and easy to reach from a wheelchair? Provide a lap tray or clipboard if a lower counter section is not available.

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## **Lighting**

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Is it easy for visually impaired customers or staff to see everything they need to?

- Make sure your premises are well lit.
- Mark corners, steps and counter edges with high visibility tape so they can be easily seen.
- Keep highly reflective surfaces away from signs to avoid glare.

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## **Guide dogs**

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If you normally ban animals, you should consider relaxing this for assistance dogs. Remember, it is not just visually impaired people who use assistance dogs.

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## **Signs and labels**

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Are signs and labels short and easy to read? Are Induction loops available?

- Use large clear text (for example, 24-point text for shelf bar labels)
- Use contrasting colours (for example, black text on a white or yellow background)
- Make sure signs are at a suitable height.

Use visual or picture symbols as well as words, if appropriate.

## Key contacts

For further advice or information please contact Kerry Vinton.

Email: [kvinton@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:kvinton@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01799 510449

**Committee: Cabinet**

**Agenda Item**

**Date: 25 May 2017**

**11**

**Title: Land at De Vigier Avenue, Saffron Walden**

**Portfolio Holder Cllr Howell**

Item for decision

---

## Summary

- 1) This report seeks Cabinet approval for the disposal of a piece of land at De Vigier Avenue, Saffron Walden.

## Recommendations

- 2) The Cabinet is recommended to approve the disposal of the piece of land known as Asset No.24 – Land at De Vigier Avenue, Saffron Walden
- 3) Authority is delegated to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services to agree the terms of the sale.

## Financial Implications

- 4) This will provide a capital receipt.

## Background Papers

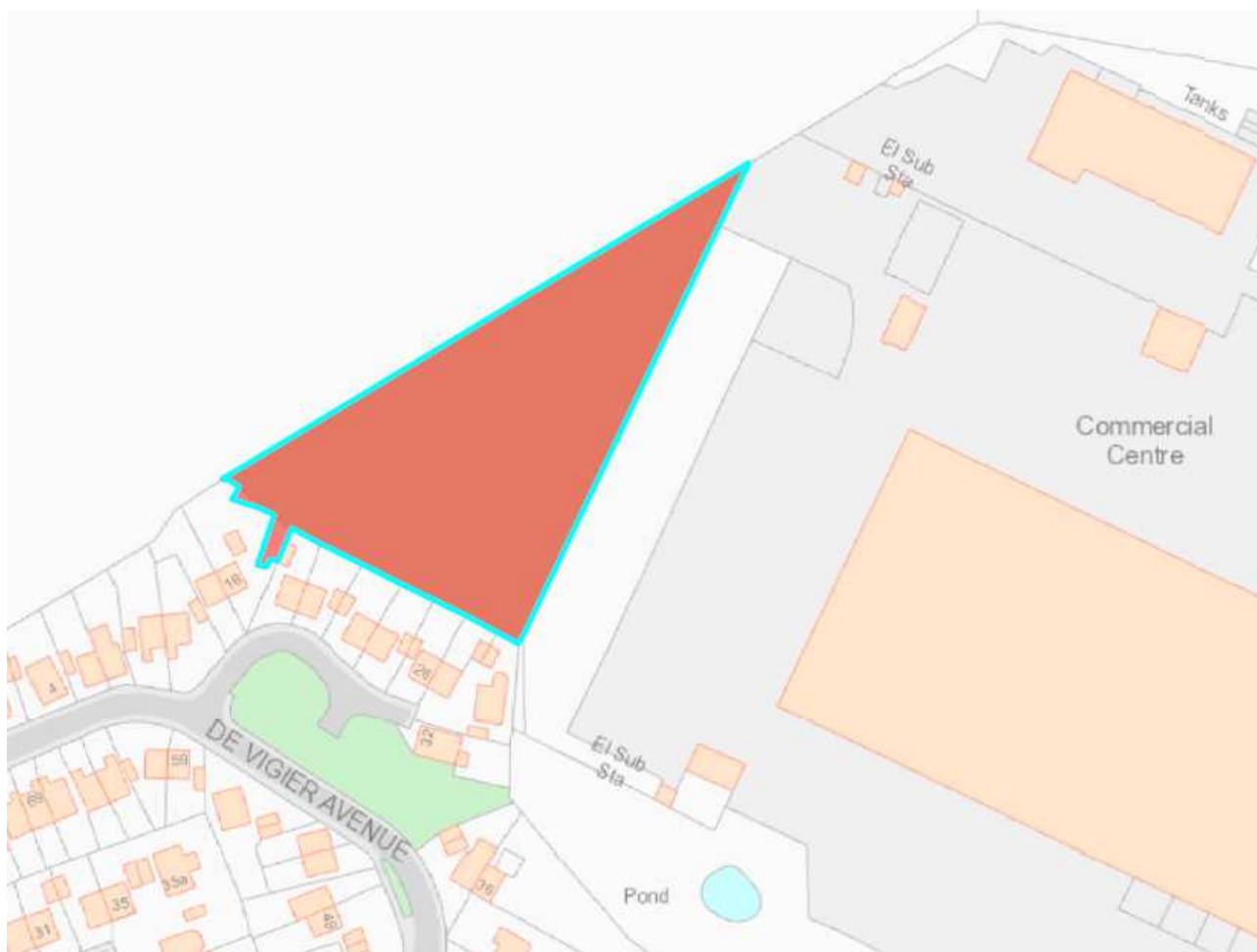
- 5) None

## Impact

Communication/Consultation	Ward Members, Saffron Walden Town Council and the adjoining residents have been notified of the option for disposal. Meetings with the residents have been held by the Leader.
Community Safety	No specific implications
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	No specific implications
Human Rights/Legal Implications	No specific implications
Sustainability	No specific implications
Ward-specific impacts	Saffron Walden Castle
Workforce/Workplace	None

## Background

- 6) The Council owns a piece of land, shown red below, at the end of De Vigier Avenue in Saffron Walden and adjacent to the former Ridgeons building supplies site.
- 7) The land is held by the General Fund not the Housing Revenue Account.



- 8) Prior to the approved development of the former Ridgeons site the UDC land was, bar right of way access over neighbouring driveways, landlocked. The approved development of the Ridgeons site has given the council an opportunity to consider the future of this land and the potential for it to be sold and incorporated into the adjoining mixed use development site, which is delivering new homes, space for businesses and open space.
- 9) Various ecological and topographical surveys have been undertaken and confirmed that the land is suitable for sale as housing land.
- 10) On 12 May the Leader and a senior officer met with a number of the residents whose homes adjoin the land. Agreement was reached that part of the existing treeline would be retained as screening and that, at the appropriate time, this piece of land would transfer from the ownership of the developer to an agreed third party. An approach would be made to the Town Council.

## Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The third party do not agree to take on the residual screening land	1 – Discussions have been held with the Mayor	2 – Ownership would remain with the developer	Discussions with the residents and Town Council will continue about the most appropriate party or parties to take on ownership of bank behind residents' homes.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



## CABINET WORKING GROUPS 2017/18

Name of Group	Terms of reference	No of Members	Lead Officer	Current Membership
Community Achievement Panel	Meets biannually to oversee the organisation of the Community Achievement Awards scheme and make recommendations on the recipients of those awards.	5	Sue Hayden	John Freeman Petrina Lees Janice Loughlin Vic Ranger Julie Redfern
Highways Panel	<p>The LHP is Accountable for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Recommending the annual LHP programme for submission to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Local Highway Panels.</li> <li>2) Documenting highways issues raised by residents and the community in its area, so that the concerns can be investigated and the possibility of addressing these through engineering solutions can be validated.</li> </ol> <p>The LHP is Responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensuring that when making recommendations the LHP: Ensures that the County's Prioritised Road Safety Schemes are included in the annual LHP programme in order to enable the County Council to fulfil its statutory duty.</li> <li>2) Ensures that as far as possible that recommended schemes meet ECC policies, strategies and standards and have due regard to the advice from Officers.</li> <li>3) Has regard to the annual LHP Budget.</li> </ol>	4 + 4 County members	Rissa Long ECC	<p><b>UDC Members</b></p> <p>Heather Asker Alan Mills Howard Ryles Geoffrey Sell</p>

Name of Group	Terms of reference	No of Members	Lead Officer	Current Membership
	<p>4) Ensures that any schemes submitted to the Cabinet Member for approval which do not meet ECC policies, strategies and standards are clearly identified as such and are made on the basis of a unanimous decision of all LHP members present and voting at a meeting having considered all alternative measures.</p> <p>5) Considers whether schemes can be funded from s106 monies and whether the LHP is prepared to recommend schemes which can be part funded by s106 money.</p> <p>6) Ensures that LHP schemes do not conflict with s106 schemes</p> <p>7) Undertaking a review of the annual local road safety schemes report for the LHP area and the prioritised Casualty Reduction Schemes.</p> <p>8) Referring to the Cabinet Member any prioritised Casualty Reduction Schemes that the LHP does not wish to include in the annual LHP programme.</p> <p>9) Approving Cabinet Member Briefings and Cabinet Member Action papers for the approval of the prioritised annual programme and any other issues requiring Cabinet Member approval.</p> <p>10) Recommending work to be undertaken by the Highway Rangers and receive reports of the minor works to be undertaken by the Highway Rangers.</p> <p>11) Monitoring the delivery of the annual LHP</p>			

Name of Group	Terms of reference	No of Members	Lead Officer	Current Membership
	<p>programme.</p> <p>12) Considering and respond to any requests referred to the LHP by other council constituted bodies, panels or groups.</p> <p>13) Provide feedback as requested, regarding the effectiveness of the activities of Essex Highways within the LHP Area.</p>			
Housing Board	<p>1. Inform on and monitor the performance and delivery of all Council housing related strategies and policies</p> <p>2. Monitor housing related performance indicators</p> <p>3. Inform on and monitor the Council's Housing</p> <p>4. Monitor the Council's Housing Revenue Account</p> <p>5. Monitor and inform on the delivery of affordable housing units in the District</p> <p>6. Consider the use of existing housing stock and other housing assets</p>	10 + 2 tenant reps	Roz Millership	<p>Terry Farthing (VC)</p> <p>Marie Felton (C)</p> <p>John Freeman</p> <p>Anthony Gerard</p> <p>Petrina Lees</p> <p>Janice Loughlin</p> <p>Alan Mills</p> <p>Vic Ranger</p> <p>Julie Redfern</p> <p><b>Vacant</b></p>
Planning Policy Working group	To give advice and guidance to officers in progressing the Local Plan and other planning guidance and report recommendations to Cabinet. This Working Group will meet in public and include public speaking.	10	Local Plan Team Leader	<p>Susan Barker (VC)</p> <p>Paul Davies</p> <p>Alan Dean</p> <p>Stephanie Harris</p> <p>John Lodge</p> <p>Petrina Lees</p> <p>Janice Loughlin</p> <p>Alan Mills</p> <p>Edward Oliver</p> <p>Howard Rolfe (C)</p>
Museum Management Working Group	<p>1. The Group shall comprise of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Museum Service and three further members and four directors of the Society.</p> <p>2. The Museum Curator shall attend all meetings of the Group in an advisory capacity and in accordance</p>	4	Carolyn Wingfield	<p>Robert Chambers</p> <p>Barbara Light</p> <p>Geoffrey Sell</p> <p>Lesley Wells</p>

Name of Group	Terms of reference	No of Members	Lead Officer	Current Membership
	<p>with the requirements of the national Accreditation Scheme for museums or any replacement thereof.</p> <p>3. Meetings shall normally be held in private and the Council shall meet the costs of all MMWG meetings and be responsible for the taking of minutes at such meetings.</p> <p>4. The Group is to meet a minimum of four times in a year in order to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Receive a quarterly report from the Museum Curator about the Museum Service.</li> <li>ii. Agree and recommend to the Council and the Society the provision of the Uttlesford Museum Service and the Museum Service strategic objectives and long term plans</li> <li>iii. Discuss matters and make recommendations to the Council and the Society on matters relating to the management of the Museum Service where a decision needs to be taken or an action needs to be ratified by the Council and/or the Society including the purchase or disposal of objects and the loan of objects to other museums</li> <li>iv. Act as the Museum's governing body for the purpose of the Accreditation scheme and implementation of appropriate codes of practice</li> <li>v. Appoint from the Group the Council's representative to attend at and report on any relevant meetings of other organisations as determined by the Group</li> <li>vi. Invite representatives of other Uttlesford museums and public galleries to attend a</li> </ul>			

<b>Name of Group</b>	<b>Terms of reference</b>	<b>No of Members</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Current Membership</b>
	<p>meeting of the Group if necessary or appropriate to the matters under discussion</p> <p>vii. Recommend to the Council hours of opening to the public and the admission charges to be levied on all users of the Museum having regard to promoting accessibility of the Museum and social inclusion and any requirements imposed on the Museum Service by other agencies.</p> <p>viii. Where appropriate make recommendations to the Society and/or the Council concerning alterations to the interior or exterior of the Museum building major projects capital developments and any other significant proposals affecting the Museum</p> <p>ix. Generally promote and act as advocates for the Museum</p>			
Refugee Working Group	To oversee the implementation of the Council's policies regarding the support for refuges within the Uttlesford areas	5	Roger Harborough	Graham Barker Alan Dean Marie Felton Sharon Morris Julie Redfern
Stansted Airport Advisory Panel	<p>1)Form an overview of policy and operational issues in relation to Stansted</p> <p>2) Monitor the activities of the airport in the interests of the people of the district.</p> <p>3) Monitor the implementation of Section 106 agreements and related undertakings by MAG and others</p> <p>4) Review and anticipate future developments at</p>	10	Assistant Director Planning	Keith Artus (C) Terry Farthing Paul Fairhurst Martin Foley Anthony Gerard Thom Goddard Derek Jones (VC) Gary LeCount

<b>Name of Group</b>	<b>Terms of reference</b>	<b>No of Members</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Current Membership</b>
	the airport and in aviation policy.			Mark Lemon Howard Ryles
Waste Strategy Panel	To monitor the implementation of the waste strategy and the inter authority agreement between collection and disposal authorities. To consider the need for review of policies and procedures, and enable members to contribute to resolution of recycling and street cleansing service delivery issues.	5	Cat Chapman	Sue Barker Terry Farthing Richard Freeman Martin Foley Lesley Wells

## REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2017/18

Organisation	Number	Representative (s)
Armed Forces and Community Covenant	1	Keith Artus
Birchanger Wood Management Committee	1	Geoffrey Sell
Board of Turpins Indoor Bowling Club	1	Paul Fairhurst
Campaign to Protect Rural Essex	1	Simon Howell
Committee of the Friends of the Maltings	1	Vic Ranger
Cooperation for Sustainable Development Board	1	Susan Barker
Council for Voluntary Service – Uttlesford	1	Eric Hicks
Dunmow Day Centre Management Cttee	1	Eric Hicks
Dunmow Museum Management Cttee	1	Vic Ranger
Dunmow Town Strategy Group/Town Team	1	Graham Barker
Essex County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1	Vic Ranger
Essex County Strategic Partnership	1	Howard Rolfe
Essex County Traveller Unit	1	Susan Barker
Essex Flood Partnership Board	1	Vic Ranger
Essex Waste Partnership Board	1	Susan Barker
Friends of Bridge End Gardens	1	Richard Freeman
Historic England Heritage Champion	1	Geoffrey Sell
Local Government Association - General Assembly	1	Howard Rolfe
LGA - Rural Community Partnership	1	Stephanie Harris
LGA – SPARSE Rural Assembly		Susan Barker
London Stansted Cambridge Consortium	1	Howard Rolfe
Parking and Traffic Regulation outside London Adjudication Committee	1	Howard Ryles
Saffron Walden Arts Trust	1	Sharon Morris
Saffron Walden Day Centre Management Cttee	1	Aisha Anjum
Saffron Walden Museum Society	1	Barbara Light
Stansted Airport Community Trust	1	Marie Felton
Stansted Airport Consultative Committee	1	Keith Artus
Stansted Day Centre Management Committee	1	Geoffrey Sell
Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group	1	Keith Artus
Takeley Day Centre Management Cttee	1	Derek Jones
Thaxted Day Centre Management Cttee	1	Martin Foley
Thaxted Guildhall Management Cttee	1	John Freeman
Uttlesford Carers	1	Petrina Lees
Uttlesford Citizens' Advice Bureau	1	Tina Knight
Uttlesford Community Travel	1	Geoffrey Sell

Uttlesford Futures	1	John Lodge
Uttlesford Over Sixties Association	1	Neil Hargreaves
Uttlesford Transport Forum	4	Richard Freeman Mark Lemon Alan Mills Howard Ryles
West Essex Alliance	1	Julie Redfern
West Essex Transportation Board	1	Susan Barker