

**Committee:** COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** June 19, 13, 2008

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**Title:** LEAD OFFICER'S REPORT

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Item for noting

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### Summary

1. This report updates Members on two matters that have arisen since the last meeting.

### Recommendations

2. That the report is noted.

### Background Papers

3. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report.
  - Payphone consultation letter from BT
  - Letter from Iain Wright MP (attached)

### Situation/Update

#### 4. Removal of BT Payphones

BT have notified us of their intention to remove public payphones that are currently 'little used by consumers' particularly if there is another payphone within 400m.

They are consulting us as a matter of courtesy due to the number of low use payphones in our district. Notices will be placed on the relevant kiosks to inform the local community. If we have any comments we must justify why we feel the individual payphones should remain.

All comments must be received by 2 July 2008. To ensure we meet the deadline for submission, please could contributions be made to the Director of Operations by 25 June to allow the document to be collated and submitted on time.

The list of payphones has been circulated to Parish Clerks and Members; the issue has also been raised at Area Forums. BT expects the District Council to co-ordinate the response from the district on the table supplied.

## 5. Negative Housing Subsidy

Sir Alan Hazelhurst has been instrumental in gaining agreement for a delegation to meet with Iain Wright MP Parliamentary Under Secretary of State as attached.



The Rt Hon Sir Alan Hazelhurst MP  
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**Iain Wright MP**  
*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State*

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*Alan* *12th May 2008*

### REVIEW OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT SUBSIDY SYSTEM

Thank you for your letter of 21 March to the Rt Hon Caroline Flint MP, on the subject of negative subsidy and Uttlesford District Council. Your letter has been passed to me as this matter falls within my Ministerial responsibilities.

As you are no doubt aware, we launched the review of the housing revenue account subsidy system on 10 March explicitly to address the concerns raised by local authorities and other stakeholders who consider the present mechanism to be unfair and unwieldy. We intend that the review should conduct a thorough examination of all the issues pertinent to the HRA subsidy including volatility, redistribution and affordability. The terms of reference were discussed with key stakeholders at the launch event and, following their input, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Housing Minister and I are satisfied that it sets the correct parameters for the review.

I know that many stakeholders are very keen to take part in this debate and we are already working with a number of councils and ALMOs who represent the spectrum of experience of the current system. Others will be able to express their views through a CIH-hosted e-forum or in the theme-based facilitated workshops to which a range of experts and practitioners have been invited. Tenant specific events are also part of our strategy to collate as many perspectives as possible from people who have a direct interest in, or will be affected by, the review.

I would be happy to meet with you and discuss your concerns about the HRA Subsidy system. Officials will be in touch with your office shortly to discuss dates and more detailed arrangements.

*Iain Wright*  
**IAIN WRIGHT**