



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: John Mitchell

Housing Board

Date: Tuesday, 30 June 2015

Time: 10:00

Venue: Committee Room

Members: Councillors Heather Asker, Alan Dean, Marie Felton (Chairman), Janice Loughlin, Sharon Morris, Alan Mills, Vic Ranger, Julie Redfern, Howard Ryles

Other attendees:- David Parish and Daphne Cornell (Tenants' Forum representatives)

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2015 5 - 10
- 3 Matters arising
- 4 Housing Strategy 2016-21 11 - 14
- 5 HRA 2014-15 Outturn and Business Plan Update 15 - 26
- 6 Housing Development Update 27 - 30
- 7 Homelessness Update 31 - 34

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10	BRE Stock Profiles and Quantitative Health Impact Assessment	101 - 108
11	Any other items which the Chairman considers to be urgent	
12	Date of next meeting	

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

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**HOUSING BOARD held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 10.30AM on 27 JANUARY 2015**

Present: Councillor Perry (Chairman)
Councillors A Dean, J Loughlin, J Menell and J Redfern

Also present: Mr David Parish and Mrs Carol Mandy (Tenant Forum representatives).

Officers in attendance: M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), P Evans (Housing Business and Performance Manager), E Horner (Accountant), D Malins (Housing Development Manager), R Millership (Assistant Director Housing and Environmental Services), J Snares (Housing Needs and Landlord Services Manager), M Tokley (Principle Accountant) and S Wood (Housing and Planning Policy Manager).

HB24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Felton, Freeman, Ranger, Rose and Smith.

HB25 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

HB26 MATTERS ARISING

(i) Minute HB17 – Development update

It was reported that Cabinet had approved the proposal to contribute funding towards the Radwinter Road extra care scheme. The Planning Committee had considered the application at its recent meeting but the item had been deferred for further clarification around the extra-care element.

An explanatory leaflet on extra- care provision had since been prepared and would be circulated to all members of the council.

(ii) Minute H233 – next meeting

It was intended that the next meeting of the group would be held at Walden Place Saffron Walden, and members would also have the opportunity to visit the site.

HRA – PROPOSED RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES

The Board received the report setting out the proposed rent and service charge increases for 2015/16.

In relation to the rent level, Members were informed that the Government had confirmed a number of key changes to be introduced from April 2015 as part of the national rent policy. The new Government guidance recommended the use of CPI plus 1% for the calculation the inflationary rate for the 10 year period 2015/16 – 2024/25 and the cessation of the rent convergence policy for existing tenants from 2015/16.

In the light of the new guidance the financial impact of the 3 possible options had been modelled

- 1 Assume rent increase by CPI plus 1% (as in the new guidance)
- a rent increase of 2.2%
- 2 Assume rent will increase by CPI plus 2% (Alternative strategy)
- a rent increase of 3%
- 3 Continue to assume a rent convergence policy in which case many rents would converge in 2015-16
- a rent increase of 3.5%

Although options 2 and 3 would give additional income to the HRA, the rent increase would place an additional burden on tenants when welfare reforms continued to impact on families. It was council policy to generally follow Government guidance and it was recommended to support option 1 as being in the best interest of tenants. It was also possible that the Government would seek to cap rent increases above the new guidance level.

The financial impact on the business plan when option 1 was modelled was a shortfall of around £200,000. This is because the original business plan assumed a rent increase in line with formula rents. However, officers were confident that with adjustments the Business Plan was still sustainable.

Mr Parish said the Tenants Forum had discussed the report and strongly recommended option 1.

AGREED to recommend to Cabinet that the preferred option for HRA dwelling rent be in line with Government guidance of CPI + 1%.

Members were given details of the suggested increases for garage rents and service charges.

Members discuss the proposed rent increase for garage rents and commented that they represented good value when privately rented and used for storage. The Assistant Director explained that a number of the garages were in poor condition, too small and not fit for purpose. There were around 40 units that were currently empty. The proposed increase was in line with inflation and was intended to fund continued maintenance. Looking forward there was an ongoing project looking at the future of the council's garage sites and assessing potential for development.

AGREED to recommend to Cabinet for approval the increases in garage rent and service charges as detailed below:

- Garage rents are increased by RPI of 2.3%.
- Heating, Service and Sewerage charges are increased in line with actual costs.
- Service charges for common services in sheltered schemes continue to be subsidised for tenants at 31st March 2012 who are not in receipt of housing benefit. Subsidy reducing by 25% annually.
- Charge for Sheltered support services is increased by RPI of 2.3%
- Sheltered support services for tenants as at 31st March 2003, who are not eligible for supporting people grant, continue to receive transitional relief protection
- Lifeline basic charge is increased by RPI of 2.3%

HB28

HRA BUDGET 2015-16

Members received the proposed HRA budget and reserves position for 2015/16 and a proposed 5 year financial forecast for the period from 2015/16 to 2019/20.

The HRA budget for 2015/16 reflected the service arrangements and investments in relation to the council's services for the fourth year under 'self financing'. The arrangements enable the service to stand-alone financially and take local decisions for housing services. The overall aims and objectives over a 30 year period reflected that approved in the HRA business plan.

The HRA business plan was a 5 year working plan which detailed priorities and projects up to 2018/19. It was an ambitious plan, which continued to deliver a significant programme of investment. The HRA Capital Programme showed that in 2016/17 it would no longer have any reserves or external funds to finance the programme but this could be met by internal borrowing within the restrictions of the HRA debt cap. Officers would continue explore efficiencies within the projects.

The 5-year budget forecast demonstrated how the budget over the medium term was able to meet loan payments, manage projects in the business plan and provide a consistent level of service to residents. The budget identified an operating surplus of £3,498,000 which had been allocated to fund agreed projects in the business plan.

The Assistant Director explained that the 2015/16 budget had been based on the assumption of the lowest income, and included the dwelling rent increase based on CPI +1 %. There were pinch points in the HRA as the

council had embarked on a large development programme, incorporated several ideas for improvement and many of these elements were now coming to fruition. Recent tenders had been higher than expected due to the current high build costs in the district.

Members were advised of the possible action that could be taken to increase funds to the HRA and efficiencies and readjustments that could be made. In line with the agreed strategy the council had still not repaid any capital from the loan and was using the in year surplus to fund a significant programme of development and investment. It was important for the council to take this opportunity at this time.

In answer to a question, it was explained that the large increase for bad debt provision was a contingency for managing the effects of the introduction of Universal Credit. The Housing Business and Performance Manager explained the action being taken to prepare for its introduction, but whilst being as proactive as it could be, this was a moving target and there was now expected to be a phased introduction in June /July 2015.

The Assistant Director drew attention to the Supporting People funding that was currently under review by Essex County Council. The outcome of these discussions would be considered by ECC Cabinet so would not be known until Feb/March. However from recent discussion it seemed likely that there would be a significant cut this year.

The loss of funding would equate to £185k and put an extra burden on the HRA revenue costs. This would affect around 370 tenants mostly in sheltered units and those who used the lifeline service. Officers would investigate the likely effect on tenants and options for the funding any possible shortfall. Members expressed concern at the possible shortfall in funding and asked that this be brought to the attention of Cabinet.

AGREED

- 1 To recommend to Cabinet for approval
 - The 2015/16 budget as set out in the report.
 - The use of headroom funds for Business Plan Projects.
 - The working balances and allocation of earmarked reserves
- 2 To alert Cabinet to the implications of the reduction of Supporting People funding.

HB29

DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY 2015 – 18

The Planning and Housing and Policy Manager presented the draft housing strategy for 2015 – 18, which set out the council's vision and aims for housing in the district for the next 3 years. It described the key issues

affecting the local housing market and how the council intended to overcome these and support growth and improve housing outcomes for local people.

The previous strategy had been published in 2012 and the report highlighted the key priorities, which had been achieved over the past 2 years. The new strategy would be subject to a 6 week consultation, and members were asked to submit any comments that they had on the document.

The following points were raised by Councillor Dean

- The strategy should mention the council's commitment to manage and improve estate infrastructure and the general environment of existing housing estates.
- The shortfall in the delivery of affordable housing should be addressed in the document.
- For average earnings, include figures for those who worked outside the district as well as for those within the district.

Members raised concern about the Right to Buy legislation and the likelihood of losing newly built houses from the council's stock. It was explained that the council retained the right to buy receipts and there was a policy for one for one replacement of dwellings. However, land had to be found for any new build and receipts were to be used within a certain timescale. The business plan showed that there was an optimum number of Right to Buy sales per annum but to date there hadn't been a significant increase in the take up of Right to Buy.

Councillor Dean passed on his congratulations to the Empty Homes Officer who had been very helpful in relation to a property in Stansted. This appointment appeared to be a positive initiative in addressing the issue of void properties in the district.

AGREED that the Housing Board notes the report and considers the initial draft Housing Strategy 2015 -18 and provides comments by 10 March to the Planning and Housing Policy Manager

HB30

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Housing Development Manager reported progress on on-gong Development Schemes. The Mead Court 1st phase handover would be between 13 -20 February. The 2nd phase, demolition would commence mid to late March.

The Catons Lane development was going through the procurement process. There had been issues with the tender price but it was expected to commence shortly.

The Reynolds Court scheme would be considered at the March meeting of the Planning Committee.

HB31

REGULATORY PANEL – UPDATE

The Housing Business and Performance Officer reported that the Regulatory Panel's next project would be to undertake a review of the council's sheltered housing schemes, with particular reference to the sheltered standards. Recommendations were expected by the end of the year.

The action plan resulting from the Panel's previous review of voids had been reviewed at officer team meetings and was now around 70% complete. Some of the recommendations had proved to be worthwhile and it was encouraging to recognise the contribution that the Regulatory Panel made to the performance of the service

HB32

PERFORMANCE REPORT –Q2 JULY – SEPTEMBER 2014

The Board received a summary of the quarter 2 performance figures for all housing related performance indicators.

Councillor Dean commented that performance indicators PI 14a (number of people presenting as homeless and 14b (the number of cases where positive intervention by the council had prevented homelessness) were not a true a measure of performance as the outcome was not under the council's control. It was unfortunate to have a red indicator, as it appeared that the council was failing in these areas

The Assistant Director explained that these figures were reported to Government, and were useful as they showed the extent of the problem with homelessness in the district. In respect of interventions it demonstrated that in an affluent district like Uttlesford, there was a lack of affordable private rented accommodation to assist with the housing need.

The Chairman said a lot of information had been presented to this meeting and he thanked all officers involved for the work they had undertaken in producing the reports.

HB33

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 23 April 2015 at 2pm at Walden Place, Saffron Walden.

The meeting ended at 12.05pm.

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 30 June 2015

4

Title: Housing Strategy 2016-21

**Author: Suzanna Wood, Planning and Housing
Policy Manager, Ext 543**

Item for information

Summary

1. The new Housing Strategy 2016-21 will set out the Council's vision and aims for housing in the district for the next five years. It will describe the key issues affecting the local housing market and what the Council intends to do to help overcome these challenges and create the right conditions to support growth and improve housing outcomes for local people.

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board notes the report.

Financial Implications

3. At this time there are no cost implications for the council, however there may be resource implications in implementing any agreed individual actions.

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

5. None

Communication/Consultation	A consultation event was held in October 2014 to begin to set priorities. A draft was prepared and submitted to Housing Board before the election but it was decided that it should be put on hold until a new Council was elected. A further draft will be prepared in time for the Housing Board in September and then sent out for consultation with partners and the wider community.
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	Equality impact assessment has been completed on the draft
Health and Safety	N/A

Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	The Council's energy officer has been involved in the drafting of the document
Ward-specific impacts	Whole District
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

6. The last Housing Strategy was written and published in 2012 and set priorities for a three year period. During that time, many of the key priorities have been achieved. These include the following:
- Delivered 284 affordable homes
 - Landlords forum held once a year
 - Successful Housing Strategy conference held once a year
 - Delivering 1 and 2 bed bungalows on S106 sites
 - Reviewed opportunities for delivery of further regeneration and new build including exploration of alternative delivery models
 - Development of a new Allocations Policy
 - Brought 185 empty properties back into use since October 2013
 - Assisting in the development of the Essex Landlord Accreditation Scheme
 - Administered and provided 62 grants costing £455,428 to enable disabled people to live as comfortably and independently as possible in their homes
7. It was agreed that a new Housing Strategy needed to be written and published in 2015 and a conference was held in October 2014 to scope future priorities for the next 5 years. This was well attended by Councillors, tenant forum members, key partners and organisations.
8. A first draft of the Strategy was provided to Housing Board in January however it was agreed that this should be put on hold until after the elections. This would give new Councillors a chance to influence the future direction of housing. There is now an opportunity for Councillors to discuss the new Strategy and its objectives before a revised draft is prepared for the next Housing Board in September. It will then be put out for public consultation before the final document is put before members for approval. It is anticipated that the new housing strategy will be in place in January 2016.
9. It is proposed that the new housing strategy for 2016-2021 will set out the main changes in the housing market, identify the key challenges in delivering new homes and housing services locally, and inform on what action will be required to help meet both current and future housing needs and aspirations.

The three key strategic aims suggested for the new Housing Strategy are:

- a. Increasing housing supply across all tenures

- b. Helping people to live independently
- c. Ensuring decent, safe and healthy homes

10. Accompanying the Housing Strategy will be a Housing Strategy Action Plan which will set out detailed objectives and outcomes for each of the themes above. The Action Plan will be kept under review and updated regularly in order to reflect changes in policy, practice or economic conditions. An evidence base will also be published and this will provide the background data to reinforce our priorities.

11. The new Housing Strategy will provide a coherent plan for housing policy, a sound evidence base and seek to inform the new Local Plan for the District. The Strategy is aligned with the Housing Business Plan and will stand alongside the Homelessness Strategy.

Risk Analysis

16.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Document is delayed/not approved	1 – little risk, partners and members will be involved in scoping the document and tight timescales have been set	3 – a future plan is needed and could cause delays to key projects	Ensure that sufficient time is given to consult with partners and members

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: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 30 June 2015

5

Title: HRA 2014/15 Outturn and Business Plan Update

Author: Roz Millership, Assistant Director Housing and Environmental Services

Item for Information

Emma Horner, Specialist Accountant

Summary

1. This report summarises the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2014/15 outturn position and sets out to show the 5 year strategy post outturn.
2. All figures are subject to external audit and therefore may change before the final Statement of Accounts is produced in September.

Recommendations

3. That the Housing Board note the contents of this report.

Financial Implications

4. The report covers the financial implications.

Background Papers

5. None.

Published Papers

6. Budget Book 2014-15
7. HRA Business Plan

Impact

- 8.

Communication/Consultation	Tenants and Members
Community Safety	No specific issues
Equalities	No specific issues
Health and Safety	No specific issues

Human Rights/Legal Implications	The HRA is a ring fenced landlord account. The Council can only account for specified transactions in the HRA and it must not operate at a deficit. There can be no cross subsidy between the HRA and General Fund in either direction
Sustainability	No specific issues
Ward-specific impacts	No specific issues
Workforce/Workplace	No specific issues

Background

9. The Local Government and Housing Act require the Council to keep a HRA that records all revenue expenditure and income relating to the provision of council dwellings and related services. The use of this account is heavily prescribed by statute and the Council is not allowed to fund any expenditure for non-housing related services from this account.
10. In April 2012, the Localism Act 2011 introduced a new financial regime for local authority housing. A new self-financing system replaced the previous subsidy system, giving Council's more freedom to borrow money and spend the income they receive from rents.
11. This new system required local authorities to take on a one off debt. The council made a substantial one off payment of £88.407 million to the Government, which it financed through a portfolio of loans from the Public Works Loans Board.
12. The original HRA 30 year Business Plan approved in March 2012, following the self-financing reforms, sets the scene for the current financial environment. This report should be read in conjunction with the Business Plan.
13. The Business Plan is updated annually and seeks to maximise the advantages of the new financial environment and the associated flexibility it offers.
14. The key objectives of the Business Plan can be summarised as follows:
 - Operate a sound and viable housing business in a professional and cost effective manner
 - Ensure that all the council's tenants live in a decent home in settled communities for as long as needed, consistent with the council's Tenant Strategy
 - Help tenants and leaseholders get involved with decisions about their housing
 - Build new affordable rented Council housing in an efficient and effective manner, in order to increase the Council's own housing stock
15. Changes have occurred since 2012 in relation to assumptions within the Business Plan, including the impact of the level of Right to Buy sales and trends in inflation.

These have potential to impact the Council's major investment plans, particularly the development of new homes, improvement of its sheltered housing and other planned maintenance programmes.

16. In September 2014, the Housing Board agreed that the Business Plan should be reviewed in 2015 to address any major changes.

Outturn Position

17. 2014/15 was the third year of the HRA Business Plan. The original HRA budget was for an in-year operating surplus of £3.36m, with £2.69m of planned funding for capital projects.
18. The HRA draft outturn favourable variance to original budget is £2.31m. The variance is made up of an additional net operating surplus of £14k, a favourable variance in the HRA direct revenue funding for capital schemes of £1.95m and reduced requirement to drawdown on the reserves of £0.35m due to delayed capital projects and the transfer of Temporary Accommodation expenditure to the general fund. This is summarised in the table below (details in Appendix A).
19. Total investment on the stock, including both revenue and capital funded maintenance and improvement works was £8.9million.

	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast	Outturn	Final Outturn	Variance
Total Income	(15,715)	(16,019)		(16,355)	(16,698)	(17,041)
Service Expenditure	4,293	4,303		4,743	4,881	578
Non-Service Expenditure	7,737	7,727		7,797	7,308	(419)
Total Expenditure	12,030	12,030		12,540	12,189	159
Operating (Surplus)/Deficit	(3,360)	(3,360)		(2,905)	(3,374)	(14)
Funding of Capital Items from HRA	3,244	3,244		3,265	1,297	(1,947)
Transfers to/(from) Reserves	116	116		(628)	(237)	(353)
Total Use of Reserves/Funding	3,360	3,360		2,637	1,060	(2,300)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	0	0		(268)	(2,314)	(2,314)

Variations

20. The table below details the movement in the surplus from the latest forecast of £0.27m to the final outturn surplus of £2.31m

Movement in Surplus (increase)/decrease	Reason for Variance
(122)	Increased rent collection due to rent arrears being lower than forecast
172	Increased requirement in housing revenue repairs
(279)	Change in impairment amount due to unforeseen increase in non dwellings asset values
(174)	decrease in forecasted provision for rent arrears
(1,947)	Net underspend and slippage from capital programme
40	Various other immaterial changes
<u>(2,310)</u>	

HRA Reserves

21. It is proposed that the 2014/15 surplus of £2.31m be earmarked for Capital Projects and this has been included in the reserve balance subject to Cabinet approval.

22. Below is a summary of HRA reserves:

£'000	Actual Balance 01.04.14	Transfer from HRA	Transfer to HRA	Transfer Between Reserves	Estimated Balance 01.04.2015
<u>Ringfenced Reserve</u>					
Working Balance	680	0	(217)	0	463
	680	0	(217)	0	463
<u>Usable Reserves</u>					
<u>Revenue Reserves</u>					
Revenue Projects	60	0	0	0	60
Change Mgt	200	0	(20)	(180)	0
Transformation Reserve	0	0	0	180	180
	260	0	(20)	0	240
<u>Capital Reserves</u>					
Capital projects	1,223	2,965	(652)	0	3,536
Sheltered Housing Reserve	318	0	0	0	318
Potential Projects	800	0	0	0	800
	2,341	2,965	(652)	0	4,654
Total Usable Reserves	2,601	2,965	(652)	0	4,654
<u>Other Reserves</u>					
Capital Receipts - Debt repayment	744	449	0	0	1,193
Capital Receipts 1-4-1 - Restricted reserve	494	636	(661)	0	469
Major Repairs Reserve - Partly restricted res	91	131	(91)	0	131
Total Other Reserves	1,329	1,216	(752)	0	1,793
Total HRA Reserves	3,930	4,181	(1,404)	0	6,447

Capital Programme

23. The Council delivered improvements to the value of £4.5 million to tenants' homes during the year.

24. Expenditure on delivering the business plan, including development schemes, totalled £2.2m.

25. The HRA capital programme revised budget was £9.797m with a final outturn of £6.740m leading to a variance to revised budget of £3.057m, as detailed below:

£'000	Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Outturn to Budget Variance
HRA Major Repairs	4,183	3,968	4,094	126
UPVC Fascia's and Guttering	500	500	377	(123)
Cash Incentive Scheme Grants	50	50	34	(16)
Additional Housing Vans	0	0	0	0
Business Plan Items				
Service Chg Planned Rep System - ICT Schemes	0	92	27	(65)
Sheltered Hsg Alarms Equip	100	100	0	(100)
Energy Efficiency Schemes	300	606	301	(305)
Support unit for people with learning difficulties	0	100	0	(100)
New Builds				
Unidentified Garden/Garage Sites	600	295	0	(295)
Canons Lane	0	30	51	21
Mead court/Canons Mead garage Site Phase 1	2,537	3,741	1,556	(2,185)
Holloway Crescent - Final costs	0	0	55	55
Sheltered Schemes				
Reynolds Court	0	205	149	(56)
Hatherley Court	0	60	24	(36)
Walden Place	0	10	33	23
Internet Café's in Sheltered Hsg	40	40	39	(1)
Total HRA	8,310	9,797	6,740	(3,057)

26. Slippage requests totalling £2.451m have been identified, relating to schemes now scheduled to take place in 2015/16, these are listed below:

Scheme	£'000	Reason for Slippage
UPVC Fascia's and Guttering	123	Delay in completion of planned work due to issue with energy provider
Service Chg Planned Rep System - ICT Schemes	65	On going project delays due to capacity
Energy Efficiency Schemes	100	Delay in completion of planned work due to issue with energy provider
Support unit for people with learning difficulties	100	Decision making delays due to feasibility of sites
Unidentified Garden/Garage Sites	295	Delay in finding suitable new build site in 14/15. Project commencing for Canons Lane and Sheltered Housing in 15/16
Mead Court/Canons Mead Site Phase 1	1,768	On-going project budget required for Phase 2 of development
	<u>2,451</u>	

27. The table below details the main variances to each scheme where the outturn differs from the revised budget and slippage has not been requested:

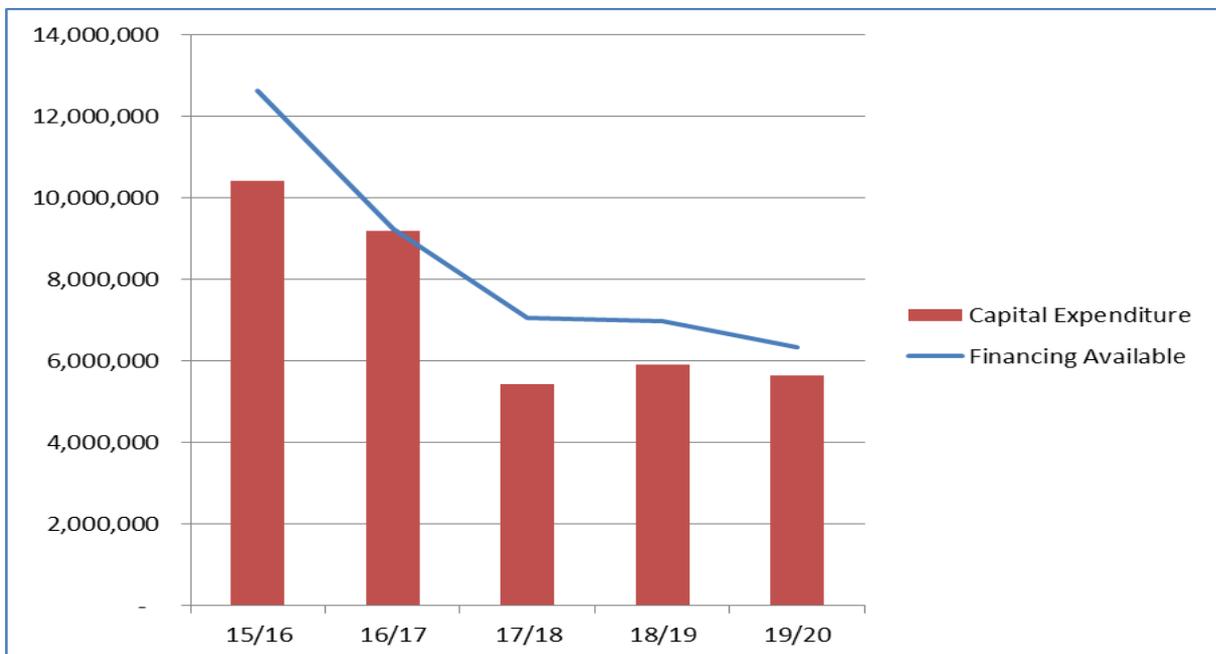
Scheme	£'000	Reason for Variance
HRA Major Repairs	126	Additional remedial works to current housing stock
Sheltered Hsg Alarms Equip	(100)	Works completed earlier than expected
Energy Efficiency Schemes	(205)	Unrequired budget due to cessation of specific scheme
Mead Court Garage Site Phase 1	(417)	Transfer of units to General Fund scheme
Holloway Crescent - Final costs	55	Unbudgeted remedial works
Other	(65)	Net other immaterial variances
	<u>(606)</u>	

HRA 5 Year Updated Programme

28. Over the next 5 years the HRA is forecasting each year a revenue operating surplus (full details in Appendix B) which will contribute towards meeting the priorities within the business plan within Capital expenditure. As detailed below:

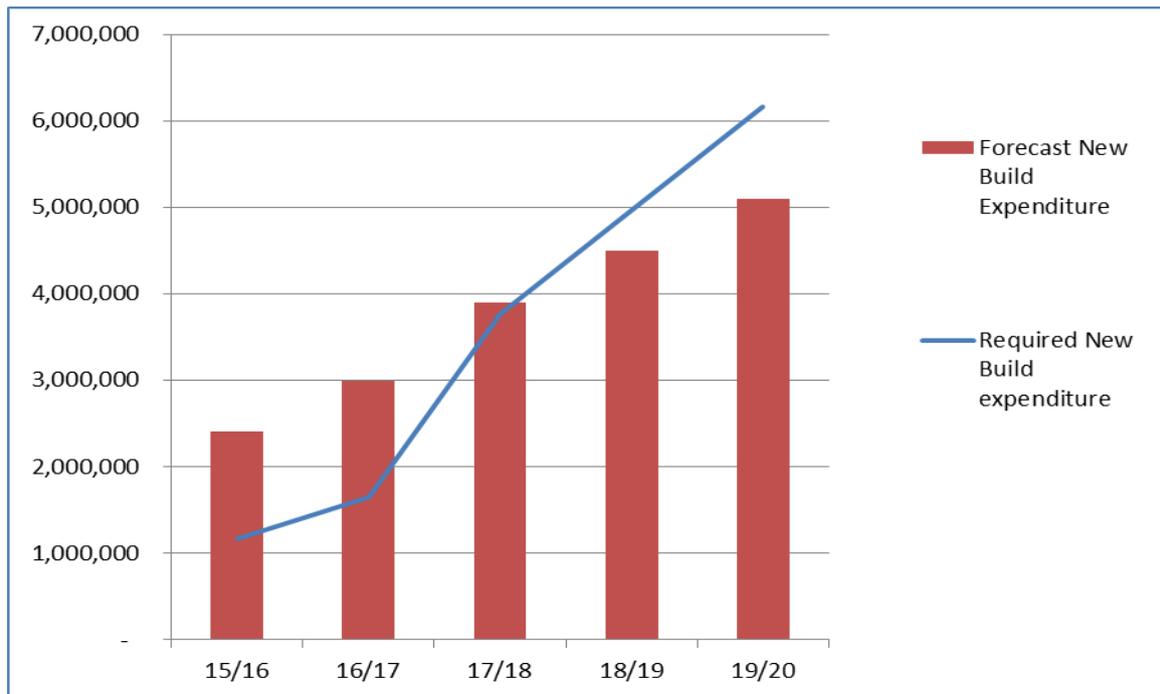
£'000	2015/16 Budget	2016/17 Budget	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	2019/20 Budget
Total Income	(15,715)	(16,019)	(16,355)	(16,698)	(17,041)
Total Expenditure	12,192	12,564	15,049	15,328	15,698
OPERATING (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(3,523)	(3,454)	(1,307)	(1,370)	(1,343)

29. The capital expenditure will be financed by the operating surplus and other available resources such as grants, capital receipts and contributions. The expenditure and available financing is detailed below, this includes slippage requested as detailed in the outturn figures. Where financing is limited there is availability to borrow from cash balances and repay over future years, but this is restricted by the HRA debt cap:



30. Due to an increase in Right to Buy sales over the predicted level there is a requirement for further capital investment into new build development schemes to ensure the Housing revenue Account meets the conditions under the 1-4-1 New Build agreement.

31. Below details the required expenditure under the agreement and the forecast spend:



32. The 1-4-1 agreement states for each right to buy sale the HRA must replenish housing stock using the retained receipt; receipts up to 30% of the total development costs can only be applied and are restricted to new social housing, excluding sheltered housing and development on existing social housing sites, the remaining balance has to be met using the HRA resources.

33. A continuation or acceleration in RTB sales, without the addition of new stock replacing RTB losses could be a cause for concern. Over a sustained period, net stock losses will increase the fixed overhead costs attributable to each unit of stock. This will reduce our ability to generate operating surpluses to support our development programme.

Business Plan Achievements in 2014/15

34. In 2014/15, our key housing achievements as a landlord were as follows:

- Progressed the Council's housebuilding programme – the council's third development of 12 homes under Phase 1 of the Mead Court development
- Gained planning permission for re-development of 2 sheltered schemes and garage site
- Garage and allotment review completed – new site feasibilities underway
- Upgraded sheltered schemes to ensure that they are of a high quality and fully accessible to all residents and visitors regardless of their disabilities. Work has included the provision of new Carecall systems and the installation of 'internet café' lounges for residents
- Applied to the Homes and Communities Agency for funding to help the costs of delivering the Council Housebuilding Programme
- Delivered another significant capital programme of works to the value of £4.5 million to tenants' homes

- Delivered all service improvements planned for 2014/15 including the re-structure of the repairs and maintenance service
- Transferred all repairs calls to the customer service centre in Saffron Walden resulting in a higher percentage of 'first time fixes'
- Completed another comprehensive review of our Housing Allocations Scheme, which resulted in a number of changes. These include strengthening local connection and financial eligibility criteria
- Introduced penalties for applicants who refuse offers of accommodation in which they have expressed an interest
- Held 3 Community Roadshows – 'Get Involved with Housing'
- Implemented new Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedures
- Developed our own in house Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme

Conclusion

35. The HRA delivered an operating surplus of £3.4 million.

36. The HRA remains better placed under the new financial regime than it was under the old national redistributive system.

37. The outturn is broadly in line with the assumptions set out in the approved HRA Business Plan. The HRA can continue to support the actions identified in the business plan and has the capacity to support contributions to reserves for future capital programmes.

38. Investment options for the council's housing stock and new development will need to be reviewed as part of the Business Plan process

39. RISK ANALYSIS

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The reported outturn may change as a result of the external audit process	2 - no bottom line adjustments identified in the last few years	2 - adjustments may be needed to some of the figures in the accounts, with possible effect on reserves balances	Close liaison with external auditors Report audit outcomes to Cabinet in September Statement of Accounts and the auditor's report to be received by the Performance & Audit Committee in September.
Changes in legislation increase the financial burden on the HRA	3 - central government currently reviewing the extension of Right to Buy	2 - adjustments to the 30 year business plan may be required)	Financial forecasting and modelling can ensure the HRA is prepared for changes to legislation
HRA Debt Settlement could be re-opened by Government	2 Possibility if council's do not demonstrate that they are delivering improvements	3 less financial resources	The Council has processes in place to manage the demands of local and national housing agendas

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.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

£000	2013/14 Outturn	2014/15				Variance
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn (P9)	Final Outturn	
<u>Housing Revenue Account Income</u>						
Dwelling Rents	(13,703)	(14,390)	(14,390)	(14,400)	(14,522)	(132)
Garage Rents	(201)	(210)	(210)	(210)	(207)	3
Land Rents	(3)	(3)	(3)	(2)	(3)	(0)
Charges for Services & Facilities	(763)	(777)	(777)	(811)	(806)	(29)
Contributions towards Expenditure	(3)	0	0	0	(1)	(1)
Investment Income	(22)	(10)	(10)	(22)	(23)	(13)
Other Income	(9)	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INCOME	(14,704)	(15,390)	(15,390)	(15,445)	(15,562)	(172)
<u>Housing Finance & Business Management</u>						
Business & Performance Management	402	467	440	379	393	(47)
Rents, Rates & Other Property Charges	20	36	36	79	74	38
	422	503	476	458	467	(9)
<u>Housing Maintenance & Repairs Service</u>						
Common Service Flats	232	275	275	273	207	(68)
Estate Maintenance	168	141	141	141	144	3
Housing Repairs	2,178	1,935	1,946	2,375	2,621	675
Housing Sewerage	47	49	49	55	54	5
Newport Depot	22	12	12	53	51	39
Property Services	382	460	462	452	444	(18)
	3,029	2,872	2,885	3,349	3,521	636
<u>Housing Management & Homelessness</u>						
Housing Services	245	253	275	319	314	39
Sheltered Housing Services	544	612	614	563	519	(95)
Supporting People	118	53	53	54	59	6
	907	918	942	936	892	(50)
Total Service Expenditure	4,358	4,293	4,303	4,743	4,881	578
<u>Other Costs</u>						
Depreciation - Dwellings (<i>transfer to MRR</i>)	3,081	3,136	3,136	3,136	3,136	0
Depreciation - Non-Dwellings (<i>transfer to MRR</i>)	104	125	125	125	131	6
Impairment - Non-Dwellings	0	0	0	100	(304)	(304)
Bad Debt Provision	(32)	150	150	150	46	(104)
Recharge from General Fund	1,069	1,211	1,211	1,150	1,069	(142)
HRA Share of Corporate Core	245	253	253	253	353	100
Interest/Costs re HRA Loan	2,626	2,625	2,625	2,625	2,636	11
Pension Fund - Added Years	20	19	19	20	19	0
Pension Fund - Deficit	76	198	198	238	236	38
Pay Award	0	20	10	0	0	(10)
Right to Buy Admin Costs Allowance	(23)	0	0	0	(16)	(16)
Total Non-Service Expenditure	7,166	7,737	7,727	7,797	7,308	(419)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	11,524	12,030	12,030	12,540	12,189	159
OPERATING (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(3,180)	(3,360)	(3,360)	(2,905)	(3,374)	(14)
<u>Funding of Capital Programme from HRA</u>						
Funding of Action Plan Capital Items	839	2,147	2,147	2,119	443	(1,704)
Funding of Capital from Revenue	2,023	1,097	1,097	1,146	854	(243)
	2,862	3,244	3,244	3,265	1,297	(1,947)
<u>Transfers to/from (-) Reserves</u>						
Capital Projects Reserve	0	(550)	(550)	(425)	0	550
Change Management Reserve	0	0	0	(200)	(200)	(200)
Sheltered Housing Reserve	0	798	798	0	0	(798)
Transformation Reserve	0	0	0	147	180	180
Working Balance	0	(132)	(132)	(150)	(217)	(85)
	0	116	116	(628)	(237)	(353)
Total Use of Reserves/Funding	2,862	3,360	3,360	2,637	1,060	(2,300)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(318)	0	0	(268)	(2,314)	(2,314)

5 YEAR PROJECTION

£'000	2015/16 Original Budget	2016/17 Original Budget	2017/18 Original Budget	2018/19 Original Budget	2019/20 Original Budget
Dwelling Rents	(14,672)	(14,974)	(15,277)	(15,585)	(15,900)
Garage Rents	(184)	(190)	(196)	(202)	(207)
Other Rents etc	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Charges for Services & Facilities	(835)	(841)	(868)	(896)	(918)
Investment Income	(21)	(11)	(11)	(11)	(12)
Total Income	(15,715)	(16,019)	(16,355)	(16,698)	(17,041)
<u>Housing Finance & Business Management</u>					
Business & Performance Management	378	390	403	415	426
Rents, Rates & Other Property Charges	36	37	38	40	41
	414	427	441	455	466
<u>Housing Maintenance & Repairs Service</u>					
Common Service Flats	241	249	257	265	272
Estate Maintenance	293	302	312	322	330
Housing Repairs	2,190	2,260	2,332	2,407	2,467
Housing Sewerage	54	56	58	59	61
Newport Depot	11	11	12	12	12
Property Services	320	330	341	352	361
	3,109	3,208	3,311	3,417	3,503
<u>Housing Management & Homelessness</u>					
Housing Services	324	334	345	356	365
Sheltered Housing Services	595	614	634	654	670
Supporting People	53	53	53	53	54
	972	1,001	1,032	1,063	1,090
<u>Other Costs</u>					
Depreciation - Council Dwellings	3,209	3,281	3,356	3,432	3,518
Depreciation - Other Assets	131	131	150	150	150
Impairment - Other Assets	100	0	0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	250	300	300	300	300
Recharge from General Fund	1,138	1,290	1,331	1,374	1,408
HRA Share of Corporate Core	234	269	278	287	294
Interest/Costs re HRA Loan	2,625	2,625	2,625	2,625	2,691
HRA Loan Repayments	0	0	2,000	2,000	2,050
Pension Costs	20	20	100	100	103
Pay Award	0	21	22	22	23
Minimum revenue provision	0	0	113	113	113
RTB admin allowance	(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)
	7,697	7,927	10,265	10,393	10,639
Total Expenditure	12,192	12,564	15,049	15,328	15,698
OPERATING (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(3,523)	(3,454)	(1,307)	(1,370)	(1,343)
Transfer to(+)/from(-) Reserves					
Change Management Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
Transformation Reserve	42	0	0	0	0
HRA Working Balance	0	0	0	0	0
Capital receipts - used for debt repayment	0	0	(1,793)	(152)	(152)
Revenue balance available for capital financing	(3,481)	(3,454)	(3,100)	(1,522)	(1,495)
<u>CAPITAL and RESERVES</u>					
Capital Spend	10,404	9,174	5,428	5,891	5,625
<u>Capital Financing</u>					
Potential funding from HCA	0	0	0	0	0
Grants/contributions	(800)	0	0	0	0
<u>Transfer to(+)/from(-) Capital Reserves</u>					
Capital receipts (1-4-1 and other)	(334)	(176)	(390)	(240)	(204)
Major Repairs	(3,340)	(3,412)	(3,487)	(3,582)	(3,545)
Capital Schemes	(1,353)	(2,110)	976	(200)	(155)
Release of funds from TA unit sale	0	0	0	0	0
Potential Developments	(778)	(22)	0	0	0
Sheltered Housing Projects	(318)	0	573	(347)	(226)
Capital financing from reserves and contributions	3,481	3,454	3,100	1,522	1,495
Requirement for borrowing	0	0	0	0	0

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 30th June 2015

6

Title: Housing Development Update

Portfolio Holder: Doug Malins – Housing Development Manager

Item for information

Summary

1. This report provides the Housing Board with a brief update of all current and pipeline Council housing development projects.

Recommendation

2. That the Housing Board notes the content of this report.

Financial Implications

3. Financial provision for the development of new Council owned homes is included within the Housing Revenue Account.

Background Papers

4. None Applicable.

Impact

5.

Communication/Consultation	Existing tenants, local residents, Town and Parish Councils and external agencies
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	All development projects are carried out with full compliance to Health and Safety Legislation.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	All local tenants and residents are consulted on individual projects to take account of their concerns and representations.
Sustainability	All development will provide thermally efficient homes that actively help to remedy the issue of fuel poverty.
Ward-specific impacts	District wide

Situation

6. The following provides a brief update on all of the current and pipeline development projects:

7. **Mead Court, Stansted Mountfitchet**

This project started on site in January 2014. This scheme involves the redevelopment of a bedsit sheltered scheme, with associated garage block and parking courts to provide 29 new affordable rented homes. The dwellings are to be a mixture of houses, bungalows and apartments, including 4 temporary accommodation flats. The project is being carried out in 2 phases, with final completion programmed for November 2015.

The first phase of the development (14 dwellings) was due to hand over in November 2014. However, the project has suffered some considerable delays. These delays have included asbestos being found in the ground, and UK Power Networks delaying the diversion of a high voltage cable by 6 weeks. However, the biggest delay was caused by Affinity Water, who could not find their water main when they arrived on site to connect up the properties. This caused a delay of over 3 months.

The first phase of 14 dwellings has now handed over, and the quality of the build is excellent.

However, this delay has caused another problem, in that nesting birds are now present in areas of the sheltered housing block that is to be demolished. The law protects nesting birds and therefore, there will be a further delay before demolition can commence. UDC development staff and our consultants are meeting with the contractor (Willmott Dixon) to assess how this delay will further affect the final completion date.

8. **Catons Lane, Saffron Walden**

This project is a development of 6 affordable rented homes, consisting of 4 two bedroom houses and 2 one bedroom houses. The site is a Council owned garage site which is in poor condition and where the majority of garages are void.

Following the procurement process, the Council has appointed Court Homes as the building contractor. They started on site on the 1st June 2015. The early stages of the work include demolition of the garages, breaking out of the hardstanding and forming a wider entrance to the site by utilising part of the garden of 14 Catons Lane.

Whilst at an early stage, the project is progressing well, which anticipated hand over of all dwellings in February 2016. This scheme is being funded through the Housing Revenue Account and Right to Buy receipts.

9. **Reynolds Court, Newport**

This project involves the redevelopment of an existing Council owned sheltered scheme. Reynolds Court was constructed in 1975 and consists of 31 sheltered housing flats and associated communal facilities. Of these, 22 of the flats provide small bedsit accommodation. There are also no lifts within the current scheme which affects

accessibility. The Sheltered Housing Asset Review identified the scheme as not fit for purpose, and a priority for investment.

Following extensive consultation with the existing tenants, it was agreed that the best solution would involve demolition and redevelopment. The proposed new sheltered scheme received detailed planning permission in March 2015 and consists of a development of 41 purpose built apartments (1 and 2 bedroom) along with all associated communal facilities constructed to meet modern day living standards.

The contractor procurement process is well under way, with the shortlisted contractors submitting their first stage tender return on the 29th June 2015. These returns will be assessed on both price and quality. All shortlisted contractors will be interviewed, before a preferred contractor is chosen to move forward to the second stage tender. The latest estimated build cost is £6.7 mill. Subject to agreeing an acceptable fixed price with the preferred contractor, it is anticipated that demolition and construction works will commence in November 2015.

The scheme is to be developed in two phases in order to enable existing tenants to remain on site. The project is anticipated to take 22 months, with the first phase completed in 12 months.

10. Hatherley Court, Saffron Walden

This project involves the remodelling and refurbishment of a Council owned sheltered scheme that was constructed in 1991. The scheme consists of 26 one bedroom flats. Of these, 18 of the flats have very small bedrooms, and all of the flats have small and inadequate kitchen facilities. The scheme has other poor attributes, such as the common room is located on the second floor with very poor natural light, no reception area, no identifiable entrance point and no scooter store/charging point.

The existing tenants have all been extensively consulted on the proposed remodelling/refurbishment programme of works. The proposed programme of work, which received planning permission in November 2014 includes, forming a new entrance lobby with canopy, providing a ground floor communal lounge, constructing an extension to provide two new apartments and remodelling all existing flats to increase the living space with the inclusion of Juliette balconies. All communal areas will be redecorated throughout.

The contractor procurement process is well underway, with the first stage tender going out to the shortlisted contractors in July 2015. It is anticipated that works will commence on site in January 2016.

11. Other Pipeline Development Projects

- Garage site redevelopments – 2 sites in Saffron Walden have already been identified, with all garage sites across the District also to be assessed for development potential.
- St. Johns Close, Saffron Walden – potential development of rear gardens. This depends on the Council successfully buying back two Right to Buy properties.
- Walden Place, Saffron Walden – potential remodelling of this sheltered scheme to separate the Listed Building from the 1980's sheltered block, providing new accommodation and communal facilities.
- Park Side, Saffron Walden – predominantly bedsit sheltered scheme in need of development assessment.

- Alexia House, Great Dunmow - predominantly bedsit sheltered scheme in need of development assessment.
- Frambury Lane, Newport – potential to sell this disused garage site with outline planning permission.
- Station Road, Wendens Ambo – potential to sell this garden plot with outline planning permission.
- Garden reduction sites – sites to be assessed for development potential

Risk Analysis

12.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Not achieving planning permission	1 Planners supportive	4 Development not possible	Pre-planning discussions with planners
Tenants not supportive	1 Tenants fully engaged in all projects	3 Tenants not satisfied	Continuous engagement.
Finance not available	1 Finance team engaged in budget planning	3 Development not possible for a period of time	Development sites to be programmed in conjunction with Finance Team

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: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 30 June 2015

7

Title: Homelessness Update

**Author: Judith Snares – Housing Needs and
Landlord Services Manager Ext 671**

Item for information

Summary

1. This report is to brief members on:-
 - The homelessness figures for the year 2014/15
 - The outcome of the recent peer review of the housing options service
 - The consultation process for the new homelessness strategy

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board notes this report

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. Housing Performance Indicator Report 2014/15
NPSS Peer Review Report

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	N/A
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	N/A
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

Homelessness Figures

6. The table below shows the comparative homelessness statistics for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

	2013/14	2014/15
Homelessness Presentations	97	112
Homelessness Acceptances	57	60
Homelessness Preventions	80	45
Number of Temporary Accommodation placements made in the year	76	81
Average time spent in Bed and Breakfast by accepted homeless families	3.71 weeks	1.73 weeks
Customers receiving in-depth housing advice	433	859

7. As can be seen the levels of homelessness are still increasing, having significantly increased in year 2012/13.
8. The time lag effects of the recession continue to put individuals and families under pressure that in some instances has led to homelessness.
9. There has, with careful managing of the council's own temporary accommodation, been a decrease in the time it has been necessary to place homeless families in bed and breakfast, although the number of households in temporary housing at the end of the year is up on 2013/14.
10. The housing options team have seen almost double the number of clients for in-depth housing advice in the past year compared to 2013/14.

11. Although the team have continued to prevent homelessness, the figures show that it is becoming increasingly difficult, with families more reluctant to keep adult children at home and with many private landlords unwilling to consider applicants on benefits and with Local Housing Allowance rates well below market rents in this area. The options we are able to offer people facing homelessness are very limited.
12. The picture for the rest of the coming year is that the situation is likely to remain difficult, with the welfare reform changes having an increased effect on people's incomes and the continued lack of affordable properties within the private rented sector.

Peer Review

13. The housing options service has recently undergone a peer review which is part of the National Practitioner Support Services' (NPSS) Gold Standard Challenge (Supported by the DCLG).
14. The service scored very well against councils that have already been reviewed, many with considerably more resources than in Uttlesford. The review identified many areas of good practice some of which the NPSS would like to share with other authorities. It also made some recommendations that could enhance the service further and officers will now be looking to implement these.
15. It was particularly pleasing that the reviewers noted that staff were observed to have excellent listening and empathy skills as housing options and homelessness prevention work can be very challenging.

Homelessness Strategy

16. The council is due to renew its homelessness strategy this year and as such the consultation process will shortly commence on this. We will begin by reviewing the current document which is a chapter within the current housing strategy. It is proposed that this time the homelessness strategy will return to being a stand-alone document, co-incidentally this was also a recommendation made during the peer review.
17. A draft strategy will be brought to the next meeting of the housing board for discussion. It will then be put out for public consultation before the final document is put before members for approval. It is anticipated that the new homelessness strategy will be in place in January 2016.

Risk Analysis

18.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
2. Cost of dealing with homelessness increases	2. The PI's show that homelessness still is on an upward trend	2. There will continue to be a need to have the funds available to	Careful monitoring of the homelessness budget allows for early notification if an overspend is

		meet the council's statutory homelessness duties	likely The Housing Options team continue to try to prevent homelessness where ever possible and keep the time that clients have to spend in nightly let accommodation to a minimum
2 Lack of temporary accommodation	2 There has been an increase in use of temporary accommodation over the past year due to increase in homelessness	3 If there is no other suitable temporary accommodation available then the use of bed and breakfast might increase. Legislation says that bed and breakfast should not be used for families, there is a risk of legal challenge if placements run over 6 weeks	Continue to monitor the availability of temporary accommodation and if necessary make provision from council stock for the use of existing properties as temporary accommodation
3 Council fails to produce a Homelessness Strategy	2 The document is a requirement by government and must be referred to when making homelessness decisions	3 There is a risk of challenge if the document is not updated	There is a timetable for producing the new document which will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the document is ready for adoption when the current strategy expires

1 = Little or no risk or impact

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

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

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Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 30 June 2015

8

Title: Allocations Policy

**Author: Judith Snares – Housing Needs and
Landlord Services Manager Ext 671**

Item for information
only

Summary

1. This report outlines proposed amendments required to the council's Allocations Policy following a change in government policy in relation to social housing tenants having a right to move for reasons of employment.
2. In addition to the proposed amendments to reflect this statutory guidance some further amendments have been proposed to offer clarification on the eligibility criteria and the allocation of properties on rural exception site.

Recommendations

3. That the Housing Board agrees amendments to the Allocations Policy and recommends the adoption of the amended policy to Cabinet.

Financial Implications

4. None

Background Papers

5. None

Published Papers

6. Providing social housing for local people. Statutory Guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities – DCLG December 2013
7. Uttlesford District Council's Allocations Policy
8. The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) Regulations 2015

Impact

- 9.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation has taken place with members , the public and partners
Community Safety	N/A

Equalities	The policy has been equality impact assessed
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The new government statutory instrument is mandatory
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	All wards
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

1. The Allocations Policy sets out who is eligible to apply for social rented housing in the district, how people apply for such housing and how applications are assessed and awarded priority. The policy was last amended in December 2014 but needs further revision to take account of recent statutory guidance. It has also been reviewed in response to lessons learnt from the first 6 months, including clarification on the eligibility criteria and the allocation of properties on rural exception sites.
2. Following the issue of a new statutory instrument by the government it is necessary to incorporate The Right to Move into the Allocations Policy (See Appendix 3 of the Allocations Scheme). The Right to Move requires the council to remove the local connection criteria from tenants of social housing who live outside of the district but who need to move to Uttlesford either to take up a definite offer of employment or to be able to maintain their existing employment.
3. The new regulation also requires that additional preference be given to such applicants. It is proposed that applicants meeting the strict Right to Move criteria are placed in one Band higher than their housing need. The council is able to restrict the numbers assisted by this regulation to no more than 1% of annual allocations and this has been incorporated into the policy change.
4. Following this new regulation we have also re-considered the council's current eligibility criteria regarding living outside of the district but working within the district as set out in para 5.2.1 iii of the policy.
5. It is proposed to amend the policy to avoid a situation that means that if you live and work in the district you qualify for housing after 3 years but if you live outside of the district but work in Uttlesford you can qualify for housing after 2 years. This criterion, agreed after the previous consultation, was seen as a way of making employment sustainable by allowing an applicant to live nearer their employment. It can however seem unfair to those already working and living within Uttlesford.
6. Two possible remedies are proposed for this. One is that the qualification period for residence and employment within the district are equalised at 3 years or the second option being that employment whether inside or outside of the district means that you qualify to go on the register after 2 years.

7. This second option can be seen as penalising those who are unable to work for whatever reason and ‘rewarding work’ as such was not a principle that was supported when the original consultation process happened, as it was thought that it could be seen as ‘discriminatory’.
8. Following legal guidance it is also necessary to add into the allocations policy the wording on rural exception allocations that has previously sat within Section 106 agreements.
9. The wording for this change has been agreed between the main provider of rural exception site schemes, Hastoe Housing Association and the council’s legal officers (See Appendix 2 of the Allocations Scheme).
10. This amendment to the policy will ensure that rural exception sites can continue to be allocated to those meeting specific rural parish connections
11. The only other amendment to the policy is clarification around the wording of 8.2.4 as to when tenants of flats will be considered for priority for houses of a similar size. When the policy was consulted on it was concurred that tenants who had lived in a flat for more than 2 years and had conducted their current tenancy in a satisfactory manner would have a higher priority. However this wording was omitted in the policy.

Risk Analysis

12.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That rural exception site allocations will not be lawful if the detail of how they are allocated does not sit within the Allocation Policy	3 Significant risk if the amendment is not made	2 Some Risk. There is a risk of legal challenge on rural exception allocations	By amending the Allocations Policy the allocation of rural exception site properties will be clearly defined and meet all legal requirements

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

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME (ALLOCATIONS POLICY)

Uttlesford District Council Housing

Allocations Scheme

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is required, by virtue of Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 to have an allocations scheme for determining priorities and the procedure to be followed in allocating housing accommodation.
- 1.2 We have written and published this policy so everyone can be clear how:
 - i. Council houses are allocated
 - ii. The homes we are offered by our Registered Providers (RP) are allocated
 - iii. Applicants on our housing register have some choice about the home they are offered;
 - iv. We meet the law's requirements about people whose housing needs we should consider.
 - v. We make best use of the available housing stock within the District
 - vi. We give preference to those applicants who have a local connection to the District
- 1.3 This Allocations Scheme has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, and has regard to the Allocation of Accommodation: Choice Based Lettings Code of Guidance 2008, Statutory Guidance on the Allocation of Social Housing 2009, The Localism Act 2011, The Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance for Local Housing Authorities England 2012, Providing social housing for local people: Statutory Guidance December 2013 and recent case law.
- 1.4 In operating the Allocations Scheme, the Council will have due regard to legislation which shall take precedence.

2. Choice Based Lettings

- 2.1 The Council allocates accommodation through a Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) called Home Option. The scheme enables applicants to express an interest in available properties which are advertised in a fortnightly publication and on a website. All applicants are provided with detailed information explaining how the scheme operates.

2.2 Under the CBL Scheme, applicants are able to register their interest in properties which are suitable for their household size and needs in accordance with the terms of this Allocations Policy.

2.3 Direct Lets

2.3.1 Direct Lets will not be part of the choice based lettings scheme.

2.3.2 Direct Lets may apply in the following circumstances:

- i. Extra care properties
- ii. If a property is needed to house someone in council property temporarily
- iii. In cases of where someone has to be moved immediately a direct let may be made
- iv. In the case of a specially adapted property built for a specific person
- v. Decants – Council properties required to be vacated by the Council for a specific purpose
- vi. If a previously joint applicant qualifies to be offered the property of which they were previously a joint tenant we will make them an offer of that property
- vii. Where applicants owed a homelessness duty by the Council under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended who do not meet the Council's Allocation's Policy eligibility criteria.
- viii. In cases where a multi-agency team requests a planned move to resolve a serious management situation a direct let (one offer only to be made) may only be considered if the situation cannot be resolved by any other means and the tenant is either an existing Uttlesford tenant or the tenant of a RP property within Uttlesford and the subsequent vacancy would be allocated through the council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme

3. The Allocations Scheme

3.1 Allocation of accommodation will be through the Housing Register in accordance with the provisions of the Allocations Scheme.

3.2 The Council recognises that there may be some exceptional situations not covered by the Allocations Scheme. In such instances, Assistant Director

of Housing and Environmental Health will have delegated authority to make decisions, as he/she considers appropriate and these will be fully documented.

3.3 The Scheme will apply to vacancies in the Council's own housing stock and to vacancies in accommodation in the District belonging to RPs for which the Council is required to make nominations.

3.4 The provisions of this Allocations Scheme will apply to applicants on the Council's Housing Register at the effective date of this Allocations Scheme, as well as those who apply after the effective date.

3.5 **The Allocations Scheme will not apply in the following cases;**

- i. Where a tenant succeeds to a secure tenancy on the death of a tenant
- ii. Where a tenancy is assigned to a person who would qualify to succeed to the secure tenant
- iii. Where a tenancy is assigned by way of a mutual exchange to an existing secure tenant or RP assured tenant
- iv. Where a tenancy is disposed through the courts (under matrimonial and family proceedings)
- v. Where a priority transfer is agreed in urgent circumstances due to person's safety being at risk.
- vi. Where a property has been identified as temporary accommodation
- vii. Where the council needs to provide alternative accommodation for a council tenant in order to carry out repairs or improvements to their property.
- viii. Where the council has a duty to re-house home owners following a compulsory purchase, provide suitable alternative accommodation under the Land Compensation Act 1973, s 39, or under the Rent Agricultural Act 1976. (If it is not possible to provide a permanent tenancy immediately, the applicant will be registered within band A of the scheme).
- ix. Where the council grants a secure tenancy to a former owner of a defective home under the Housing Act 1985, s554 or s555

4. The Housing Register

4.1 The Council is not legally obliged to maintain a Housing Register but has chosen to do so.

- 4.2 The Housing Register will be maintained by Housing Services at the Council Offices in Saffron Walden.
- 4.3 The Housing Register will be open to all categories of person except those who are ineligible as defined at Paragraph 5.
- 4.4 The Housing Register will be open to;
- i. homeseekers of 18 years of age and over
 - ii. current council or RP tenants
 - iii. 16 and 17 year olds owed a full housing duty by a local housing authority under homelessness legislation.
 - iv. 17yr 6mth old Care Leavers who were resident in Uttlesford at the time they were placed in Care

5. Eligibility categories

5.1 Eligibility

- 5.1.1 The following categories of applicant may not be eligible for the Housing Register;
- i. Persons subject to immigration control (except those in classes prescribed by the Secretary of State as being eligible for an allocation of housing)
 - ii. Persons not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (i.e. the U.K., Channel Islands, Isle of Man and the Irish Republic)
- 5.1.2 Any person making an application who is identified as falling under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 will be assessed in accordance with the Act.
- 5.1.3 Eligibility for housing will be determined in accordance with the Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local authorities in England issued by the government under s169 of the Housing Act 1996 Part 6 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
- 5.1.4 Any other persons the Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe as persons from abroad who are ineligible to be allocated housing by local authorities in England.

5.2 Local Connection Eligibility

- 5.2.1 Any applicant who does not meet the following local connection eligibility criteria will be ineligible and therefore not qualify to join the housing register.

- i. Have lived continuously in the Uttlesford District for the last three years (time spent away at University or college will count as living continuously within the district providing the applicant had previously lived in the district immediately prior to the start of their course.)
- ii. Living outside of Uttlesford but have immediate family members who have lived in Uttlesford for the last 5 years and from whom they are receiving substantial ongoing support.
- iii. Living outside of Uttlesford but have been permanently employed in the Uttlesford District for a minimum of 3 years and working at least 24 hours per week – **Possible Alternative criteria** – *Having current permanent employment in the Uttlesford District for a minimum of 2 years and working at least 24 hours per week. (This would apply to those living in or outside the district)*
- iv. Applicants who meet the Right to Move criteria as set out in Appendix 3.
- v. Applicants who were registered on the Housing Register on **31st Dec 2014** and who have lived in the District for at least two and a half years continuously prior to this date or whose immediate family support connection has lived here continuously for the past four and a half years prior to this date.
- vi. Other special reasons to be agreed by the Assistant Director: Housing and Environmental Health at their discretion – for example, where an applicant has no safe connection to another area due to violence.

5.2.2 The following categories of person will be exempt from local connection criteria:-

- i. Existing social housing tenants residing in the Uttlesford District
- ii. Applicants who are serving members of the regular forces or who have served in the regular forces or been honourably discharged, if the application is made within five years of their date of discharge.
- iii. Applicants who have recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner where:-

- the spouse or civil partner has served in the regular forces; and
- their death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service
- Is serving or has served in the reserve forces and who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service and the application is made within five years of discharge.

5.3 Financial Eligibility

- 5.3.1 Any applicant who in the opinion of the Council has sufficient funds including: annual income, residential property equity, savings, or other assets to enable them to meet their own housing costs by open market purchase or open market renting will be ineligible to join the housing register.
- 5.3.2 Any lump sums received as compensation for injury or disability sustained on active service by either, members of the Armed Forces, former Service personnel, bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Regular Forces, or serving or former members of the Reserve Forces, will be disregarded from this criterion
- 5.3.3 Owner Occupiers, or other applicants who are financially ineligible to join the housing register, will be eligible to join if they qualify for sheltered housing.

5.4 Housing Related Debt Eligibility

- 5.4.1 Applicants with housing related debt will generally not be eligible to join the housing register if they are not addressing the debt. Housing related debt includes rent arrears to the Council, RP, other local authority or private landlord, also Council Tax and any monies given through the Councils Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme.
- 5.4.2 When a financial assessment carried out by the Council shows that the debt cannot be cleared immediately then a realistic and affordable repayment arrangement should be agreed to clear the debt.
- 5.4.3 Applicants will become eligible to join the register if they have an agreed repayment plan in place and have made regular payments for at least 12 months or the debt has been cleared in full.
- 5.4.4 Council and RP tenants who have been accepted onto the housing register but have rent arrears on their current property will not be

offered another tenancy until all rent arrears have been cleared in full.

5.4.5 Accepted homeless applicants who have rent arrears on their current temporary accommodation will not be offered accommodation that would discharge the Council's homelessness duty until the rent arrears are cleared in full.

5.4.6 Housing Associations may also hold their own policy on debt.

5.4.7 All cases of housing related debt will be considered on an individual basis taking account of all the information provided by all interested parties.

5.5 Exclusions from the Housing Register

5.5.1 The Council may exclude someone from the register if it considers it proportionate and reasonable to do so as a result of unacceptable behaviour. The Council will take into account all relevant factors such as health, dependants and the individual circumstances of the applicant when making these decisions. The decision to exclude someone from the housing register will in the first instance be made by the Housing Needs Team Leader.

5.6 Unacceptable Behaviour

5.6.1 "Unacceptable behaviour" " is defined as behaviour, which would, if the person was either a secure tenant or a member of a secure tenants household, entitle a landlord to a possession order under any of grounds 1 to 7 of HA 1985 sch 2."

5.6.2 If an applicant who has previously been refused an application onto the housing register because of unacceptable behaviour and considers that their unacceptable behaviour should no longer be held against them they can complete a new application from.

5.6.3 When making decisions regarding unacceptable behaviour Uttlesford District Council will consider:

- i. If the applicant (or a member of their household) has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant.
- ii. When the unacceptable behaviour took place. Consideration will be given to the length of time that has elapsed, this will be a minimum of two years and whether there has been any change in circumstances.

- iii. What action the landlord would have taken against the perpetrator of the unacceptable behaviour. The behaviour must be serious enough for the landlord to be granted a possession order as detailed above.
- iv. Whether the behaviour is serious enough to make the applicant unsuitable as a tenant.
- v. If the applicant or any member of their household is subject to an Anti-Social Behaviour Order an Acceptable Behaviour Contract or any similar penalty introduced by the ASB and Crime and Policing Act 2014 or any relevant legislation.

5.6.4 The Council may decide to exclude existing applicants from the register where they become aware of unacceptable behaviour that would make them unsuitable to be a tenant.

5.6.5 All decisions made by the Council in relation to excluding applicants from the housing register are subject to review if requested by the applicant (see 16).

5.7 Notifying an ineligible applicant

5.7.1 Applications from ineligible applicants will not be registered. The applicant will be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for the decision will be explained to them.

6. Application to the Housing Register

6.1 Advice and Information

6.1.1 The Council will ensure that advice and information is available free of charge to persons in the District about the right to make an application for housing.

6.1.2 The advice and information can be provided by the Council on the phone, by letter/e-mail or in person at the Council Offices. Applicants may also seek advice from other agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau.

6.1.3 Applicants will be required to complete an on-line application form for inclusion on the Housing Register and to provide supporting documentation as the Council deems appropriate to allow an assessment of their entitlement to housing accommodation to be made.

6.2 Joint Applicants

6.2.1 Applicants may be a joint applicant with another person although for a joint application, both applicants must be eligible under this policy, except for the local connection criteria where only one of joint applicants needs to meet the criteria.

6.3 Definition of a household

6.3.1 Applicants should only include persons on their application who will be part of their household and occupying the accommodation as their only principal home.

6.3.2 Non- dependent children/step-children or adults previously dependant on the applicant, will only be considered as part of the household where they have had continuous recorded residence with the applicant and have never had their own independent accommodation, unless this was whilst in further education.

6.3.3 Applicants with a shared residence order or staying contact for children are not automatically entitled to bedrooms for their children. The general principle is that a child needs one home of an adequate size, and that the council will not accept responsibility for providing a second home for children. The council will make an assessment based on the individual circumstances.

6.4 Documents

6.4.1 As part of the application process, applicants will be asked to provide documentary proof of certain things such as:

- i. Photographic proof of their identity and that of all those included on their application
- ii. Their current address
- iii. Proof of meeting the local connection residency criteria
- iv. Details of any dependants living with them
- v. Their income
- vi. Their savings
- vii. Details relating to previous accommodation where appropriate

- 6.4.2 We may require additional information according to an applicant's circumstances and may sometimes need to contact third parties to verify the information that the applicant has given us. By completing the application form applicants, as detailed on the form, are giving consent for us to do this.
- 6.4.3 If all the required supporting documents are not received within 28 days the application will be cancelled.
- 6.4.4 If assistance is needed in making an application to the Housing Register help will be available from the Housing Services Department.

6.5 User guide

6.5.1 When an applicant has been found to be eligible to join the Register, we will assess their application and they will receive a letter of confirmation and access to an on-line Scheme User Guide which will tell them:

- i. Their HomeOption identification number;
- ii. The Band that their application has been placed in and the date from which this takes effect
- iii. The size of home for which they are eligible
- iv. Details of how they can register interest for a home under CBL

6.5.2 If from an application form we have identified that an applicant may need assistance with using the Scheme we will add their name to a database of applicants for whom assistance with making expressions of interest is offered. Applicants can be added to this list at any time upon their request.

6.5.3 A printed version of the User Guide can be provided on request.

6.6 Renewal of applications

6.6.1 In order to keep the Housing Register up to date, applicants will be required to renew their application, this will normally be on the anniversary of their application. Applicants will be prompted to renew their application when they log on to the HomeOption website. They will also be sent an email to the email address supplied on their application or a letter to the address registered on the application.

6.6.2 If an applicant fails to renew their application within 28 days from the date they received a communication to say that renewal is due, they will be deleted from the Housing Register without further notification.

6.7 Cancelling an application

6.7.1 We will only cancel an application if:

- i. The applicant has written to us to ask us to cancel it, or
- ii. The applicant has not responded to the renewal requests (see paragraph 6.6 above) or
- iii. The applicant has accepted an offer of accommodation through HomeOption.
- iv. The applicant has ceased to be eligible (see paragraph 5 above), or
- v. The applicant has made false or deliberately misleading statements in connection with their application (see paragraphs 18 below)
- vi. The applicant has not provided documentary proofs for their application within 28 days of completing the on-line form

7. Access to Information

7.1 Upon written request, an applicant, will be able to;

- i. receive a copy of their details entered on the Housing Register free of charge
- ii. receive copies of documents provided by them
- iii. have access to their file in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998
- iv. ask for a formal review of any decisions about the facts of their case
- v. be informed in writing of any decision about the facts of their case and of their right to request a review of any such decision
- vi. receive general information to enable an applicant to assess;

- how their application is likely to be treated
- whether accommodation appropriate to their needs is likely to be available and, if so, when

8. Assessment of Housing Need and Allocation of Properties

8.1 Assessing Housing Need

- 8.1.1 Applicants housing circumstances are assessed on their individual circumstances and their application placed in one of five Bands. These Bands ensure that we give greatest priority to those in the greatest housing need, so that we make the most effective use of available homes. The law also requires us to give preference to certain categories of housing need, and these have been included within the banding priority criteria.
- 8.1.2 Band A is considered the highest priority of housing need, Band B the next highest etc., with Band E being the lowest priority.
- 8.1.3 Within each Band, the applicant with the greatest priority is the applicant who has spent the longest time in that band.
- 8.1.4 Some allocations will be dealt with outside the scheme; these are explained in paragraphs 2.3 and 3.2.
- 8.1.5 Where an applicant or one of joint applicants is a tenant of the Council at the time of the application then the property subject to that tenancy will be inspected by the Council to ensure compliance with the terms of the tenancy agreement before the application is processed.
- 8.1.6 Further details of how each band has been assessed is provided below:

The Band Criteria

8.1.6.1 **BAND A**

Applicants meet at least one of the following criteria

- i. Accepted Homeless in severe need
- ii. Critical Medical/Welfare award – to include emergency situations

- iii. Relationship breakdowns in council properties where applicants are under-occupying but have been assessed as having housing need within Uttlesford
- iv. Successor tenants in council properties where applicants are under-occupying
- v. Releasing a property in need (council or RP property that the Council has nominations rights to) or where it prevents the Council making expensive alterations to a property
- vi. Those applicants within Uttlesford required to leave their homes as a result of an emergency prohibition order served in relation to the premises under the Housing Act 2004
- vii. Uttlesford Council tenants, or tenants in RP property where the Council will receive the nomination, who are currently in accommodation larger than their needs(Uttlesford tenants may be eligible for removal expenses grant see paragraph 9.21 below)
- viii. Multiple needs - If someone has two or more needs in band B they will be moved to band A (accepted homeless cases do not come under this category – if additional preference is needed for homeless cases they will be assessed as accepted homeless in severe need)

8.1.6.2 High welfare and multiple needs in band A would be expected to express an interest within 4 cycles of available properties otherwise priority may be reduced.

8.1.6.3 **BAND B**

Applicants meet at least one of the following criteria

- i. Serious Medical/Welfare award
- ii. Overcrowding in permanent social housing within Uttlesford
- iii. Accepted homeless cases
- iv. Applicants threatened with homelessness who are likely to lose their accommodation through no fault of their own, for which there is no legal redress, who are

assessed by the council as likely to be in priority need and who are receiving housing advice from the council to prevent homelessness. If in rented accommodation under an assured or assured short hold tenancy or tied accommodation this threat will be deemed to exist at the point at which the applicant's landlord can begin an application to the Court to seek possession of the property. This is the point at which a notice of seeking possession or notice to quit expires and there is a clear indication that the landlord intends to seek possession.

- v. Nominations from supported housing schemes where the Council has agreed move-on arrangements and the applicant is ready to move on. These applicants will be able to use the CBL scheme for a period of 4 weeks from the date they are placed into this band to express interest in any suitable flatted accommodation. If they have not been successful after the end of this period they will be made one offer of suitable flatted accommodation which may be either in the private or social sectors which if they refuse will result in them being down banded to a band that reflects their housing need.
- vi. A prohibition order or demolition order has been served, or is about to be served in relation to the applicant's dwelling. This indicates that the property contains one or more category 1 hazards that probably cannot be remedied.
- vii. An improvement notice has been, or is about to be, served in relation to the applicant's dwelling and :-
 - a. The remedies that are needed to reduce the hazard will require the property to be vacated for a significant period of time
 - b. The cost of the remedies are beyond the means of the applicant (where applicable)
 - c. The remedies will make the property unsuitable for occupation by the applicant
- viii. Multiple needs – Applicants with four or more needs in band C will move to band B

8.1.6.4 **BAND C**

Applicants meet at least one of the following criteria

- i. Moderate medical/welfare award
- ii. Notice of Seeking Possession
- iii. Notice to Quit - other than s.21 HA 1988 notices served at the start of a tenancy
- iv. Applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness who are assessed by the council as not in priority need
- v. Applicants who following a homelessness application have been deemed by the council to be in priority need but intentionally homelessness
- vi. No fixed abode
- vii. Overcrowded in private rented accommodation or social housing outside Uttlesford
- viii. Fixed term licensees
- ix. Shared facilities – not generally applicable for single applicants under 35yrs
- x. Lacking facilities
- xi. A hazard awareness notice has been served in relation to a category 1 or 2 hazard at the applicant's dwelling

and

the remedies that are needed to reduce the hazard will require the property to be vacated for a significant period of time;

or

the cost of the remedies are beyond the means of the applicant (where applicable);

or

the remedies will make the property unsuitable for occupation by the applicant

8.1.6.5 **BAND D**

- i. Applicants assessed as meeting Right to Move criteria who have been placed in one Band higher than their housing need.

8.1.6.6 **BAND E**

Applicant meets at least one of the following criteria

- i. Caravan or mobile home but no housing need
- ii. Tied accommodation but no housing need
- iii. Applicants who live in a property that is adequate to meet their needs in terms of property type, size and facilities.
- iv. In prison
- v. A suspended prohibition order or improvement notice has been or will be served by the Environmental Health Department in relation to the applicant's dwelling but the criteria leading to it becoming active are not met by the applicant.
- vi. A hazard awareness notice or improvement notice has been or will be served in relation to the applicant's dwelling but the specified remedies are low cost and straight-forward to achieve.

8.2 Allocation of Properties

8.2.1 With the exception of those allocations dealt with outside the scheme; these are explained in paragraphs 2.3 and 3.2 properties will be allocated to the applicant who expressed interest in the property, who is in the highest Band and with the earliest priority date within that Band.

8.2.2 At the time of the offer of a property applicants will be asked to provide proof that they continue to meet all eligibility criteria to be included on the housing register

8.2.3 Where two applicants have the same priority date in the Band the property will be allocated to the household who it is judged to have the family composition that makes best use of the accommodation. This will be decided by a Senior Manager and the reasons documented

8.2.4 Houses – Transfer applicants and homeseekers who are tenants of RP accommodation within Uttlesford, where UDC has the nomination rights, will be given priority for houses with the same number of bedrooms as their current property ahead of other homeseekers, even if they are in a lower Band or have a lower priority date, providing they meet the following criteria:-

- Currently living in a flat
- Have lived in the flat for more than 2 years
- Have conducted their current tenancy in a satisfactory manner

For properties larger than one bedroom this will only apply if there are children under 16 within the household.

9. Housing Priority

9.1 Deciding who has priority on the register

9.1.1 Applicants will be placed in the relevant Band defined by their specific circumstances. Reasonable preference, where appropriate, is awarded in accordance with the legal duties of the Council.

9.2 Overcrowding

9.2.1 Homeless applicants placed in temporary accommodation by the council will not be assessed under the criteria for overcrowding.

9.2.2 Applicants will be placed in Band B if they are overcrowded, i.e. lacking one or more bedrooms and live in Council or Housing Association properties where the Council has nomination rights to the RP.

9.2.3 Applicants will be placed in Band C if they are overcrowded in private rented accommodation or living with relatives or friends.

9.2.4 Overcrowded applicants with a local connection to Uttlesford, but living in Council or Housing Association properties outside the District will be in Band C.

9.2.5 Rooms which do not meet the standards for use as living accommodation for one person (the standards are given in the Housing Act 1985 Part X) will not be counted.

9.2.6 If applicants need an extra room for medical or welfare/hardship reasons they will not be considered overcrowded but will be assessed for medical or welfare priority.

9.2.7 Overcrowding priority will not be given if someone moved into the applicants' household making them overcrowded. This will be looked at on welfare grounds.

9.2.8 Where an applicant is pregnant and the birth of the child will mean that they are entitled to a larger property, the applicant will not receive overcrowding priority until the baby is born.

9.3 Children sharing bedrooms

9.3.1 Two children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom until one of them reaches the age of 16.

9.3.2 Two children of the opposite sex are expected to share a bedroom until the oldest is 10 years old.

9.4 Applicants without children

9.4.1 Single applicants and couples without children who are living in overcrowded conditions will not be given priority for overcrowding unless they are in self-contained accommodation which is too small, for example a couple in a one person bed-sit. Young adults living with their parents or people temporarily sharing with friends will not get overcrowding priority.

9.5 Disrepair, poor design and lack of facilities

9.5.1 Any complaint about poor repair within Council or RP properties must be reported to the applicant's landlord's Repairs service.

9.5.2 Applicants living in private sector accommodation in poor condition must be referred to the Council's Environmental Health Department who will assess the situation and then make their recommendations according to the Allocations Scheme.

9.5.3 If an applicant lacks facilities such as cooking facilities, washing facilities, toilet facilities or adequate heating they will be placed in Band C.

9.6 Sharing with another household

9.6.1 Applicants will be placed in Band C if they share any of the following facilities with either people they are not related to or their family if they are wishing to live separately from them.

- i. living room

- ii. kitchen
- iii. bathroom or toilet.

9.6.2 Single applicants under the age of 35 who are sharing will generally be considered as adequately housed. Consideration will be given for applicants in special circumstances.

9.7 People living in mobile homes or caravans

9.7.1 Applicants living in a caravan, mobile home or houseboat will be placed in band E if there is no other housing need, reflecting parity with other private sector applicants.

9.7.2 It does not matter if the caravan is on a site or not or if they own or rent the property.

9.7.3 If their accommodation lacks facilities or is in poor repair (see paragraph 9.5) they will be placed in band C.

9.8 Homelessness

9.8.1 Accepted homeless households are applicants to whom:

- i. The Council has accepted a duty under Part VII of The Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 (the duty towards households who are in priority need and unintentionally homeless) **and**
- ii. the council accepts a duty to provide suitable accommodation.

9.8.2 In the first instance the Council will look to discharge its homelessness duty for all accepted homeless applicants within the private rented sector. The Council will ensure that any offer of private rented housing is appropriate to the needs of the household, that the length of any tenancy is a minimum of 12 months and that the property meets the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012. An assessment will also be carried out to assess the affordability of the property, including the eligibility to receive Local Housing Allowance/Housing Benefit. The property may not be within the Uttlesford District.

9.8.3 Whilst the Council is looking for suitable accommodation within the private sector, applicants who meet the Council's Allocation Policy eligibility criteria will be allowed to make expressions of interest on suitable properties advertised through the CBL system. If after a period of 2 cycles from when the applicant received their S.184

decision letter they have either not been offered a suitable private sector property or been successful through the CBL system, the Council will express interest on their behalf and make one final offer of suitable accommodation. This will be in whichever tenure is available first and will generally be flatted accommodation. If this offer is refused, the Council's homelessness duty under the Housing Act 1996 to provide accommodation will be considered to have been discharged.

- 9.8.4 Accepted homeless applicants, who meet the Council's Allocation Policy eligibility criteria, who are housed in temporary accommodation provided by the Council, including Bed & Breakfast accommodation, hostels or homeless at home, will be placed in Band B. Accepted homeless applicants in severe need will be placed in Band A
- 9.8.5 Homeless applicants who do not meet the Council's Allocation Policy eligibility criteria will be made only one offer of suitable accommodation. This will be a final offer and will generally be a in the private rented sector. If a suitable private rented sector offer cannot be made within 3 months of the Section 184 decision letter, the council may make one final offer of suitable flatted social housing accommodation. If this offer is refused, the Council's homelessness duty under the Housing Act 1996 to provide accommodation will be considered to have been discharged.
- 9.8.6 When a private rented property becomes available it will be offered to the accepted homeless applicant for whom the property is suitable and if this is more than one applicant, it will be offered to the applicant with the earliest homeless application date.
- 9.8.7. Any private rented tenancy that discharges the council's homelessness duty will be for a period of not less than 12 months. If within 2 years, beginning with the date on which the applicant accepts a private rented sector offer, the applicant re-applies for accommodation, or for assistance in obtaining accommodation, and if the applicant is found to be homeless (from the date of the expiry of the termination notice) and did not become homeless intentionally from the private rented accommodation, the Council will accept a homelessness duty regardless of whether the applicant has a priority need.

9.9 Accepted homeless households in severe need

- 9.9.1 These are applicants to whom:
- i. the council has accepted a duty under the Homelessness legislation **and**
 - ii. they meet the Councils eligibility criteria

- iii. are elderly and vulnerable due to frailty* **or**
- iv. have a terminal or long-term illness **or**
- v. have severe mental health problems, have been unable to cope in temporary accommodation, and have been 'sectioned' or are likely to be admitted under the Mental Health Act **or**
- vi. are permanent wheelchair users **or**
- vii. are council or RSL tenants who have an urgent need to transfer as they are suffering from violence or threats of violence and are considered to be at significant risk

9.9.2 Where the above circumstances apply these applicants will be placed in Band A.

9.9.3 The Council will decide who will be placed in Band A. Recommendations will be made by the Housing Officer dealing with the case because they have the most accurate and up-to-date information on the applicant, due to the investigations carried out before an applicant is accepted as homeless.

9.9.4 *Elderly non-frail applicants may still be placed in Band A, however clear supporting evidence will be required to support their application.

9.10 Other Homeless households not owed a duty

Other homeless applicants who are not owed a duty under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 (the duty towards households who are in priority need and unintentionally homeless) are still entitled to reasonable preference and will be placed in Band C of the scheme.

9.11 Prevention of homelessness

9.11.1 Applicants threatened with homelessness who are likely to lose their accommodation through no fault of their own, for which there is no legal redress, who are assessed by the council as likely to be in priority need and who are receiving housing advice from the council to prevent homelessness will be placed in Band B. If the applicant is in rented accommodation under an assured or assured short hold tenancy the threat of homelessness will be deemed to exist at the point at which your landlord can begin an application to

the Court to seek possession of their property. This is the point at which a notice of seeking possession or notice to quit expires.

9.11.2 If they are subsequently accepted as homeless they will remain in Band B but their earlier effective date will remain.

9.11.3 An applicant is subsequently deemed to be not working with the Council and who has not expressed interest in suitable properties advertised through the CBL system or has refused a suitable offer of accommodation will be down banded to the Band that otherwise reflects their housing need.

9.12 Assured shorthold tenants under notice

9.12.1 Assured shorthold tenants who have received a 'Notice Requiring Possession'/ Notice to Quit from their landlord will be placed in Band C if there is less than three months before the notice expires.

9.12.2 All applicants will be offered advice regarding their housing options.

9.13 Lodger under notice

9.13.1 This applies to applicants living in the same property as their landlord.

9.13.2 They must be renting a room that is for their own use only, and be paying a market rent.

9.13.3 Proof that notice has been served is required.

9.13.4 They will be placed in Band C if there is less than three months before the notice expires.

9.13.5 The Council will then check to see whether the notice will be enforced.

9.14 Tenants of tied accommodation under notice

9.14.1 Tenants in tied accommodation with no need to move will be placed in Band E.

9.14.2 If they have received a legal notice asking them to leave that accommodation they will be placed in Band C.

9.15 Protected tenants with a possession order

9.15.1 This applies to a tenant with a 'protected' tenancy (that is a tenancy with protection from eviction, but not an assured shorthold tenancy).

9.12.5 They must have been served with a court order for possession and then will be placed in Band C.

9.16 Fixed-term licensee

9.16.1 This applies to applicants living in supported housing schemes. Applicants in these schemes will be placed in Band C.

9.16.2 Applicants in supported housing schemes where the Council has agreed move-on arrangements will be placed in Band B if they are judged as ready to move on.

9.16.3 Applicants accepted by the Council as being owed the full homeless duty and in a specialist refuge for victims of domestic abuse will be placed in Band B

9.17 Applicants with no fixed address

9.17.1 This applies to applicants who have no fixed address.

9.17.2 They will be placed in Band C.

9.17.3 If they are in prison they will be placed in Band E.

9.18 Medical, welfare, hardship and harrassment

9.18.1 Important: priority can only be awarded under **one** heading: medical, welfare, hardship or harassment.

9.18.2 Applicants can be assessed under all headings, but get awarded priority under only one heading.

9.18.3 Any medical or welfare priority can be reassessed if an applicant's circumstances change.

9.19 Medical assessments

9.19.1 This applies if an applicant's present housing is detrimental to their health, or if a move to more suitable accommodation would have a positive effect on their health.

9.19.2 Applicants may also be awarded priority if the applicant is asking to be rehoused so they can receive care or specialist support.

9.19.3 Extra information may be sought from private sector landlords, housing officers, GPs, health visitors and other parties.

9.19.4 The table below is used to act as a guide to priority:

Effect on housing	Medical Problem			
	Very Serious	Serious	Moderate	Low
Very Serious	Band A	Band B	Band C	No award
Serious	Band B	Band B	Band C	No award
Moderate	Band C	Band C	Band C	No award
Low	No award	No award	No award	No award

9.19.5 Assessments of medical priority will be carried out by two senior officers in consultation with any officers with direct knowledge of the applicants and using all information available at the time and using the above guide.

9.19.6 Applicants accepted under Homelessness legislation will not be eligible for medical priority. If a homeless applicant's temporary accommodation is unsuitable on medical grounds the Council will first look to see if alternative temporary accommodation can be found.

9.19.7 Homeless households can be considered through a medical assessment if an extra room is required on medical grounds.

9.20 Welfare/Hardship/Harassment assessments

9.20.1 This applies if at least one person in the household is vulnerable and less able to find settled or suitable accommodation.

9.20.2 These people will have a need to move but may not get medical priority because their present housing may be suitable for their needs.

9.20.3 The table below is used to act as a guide to priority:

Need for settled suitable accommodation	Level of Vulnerability		
	High	Medium	Low
High	Band A	Band B	Band C
Medium	Band B	Band B	Band C
Low	Band C	Band C	Band C

9.20.4 Welfare/Hardship/Harassment priority will be carried out by two senior officers in consultation with any officers with direct knowledge of the applicants and using all information available at the time and using the above guide.

9.20.5 Homeless applicants will not be looked at under welfare issues. If a homeless applicant's temporary accommodation is unsuitable on

welfare grounds the Council will first look to see if alternative temporary accommodation can be found.

9.20.6 If a homeless applicant or household is particularly vulnerable and they may be at significant risk in temporary accommodation the Council can consider the category of 'accepted homeless applicants in particular need' to increase them to band A (see paragraph 9.9).

9.21 Tenants with a home that is bigger than they need

9.21.1 This applies to Uttlesford District Council secure tenants or tenants of RPs (where the Council has nomination rights), who are 'under-occupying' their homes and want to move to a smaller property. These applicants are given high priority because it enables a household with high need to move into the freed up larger home.

9.21.2 Applicants who are currently in property larger than their needs will be placed Band A.

9.21.3 Where an Uttlesford District Council tenant is downsizing to a Council or RSL property they may be eligible for a downsizing grant to help with removal costs. For further details please see the Council's Decant Policy.

9.22 Applicants offered housing because of the death of an Uttlesford Council secure tenant

9.22.1 This applies if the applicant qualifies to 'succeed' to a tenancy when the tenant dies.

9.22.2 To be a 'successor tenant' the applicant has to meet certain rules – usually must be related to the tenant, or be their partner, and have lived in the property a certain time. The rules for this are in the tenancy conditions for the property.

9.22.3 If the successor tenant does not need the property because of its size, or the adaptations or services in the property, they may be served a notice seeking possession under Schedule 2, Ground 16 of The Housing Act 1985. This will be served more than six months but less than twelve months after the tenant's death.

9.22.4 Where successor tenants are in a property larger than they need or with major adaptations they do not require they will be placed in band A. They are able to express an interest for suitable properties under the scheme. If they have not expressed an interest within six months of their application their case will be reviewed and the

Council may reserve the right to express an interest for them on suitable properties.

9.23 Uttlesford Council secure tenants offered housing because of a Relationship breakdown

9.23.1 This category applies to Uttlesford secure tenants only.

9.23.2 If a joint tenant ends the tenancy when moving out, the property is not automatically offered to the tenant remaining.

9.23.3 Applicants will be placed in Band A when there is a relationship breakdown and the joint tenant moves out and ends the tenancy and the other tenant qualifies to be offered a smaller property.

9.23.4 They will be able to express an interest for properties under the scheme but if they have not expressed an interest within six months of their application their case will be reviewed. The Council reserves the right to express an interest for them on suitable properties.

9.23.5 If a property is then subsequently refused they will have no right to remain in their current property and therefore action will be taken by the council to gain possession of the property.

9.23.6 If an applicant qualifies to be offered the same property we will make them a direct let offer of that property.

9.24 Transfers which will release a property that is needed

9.24.1 Applicants will be placed in Band A of the scheme if they wish to move **and**

- i. the property they would leave is needed to meet the urgent housing needs of another household on the register which otherwise would not be met within a reasonable time **or**
- ii. where it prevents the Council making expensive alterations to the property **and**
- iii. there is not a serious shortage of the types of home they want to move to.

9.25 Applicants who have deliberately made their housing situation worse

9.25.1 The Council will consider whether an applicant has deliberately made their housing situation worse to increase their housing need,

and consequently improve their chances of re-housing through the register.

9.25.2 If it is decided that the applicant has made their housing situation worse, they will remain in the band that reflects their housing need in their previous accommodation.

9.25.3 If the applicant was not registered from their previous address, the assessment of housing need will be based on the accommodation occupied before their accommodation changed.

9.25.4 The assessment will be reviewed after 12 months, on request. If the restriction is removed, the application will be placed in the band that reflects current circumstances. Their effective date will be the date they moved to the new band.

9.26 Owner-occupiers

9.26.1 Applicants who previously owned a property and have sold it will be asked to provide proof of the sale and evidence of any proceeds received.

9.26.2 Owner-occupiers will generally not be eligible to join the housing register unless they are able to demonstrate that they are unable to meet their housing needs through their own resources.

9.26.3 Property owners over 60 will be eligible to join the housing register if they can demonstrate a need for sheltered accommodation.

9.27 Applicants in 'tied' accommodation which is suitable for their needs

9.27.1 Applicants are considered to be in tied accommodation if the occupation of their home is essential for the performance of their duties as an employee. This includes applicants who are accommodated by HM Forces.

9.27.2 Applicants in 'tied' accommodation will be placed in band E. They will be moved to Band C if:

- i. they are six months away from retirement **or**
- ii. they have received a legally binding notice asking them to leave their accommodation.

9.28 Deciding the effective date

9.28.1 Priority within bands relates to an applicant's effective date. The effective date is usually the date the application is received, except;

- i. Where an applicant is moved from one band to a higher band. Their new effective date will be the date their circumstances changed.
- ii. Where an applicant receives priority on medical or welfare grounds their effective date will be the date the Council receives the required supporting evidence to make this award.
- iii. Where an applicant has been accepted as Homeless their effective date will be the date they applied as homeless; unless they already qualify for Band B with an earlier date.

9.29 Armed Forces Priority

9. 29.1 Members of the Armed Forces, who are in urgent housing need who fall within one or more of the following criteria, will be placed in one Band higher than their housing need.

- i. Is serving in the regular forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service
- ii. Formerly served in the regular forces or was honourable discharged where the application is made within 5 years of their date of discharge
- iii. Has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service or
- iv. Is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service

9.29.2 For this purpose "the regular forces" and the "reserve forces" have the meanings given by section 374 of the Armed Forces Act 2006(4)

9.30 By-passing applications that would otherwise meet eligibility criteria for an offer of accommodation

The Council reserves the right to by-pass an offer of accommodation while shortlisting applicants in the following circumstances

- i. The property is not in accordance with an applicants assessed medical needs

- ii. Applicant has pets and the property is not suitable or pets are not permitted
- iii. Applicant has housing related debt where an agreed repayment plan has been breached (see 5.4)
- iv. Applicant is a Council or RP tenants with rent arrears (see 5.4)
- v. If the applicant does not meet the rules relating to age or household size by the RP advertising the property.
- vi. Other reasons where the Council deem that a sensitive allocation is necessary and this has been agreed by a Senior Manager .
- vii. If the applicant has been offered a property and have not yet refused that offer.
- viii. If the applicant is unable to view or accept the property within the required timescale.
- ix. Where the applicant has not notified the Council of a change of circumstances material to their application.

9.31 Penalty for refusal of offers of accommodation

Any applicant (except from existing Council or RP tenants who are under-occupying and wishing to move to smaller accommodation) who refuses 2 offers of accommodation, for properties on which they have expressed interest, within a 6 month period, will have their application e suspended for 12 months.

10. Types of Tenancies

- 10.1 The type of tenancy an applicant will be offered will be in accordance with the Council's tenancy policy or the tenancy policy of the landlord of the property. Tenancy policies will be set having regard to the West Essex Tenancy Strategy.
- 10.2 The Council will offer joint tenancies to adult partners where there is a need for a long term commitment to a joint home, except where one of the prospective joint tenants is excluded from or ineligible to join the housing register.
- 10.3 Generally, homeless applicants residing at homeless accommodation (including the Council's managed short stay accommodation) or bed and breakfast accommodation, if offered Council accommodation, will be offered an Introductory Tenancy followed by secure or flexible tenancy in accordance with the Council's Introductory Tenancy Scheme and Tenancy Policy.

11. Tenancy Start Dates

- 11.1 The Council will allow applicants 7 days to reach a decision whether to accept any Council accommodation they are offered, although we may allow longer having regard to personal circumstances.
- 11.2 Where possible the applicant will be given an opportunity to view the property they are being offered before they have to give the Council a decision.
- 11.3 If the applicant is interested in the tenancy they will either be advised by telephone when the property is ready for letting or receive a formal offer of the tenancy by first class post.
- 11.4 Generally, for properties becoming ready for letting on Friday, the tenancy start date will be the following Monday.

12. Redecoration Scheme

Internal decorations to an Council property are the tenant's responsibility. However, if a property (excluding sheltered accommodation) offered to a housing applicant is, in the view of the inspecting officer, in need of redecoration, a voucher for the purchase of an appropriate amount of paint will be provided.

13. Designation of Property Type – Age restrictions

- 13.1 To make best use of housing stock properties are designated as being either general needs or for older persons or people with disabilities.
- 13.2 Older person's properties, such as bungalows, will normally be allocated to the following categories of person:-
- i. Those aged 60 or over (55 for some RP accommodation)
 - ii. Those under 60 with Band B medical assessment for mobility who require this type of accommodation. In these circumstances single people and couples will only be offered 1 bed bungalows and will not be able to express interest in general needs properties.
- 13.3 In areas of lower demand some bungalows may be advertised without an age restriction, however, in the first instance preference will still be given to applicants over 60 expressing interest.
- 13.4 General needs properties such as houses or flats will be allocated to persons under 60 unless there are special circumstances which indicate that a particular general needs property is suitable for and applicant who is 60 or over.

14. Allocating Sheltered Housing

14.1 When allocating sheltered housing the same general principles as for other property types are followed, apart from the following:

- i. An assessment of the applicants suitability and need for support must be completed before any tenancy is offered. If the applicant is considered unsuitable for sheltered accommodation, they will be advised and given advice on homes more suitable to their needs.
- ii. When assessing suitability for sheltered housing applicants will also be given advice about the allocation scheme and how to bid. If an applicant needs help with the process, this will be noted and appropriate arrangements made.
- iii. Applicants must generally be over 60 years of age to be eligible for sheltered housing (over 55 for some RP accommodation)

15. Properties designed or adapted for people with physical disabilities

15.1 If an applicant needs a home suitable for wheelchair users or needs other specialist adaptations we will usually require an assessment by an Occupational Therapist before an offer can be considered. (Please refer to the Council's Disabled Adaptations Policy)

15.2 Homes particularly designed for, or accessible to, people with disabilities will be advertised as such to help applicants with those needs identify them.

15.3 Properties which have been adapted to a very high standard may not be included in the scheme and may be directly allocated.

16. Reviews

16.1 If an applicant considers they have been unfairly or unreasonably treated having regard to the provisions of the Allocations Scheme they have the right to request a review of their case. (i.e. the band they have been placed in)

16.2 In the first instance, they must appeal in writing to the Housing Needs Team Leader and will receive a written response within 10 working days.

16.3 If, having received this response they wish to make a further appeal they can write to the Housing Needs and Landlord Services Manager who will then review the case.

17. Equal Opportunities

17.1 The Council's allocation scheme will be operated strictly in accordance with Council policy irrespective of an applicant's ethnic origin, race,

nationality, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age or disability.

17.2 The Council will have regard to, and implement, the provisions of the Race Relations Code of Practice in Rented Housing, which it has adopted. The Council will also abide by the Race Relations Act 1976.

17.3 As an aid to ensuring that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, the Council will monitor the racial origin of:

- i. Applicants on the Housing Register
- ii. Applicants allocated housing
- iii. Applicants offered sheltered accommodation

17.4 The practices and procedures of Housing Services will be monitored by the Head of Service to ensure that they do not discriminate directly or indirectly. Changes will be made if it is established that practices or procedures may be contravening the Equalities Act 2010.

18. False and Withheld Information

18.1 It is an offence for anyone seeking housing assistance from us to give false information or withhold information that may affect their application for housing.

18.2 This could result in:

- i. Criminal prosecution
- ii. Cancelling the applicant's housing register application (see paragraph 6.6 above)
- iii. Possession proceedings for any tenancy an applicant has obtained as a result of giving or withholding false information

18.3 The Council may seek possession of a property under Ground 5 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 if a tenant has induced the Council to grant a tenancy by knowingly or recklessly making a false statement. The Council can prosecute and fine up to £5,000 if found guilty.

19. Information on the Allocations Scheme

19.1 The Council will:-

- i. Publish a summary of its Allocations Scheme in a leaflet and provide copies free of charge on request to any member of the public

- ii. Provide copies of the Allocations Scheme free of charge at Housing Services, Council Offices, Saffron Walden
- iii. Enable copies of the Allocations Scheme to be downloaded on the Internet from the Council's web-site: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

19.2 Within a reasonable period of time, the Council will notify applicants on the Housing Register of an alteration to the Allocations Scheme reflecting a major change of policy, explaining in general terms the effect of the change.

20. Review of Allocations Scheme

The Allocations Scheme will be reviewed periodically by the Council's Housing Board and any recommended changes agreed by the Council's Cabinet.

21. Consultation on Changes to the Allocations Scheme

Before adopting a new Allocations Scheme or making an alteration reflecting a major change of policy in an existing Allocations Scheme, the Council will notify every RP with which it has nomination arrangements of the change, and all local Councils affording them a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposals.

Data Protection Act

The information you provide may be put on a computer system registered under the current Data Protection law. It may be checked with other information or data held by the Council. It may be disclosed for the purposes as described on the Register Entry in the Council's Data Protection Register. We may also share data with other agencies for the prevention and detection of crime.

IF YOU REQUIRE THIS INFORMATION LEAFLET IN AN ALTERNATIVE FORMAT AND OR LANGUAGE PLEASE CONTACT HOUSING SERVICES ON 01799 510510

Housing Services
Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices
London Road
Saffron Walden
CB11 4 ER

Telephone: 01799 510510
Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk
Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Appendix I

For General Needs Accommodation, the number of bedrooms that working age applicants are eligible to express interest in, will generally be in line with the prevailing Housing Benefit Regulations on size criteria.

Size of Accommodation Allocated – working age applicants

Household Size	Number of rooms
1 adult	Bedsit/ 1 bedroom
2 adults living together as a couple	1 bedroom
1 adult (2 adults living together as a couple) expecting baby and the pregnancy is over 24 weeks	2 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with either: - 1 child* - 2 children* of different sexes where neither child is over 10 years of age - 2 children* of the same sex up until the eldest child is 16 years of age	2 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with either: - 2 children* of different sexes where the oldest child is over 10 years of age - 2 children* of the same sex where the eldest child is over 16 years of age - 3 children* - 4 children* regardless of sex up until the eldest child is 16 years of age	3 bedrooms
1 adult (or 2 adults living together as a couple) with either: - 4 children* where 1 child is over 16 years of age - 5 or more children*	4 bedrooms

***Parents with ‘staying access’ to dependent children or shared residence orders** - Applicants with a shared residence order or staying access for children are not automatically entitled to bedrooms for their children. The general principle is that a child needs one home of an adequate size, and that the council will not accept responsibility for providing a second home for children. The council will make an assessment based on the individual circumstances.

Single applicants or couples where one is over 60 years of age will be eligible to express interest in 1 or 2 bedroom designated older persons accommodation.

Appendix II

Local Lettings Plans

A Local Letting Plan is an arrangement for the allocation of properties to meet the specific needs of a locality in response to results of a housing needs survey..

Rural Housing – Exception site

When vacancies arise in properties that have been built in rural localities (rural exception sites) and a planning agreement specifies a local connection requirement, this takes precedence over the local connection eligibility in 5.2. This means that households wishing to apply for housing on an exception site who fulfil the local connection requirement set out in a planning agreement, but not the eligibility criteria in 5.2, will be eligible to join the housing register but **only** for this specific development site.

The local connection criteria for rural exception sites will be as follows and in the following order of priority

1. Persons who have been permanently resident in the specified parish for at least two years
2. Persons who are no longer resident in the specified parish but who have been resident for at least three years during the past five years
3. Persons who meet either of the following criteria
 - i. in permanent employment in the specified parish for a minimum of 2 years and working at least 24 hours per week
 - ii. having close relatives (i.e. parents, grandparents, children, brother or sister) living in the specified parish or parishes who have lived there for at least five years
4. If there are no persons meeting the criteria in 1 to 3 then the cascade above will be applied to any neighbouring parishes identified in relevant clauses in the planning agreement
5. In the event that it is still not possible to allocate a property to applicants who meet criteria 1 to 4 above then the property may be allocated to applicants who meet the local connection requirements who will under-occupy the property, providing that the under-occupancy created does not exceed one bedroom
6. In the event that it is still not possible to allocate a property to applicants who meet criteria 1 to 5 above then the property may be allocated to applicants who meet the Uttlesford eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.2.1

7. In the exceptional event that the council is unable to nominate any persons from its Housing Register who comply with 1 to 6 above, the Registered Provider would offer tenancies to Eligible Persons, the definition of which would be consistent with both the council's local connection criteria and the occupancy requirements. The priority when offering tenancies to Eligible Persons would mirror the council's policies on Allocation of Properties.

The council will select nominations which meet the criteria set out in 1 to 6 in the priority order of their local connection and then on the basis of their housing need and then the date that their housing need priority was awarded.

The age criteria (Section 13) may be waived for suitable properties to allow older people to remain in a village.

Rural Housing – Non exception site

Requiring applicants to have a connection with the locality may also be considered by the Council, on a proportion of the affordable housing provision, on any site subject to the terms of a planning obligation where a local need can be demonstrated through a housing needs survey, no more than three years old at the time of the submission of the planning application.. To be eligible for an allocation on these sites applicants must be assessed as having a housing need by being in Bands A – D of the allocation policy.

Sustainable Communities

In exceptional circumstances, the council may decide to let properties on a slightly different basis from normal, in the interests of building a strong and sustainable community or to deal with particular local issues. The decision to apply such criteria will be jointly made by the landlord of the property and the council.

On new developments, the Council and the landlord may consider widening the eligible bands for home types on first lettings, again taking equal opportunities and legal issues into account

Appendix III

Right to Move Guidance

The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations

2015 states that local authorities cannot decide that a person does not qualify for an allocation of accommodation on the grounds that the applicant does not have a local connection with the area if the applicant is a tenant of social housing and who needs to move to take up a job or live closer to employment or training (including apprenticeships).

A local connection requirement must **not** be applied to existing social tenants seeking to transfer from another local authority district in England who:

- have reasonable preference under s.166(3)(e) because of a need to move to the local authority's district to avoid hardship, and
- need to move because the tenant works in the district, or
- need to move to take up an offer of work

The applicant must demonstrate that they **need**, rather than wish, to move, for work related reasons. In this regard the following factors will be taken into account:

- the distance and/or time taken to travel between work and home
- the availability and affordability of transport, taking into account level of earnings
- the nature of the work and whether similar opportunities are available closer to home
- other personal factors, such as medical conditions and child care, which would be affected if the tenant could not move
- the length of the work contract
- whether failure to move would result in the loss of an opportunity to improve their employment circumstances or prospects, for example, by taking up a better job, a promotion, or an apprenticeship

This is not an exhaustive list, other local circumstances may be taken into consideration.

The following forms of work are excluded from the Right to Move

Short-term

In determining whether work is short-term the following factors will be taken into consideration

- whether the work is regular or intermittent
- the period of employment and whether or not work was intended to be short-term or long-term at the outset

- A contract of employment that was intended to last for less than 12 months could be considered to be short-term

Marginal

In determining whether work is marginal the following factors will be taken into consideration

- the number of hours worked (employment of less than 16 hours a week could be considered to be marginal in nature)
- the level of earnings

However Uttlesford District Council may take into account that if;

- a tenant only works 15 hours a week, for example, it may not be determinative if they are able to demonstrate that the work is regular and the remuneration is substantial

Ancillary

- If a person works occasionally in the local authority's district, even if the pattern of work is regular, but their main place of work is in a different local authority's district, the work is excluded from the regulations
- If the tenant is expected to return to work in the original local authority district. If a local authority has reason to believe this is the case, they should seek verification from the tenant's employer
- A person who seeks to move into a local authority to be closer to work in a neighbouring authority – for example, where the transport links are better in the first local authority's area – is also excluded from these regulations.

Voluntary Work

- Voluntary work means work where no payment is received or the only payment is in respect of any expenses reasonably incurred

Apprenticeship

- The term 'work' includes an apprenticeship. This is because an apprenticeship normally takes place under an apprenticeship agreement which is an employment contract (specifically a contract of service) *[Why are apprenticeships excluded?]*

Verification and evidence

Uttlesford District Council will require proof that the work or job-offer is genuine and will need to see appropriate documentary evidence, which could include:

- a contract of employment
- wage/salary slips covering a certain period of time, or bank statements (this is likely to be particularly relevant in the case of zero-hours contracts)
- tax and benefits information – e.g. proof that the applicant is in receipt of working tax credit (if eligible)
- a formal offer letter
- additionally, the employer may be contacted to verify the position *[Do we need to write in that applicants may be required to sign an authority to enable the employers to provide information regarding employment?]*

Uttlesford District Council may consider whether an applicant qualifies both at the time of the initial application and when considering making an allocation.

A set quota which the Council feels appropriate for the proportion of properties that it expects to allocate each year to transferring tenants who need to move into their district for work related reasons is 1%. However this will be reviewed and revised as appropriate based upon supply and demand through monitoring channels.

Applicants who meet the criteria for Right to Move will be placed in one and higher than their housing need.

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 30 June 2015

9

**Title: PERFORMANCE REPORT –
2014-15 Outturn**

**Author: Paula Evans, Housing Business &
Performance Manager, Ext 636**

Item for information

Summary

1. This report provides Housing Board Members with a summary of the 2014/15 outturn performance for all Housing related performance indicators.

Please note: A full 2013/14 benchmarking report from Housemark will be available in July for Members review.

In addition the proposed performance indicators and their respective targets for 2015/16 are also included for Members reference.

Performance data will not be available for quarter 1 2015/16 until the middle of July.

Recommendations

2. That Members note performance and comparative data for all 2014/15 performance indicators and the targets identified for 2015/16 indicators.

Financial Implications

3. None. There are no costs associated with the recommendations.

Referenced External Sources

4. The following external sources were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report:

- Covalent - The Council's corporate performance management system
- Housemark – The Council's external performance benchmarking management system for Housing Services

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	n/a
Community Safety	n/a
Equalities	For some indicators equalities data is used to measure their performance

Health and Safety	Some indicators measure the performance of Health and Safety processes
Human Rights/Legal Implications	n/a
Sustainability	n/a
Ward-specific impacts	n/a
Workforce/Workplace	n/a

Situation

6. The collection and reporting of Housing performance indicators is managed through Covalent, the Council's corporate performance management system and Housemark, the Council's external benchmarking performance management system for Housing Services.
7. Data is collected and reported for Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), Performance Indicators (PI's) and Local Performance Indicators (LPI's). These indicator 'levels' are applied across the authority as follows:
 - KPI's are so called because the Corporate Management Team (CMT) wanted to identify and raise the profile of key business processes (currently reviewed by CMT and the Performance and Audit Committee)
 - PI's are so called because CMT regard these as general indicators to performance manage Council processes (currently reviewed by CMT and Performance and Audit Committee)
 - LPI's were introduced for Services to monitor their performance at 'ground level' (reviewed by CMT only)
8. All Housing performance indicators managed through Covalent are subject to review by both CMT and the Performance and Audit Committee through UDC's corporate performance management process.
9. Where relevant these indicators are used to monitor Service Plan actions.
10. Some indicators can only be monitored annually because data is only available on an annual basis or because it is not meaningful to collect the information over a shorter period of time. Others may be tracked on a quarterly or six monthly basis.
11. This report details the performance during 2014/15 for all Housing indicators which have either been monitored on a quarterly or annual basis and indicates whether targets have been met and whether performance has improved (see Appendix One and Two attached).

12. The associated Covalent Performance reports (Appendix One and Two attached) details:
- Outturn performance data for 2014/15 (highlighted column)
 - Performance for the 4 preceding quarters (including performance for the previous year)
 - Quarterly/annual targets
 - Status of the performance indicator (red, amber or green)
 - Officers notes on performance for the outturn data as at Q4 2014/15
13. Members should note that due to an externally driven change in the reporting format for Housemark data, Officers are currently compiling a series of reports for both Tenant Forum and Housing Board Members to review in the future, therefore no Housemark data is attached to this report for review.
14. Members should also note that due to the nature and unpredictability of some of the services provided, the performance levels of some indicators cannot be controlled by the Council (e.g. homelessness). However, the monitoring of these indicators provides invaluable data when managing the service.

Members are encouraged to refer to the Officer notes detailed in the reports for further performance information.

15. Statistics

Summary of 2014/15 Performance Status

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (based on 2 indicators in total)

10% or more off target	Up to 10% off target	On or above target
		
0	0	2
0%	0%	100%

Performance Indicators (PIs) (based on 6 indicators in total)

10% or more off target	Up to 10% off target	On or above target
		
3	1	2
50%	17%	33%

Local Performance Indicators (LPIs) (based on 17 indicators in total)

10% or more off target	Up to 10% off target	On or above target
		
4	5	8
24%	29%	47%

All Performance Indicators (based on 25 indicators in total)

10% or more off target	Up to 10% off target	On or above target
		
7	6	12
28%	24%	48%

Long term trend

(comparing 2013/14 performance to 2014/15 performance)

All Performance Indicators (KPI's, PI's and LPI's)

Performance Trend		
	Improved	2 (8%)
	Worsened	5 (16%)
	Unchanged	18 (76%)

16. Following an end of year review of all indicators and subsequent development of the Housing Service Plan, the indicators that have been identified for collection during 2015/16 are contained in Appendix Three for Members reference. Targets for these indicators are also included.

Risk Analysis

17. The following have been assessed as the potential risks associated with this

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That performance will fail to meet all set targets	1 – managers monitor performance on a regular basis to ensure early detection of issues requiring attention	3 - failure to act promptly could impact upon quality of service provision and the Council's reputation	Performance is reviewed on a quarterly basis by CMT and the Performance and Audit Committee

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.



2014/15 Housing KPI & PI Outturn Report

PI Status	
	This PI is more than 10% below target.
	This PI is between 0.01 and 10% below target.
	This PI is on target.

* Cumulatively monitored

Quarterly targets for these indicators have been profiled

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2013/14	Q1 2014/15	Q2 2014/15	Q3 2014/15	Q4 2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	Latest Note
KPI 08 (GNPI 36) Average re-let time in days (General Needs only)	13	18	16	12	18	13	18	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: 141 Denominator: 8. 2014/15 Numerator: 959 Denominator: 53. Average re-let time has risen slightly in the last quarter but is still on target. All relevant service areas continue to work together to ensure re-let time is kept to a minimum for each void.
								
	21	18	18	18	18	21	18	
KPI 16 Rent collected as percentage of rent owed (including arrears b/f) (Maximise) *	97.52%	89.50%	93.36%	95.58%	96.60%	97.52%	96.60%	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: £3,992,627.68 Denominator: £4,533,882.01 (88.06%) 2014/15 Numerator: £14,984,554.29 Denominator: £15,512,251.78 = 96.60%. This PI remains on target.
								
	96.30%	88.50%	93.55%	94.55%	96.50%	96.30%	96.50%	
PI 13 % of homes that are non-decent at the end of the period	Annual PI					.0%	.0%	2014/15 Data is estimated but the real data will be available for the committee meeting.
								
						.0%	.0%	

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2013/14	Q1 2014/15	Q2 2014/15	Q3 2014/15	Q4 2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	Latest Note
PI 14a Homelessness: Number of people presenting as homeless (Minimise)	14	30	30	29	23	97	112	Q4 2014/15 23 homeless applications in Q4. Presentations have gone down by 6 and advice and prevention are still the main focus. Continuing difficult economic times and the lack of affordable housing, either social or private within the district have kept presentations at a steady level.
								
	25	25	25	25	25	75	100	
PI 14b The number of cases where positive intervention by the Council has prevented homelessness	18	14	9	11	11	80	45	Q4 2014/15 10 prevented and 1 relieved. This is a reflection of the fact that the team had a number of challenging cases which have been time consuming. Nevertheless, improvement on this target is a priority and the development of this area of work is ongoing for the team.
								
	35	35	35	35	35	140	140	
PI 15 (HMPI 102) % Residents satisfied with the most recent repair (Maximise)	98.00%	99.28%	99.78%	98.74%	98.64%	98.00%	99.16%	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: 363 Denominator: 368 = 98.64%. In excess of target as high levels of satisfaction recorded. 2014/15 Numerator: 1,536 Denominator: 1,549 = 99.16%.
								
	98.00%	98.50%	98.50%	98.50%	98.50%	98.00%	98.50%	
PI 16 Number of households living in temporary accommodation (Minimise)	15	26	13	16	20	15	20	Q4 2014/15 Council owned and shared accommodation = 19 cases. Emergency B&B placements = 1. The emergency placement is a lady and her son who are waiting to go into more suitable temporary or permanent accommodation. Sound casework and good prevention work ensured that families were moved into permanent accommodation promptly.
								
	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	
PI 17 Number of service users who are supported to establish and maintain independent living	1,213	1,205	1,211	1,213	1,221	1,213	1,221	Q4 2014/15 As at the end of year there are 390 sheltered tenants. Within the available sheltered stock there are currently only 5 voids, all of which are all under offer. The available stock is reducing because of the redevelopment of Mead Court, and the need to release vacancies within Reynolds Court and Hatherley Court prior to the redevelopment of these schemes. The number of lifelines at the end of year is 831, an overall increase of 10 on the last quarter making a total of 1221 supported households.
								
	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	

2014/15 Housing Local Performance Indicators Outturn Report



PI Status	
	This PI is more than 10% below target.
	This PI is between 0.01 and 10% below target.
	This PI is on target.

* Cumulatively monitored

Quarterly targets for these indicators have been profile

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2013/14	Q1 2014/15	Q2 2014/15	Q3 2014/15	Q4 2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	Latest Note
HSG 4 (H4) New tenants visits completed within 4 weeks	57%	54.3%	64%	68.2%	80%	96.5%	65.1%	Q4 2014/15 Number of new tenant visits to be completed 35. Completed within 4 weeks = 28, completed within 5 weeks = 4, completed within 6 weeks = 1, completed within 7+weeks = 1.
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
HSG 5 % of rent lost through dwellings being vacant (GN & HfOP)	1.75%	1.80%	1.85%	1.87%	2.28%	1.54%	1.96%	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: £91,461.35 Denominator: £4,012,225.92 = 2.28%. This indicator is slightly under target due to a higher than expected void rate in final quarter. 2014/15 Numerator: £295,243.78 Denominator: £15,089,582.03 = 1.96%.
	1.95%	1.90%	1.90%	1.90%	1.90%	1.95%	1.90%	
HSG 9 % of BME applicants on the housing register	10.5%	10.2%	10.7%	11.8%	10.9%	10.2%	10.9%	Q4 2014/15 Total applicants = 892 of which % BME applicants = 10.9%. This figure is consistent with previous quarters. BME figures have decreased slightly from last month possibly due to the review of the housing register in line with the new policy.
	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2013/14	Q1 2014/15	Q2 2014/15	Q3 2014/15	Q4 2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	Latest Note	
HSG 10 Average time taken (days) to process homeless applications	28.6	23.5	16.5	29	24.5	21.2	23.3	Q4 2014/15 22 Decisions made totalling 539/22 = 24.5 days on average. The average has gone down from last quarter and shows a consistent high performance.	
	33	33	33	33	33	33	33		
HSG 14 (HMGH 60) % of dwellings that are vacant and available to let (GN & HfOP)	Annual LPI						0.70%	0.50%	2014/15 Numerator: 12 (Total no. of properties void for less than 28 days) Denominator: 2,408 (Total Housing Stock as @ 31.03.15) = 0.50%. Turnaround of voids continues to improve this year with Voids Surveyors, Voids Operatives team and Housing Management Team working closely on all cases.
							0.80%	0.75%	
HSG 20 (HMPI220) Current tenant rent arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit (excluding HB adjustment)	2.88%	3.18%	3.20%	3.24%	3.11%	2.88%	3.11%	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: -£21,495.15 Denominator: £4,012,225.92 (-0.54%). 2014/15 Numerator: £469,028.40 Denominator: £15,089,582.03 = 3.11%. This PI is on target. Continued specific focus on rent collection activities within the Rents team has supported the performance of this PI.	
	3.30%	3.29%	3.29%	3.29%	3.29%	3.30%	3.29%		
HSG 21 Homelessness: Number of people accepted as homeless (Minimise)	7	14	19	14	13	57	60	Q4 2014/15 13 homeless applicants accepted. Acceptances are slightly down from last quarter and better than previous quarters. Finding private rentals as an alternative has been very challenging.	
	15	15	15	15	15	35	60		
HSG 22 Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for accepted priority needs families (weeks) (Minimise)	1.71	0	0.9	2.9	3.3	3.71	1.7	Q4 2014/15: Total number accepted cases in nightly paid accommodation = 4. Total length of stay = 93 days; 93/4 = 23.2 23.2/7= (days in a week) = 3.3 weeks. 4 families only in B&B and they were moved to more suitable UDC accommodation as soon as it was available. UDC TA has been at a premium during this period owing to damp issues and the upcoming demolition of Mead Court.	
	1	0	0	0	0	1	0		

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2013/14	Q1 2014/15	Q2 2014/15	Q3 2014/15	Q4 2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	Latest Note
HSG 23 Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for accepted priority needs others (weeks) (Minimise)	0	5.9	3.07	0	0	5.9	2.2	Q4 2014/15 There were no cases in this category in Q4
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
HSG 24 Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for rejected (all groups) (weeks) (Minimise)	0.2	0.1	1.8	9.1	3.9	0.24	0.7	Q4 2014/15 Total number cases in nightly paid accommodation = 3. Total length of stay = 83 nights 83/3 = 27.6. 27.6/7 (days in a week) = 3.9 weeks. One of the cases was a couple who were temporarily housed by us for 3 days and returned to East Herts. The other 2 cases were complex single men who were not suitable for family or shared accommodation.
	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	
HSG 28 Average energy efficiency rating of dwellings (based on SAP 2005)	Annual LPI					69	65	2014/15 Some of the energy efficiency programmes have conversely affected energy efficiency. Future programmes intend to rectify the issue and raise thermal efficiency in the forthcoming years.
						69	70	
HSG 32 (GNPI 19) % of urgent repairs completed within target time	92.0%	95.2%	94.7%	95.1%	96.7%	95.0%	95.4%	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: 1,044 Denominator: 1,080 96.7%. Performance further improved as Restructure bringing benefits.
	100.0%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	100.0%	97.5%	
HSG 34 % of lets to all properties allocated through the allocation scheme to BME applicants	7.15%	5.97%	5.7%	4.5%	8%	8.9%	6.04%	Q4 2014/15 75 total lets, 6 to BME groups = 8 %. An increase from last quarter.
	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2013/14	Q1 2014/15	Q2 2014/15	Q3 2014/15	Q4 2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	Latest Note
HSG 35 % of Pre-Void Inspections completed on all voids that can be pre-inspected for the period	92%	69%	75%	96%	83.3%	48%	80%	Q4 2014/15 60 voids of which 18 could have been inspected. Of the 18 properties that could have been inspected 15 inspections were completed. 2014/15 201 voids of which 92 could be inspected. 74 Inspections completed = 80%.
								
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
HSG 37 (GNPI 18) % of emergency repairs completed within target time (24hrs)	94.0%	94.9%	96.6%	96.4%	95.7%	96.0%	95.9%	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: 687 Denominator: 718 = 95.7%. Slight reduction in performance during period where Responsive Contract being tendered and renewed.
								
	100.0%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	97.0%	97.5%	
HSG 42 (GI5C0) Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.90%	99.43%	99.62%	99.81%	100.00%	99.90%	99.86%	Q4 2014/15 Due to Q1 percentage being so low this lowered our overall percentage for the year.
								
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
HSG 43 Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed (excluding arrears b/f) (HMPI 210)	100.57%	100.32%	98.56%	99.23%	99.30%	100.57%	99.30%	Q4 2014/15 Numerator: £3,992,627.68 Denominator: £4,012,225.92 = 99.51%. 2014/15 Numerator: £14,984,554.29 Denominator: £15,089,582.03 = 99.30%. This PI remains on target due to continued priority focus on rent and rent arrears collection processes.
								
	99.10%	98.15%	98.65%	98.90%	99.15%	99.10%	99.15%	

Housing Services KPI/PIs/LPIs and Targets 2015-16

Directorate Public Services Service Housing Asset Management										
PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
KPI 08 (GNPI 36) Average re-let time in days (General Needs only)	18	12	12	12	12	12	11	Roz Millership	Paula Evans	VOIDS
PI 13 % of homes that are non-decent at the end of the period	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Paula Evans	Roz Millership	Asset Management Planned Repairs
PI 15 (HMPI 102) % Residents satisfied with the most recent repair (Max)	PI TO BE PUT ON HOLD – TARGETS NEED TO BE REVIEWED AS PART OF THE DEPOT MOBILE WORKING PROCESS							Bill Golbourn David Ogilvie	David Turner	Asset Management Responsive Repairs

Directorate Public Services
Service Housing Business & Performance

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
KPI 16 Rent collected as percentage of rent owed (including arrears b/f)	96.50%	96.50%	88.50%	93.55%	94.55%	96.50%	96.60%	Paula Evans	Robert Patterson-Smith	None

Directorate Public Services
Service Housing Needs & Landlord Services

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
PI 14a Homelessness: Number of people presenting as homeless (Min)	100	100	25	50	75	100	90	Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options
PI 14b The number of cases where positive intervention by the Council has prevented homelessness	140	100	25	50	75	100	110	Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
PI 16 Number of households living in temporary accommodation	15	17	17	17	17	17	17	Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options
PI 17 Number of service users who are supported to establish and maintain independent living	1,300	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,300	Judith Snares	Fergus Simmonds	Health & Well-being

Directorate Public Services
Service Housing and Environmental Health

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 13 % of housing stock void as at 31st March each year - long term voids	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Paula Evans	Roz Millership	
HSG 16 (GNPI 36) Re-let times for general needs void properties requiring major works (days)	NONE	35	35	35	35	35	28	Roz Millership	Paula Evans	Voids

Directorate Public Services
Service Housing Asset Management

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 27 (a) % of all fire safety actions identified in Fire Risk Assessments implemented by target date - High Priority	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Bill Golbourn	David Ogilvie	Health & Safety
HSG 27 (b) % of all fire safety actions identified in Fire Risk Assessments implemented by target date - Medium Priority	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Bill Golbourn	David Ogilvie	Health & Safety
HSG 27 (c) % of all fire safety actions identified in Fire Risk Assessments implemented by target date - Low Priority	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Bill Golbourn	David Ogilvie	Health & Safety
HSG 28 Average energy efficiency rating of dwellings (based on SAP 2005)	70	71	COLLECTED AND REPORTED ANNUALLY				72	Bill Golbourn	David Ogilvie	Asset Management Planned Repairs
HSG 32 (GNPI 19) % of 'other' repairs completed within target time	97.5%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.5%	David Ogilvie	David Turner	Asset Management Responsive Repairs

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 37 (GNPI 18) % of emergency repairs completed within target time (24hrs)	97.5%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.5%	David Ogilvie	David Turner	Asset Management Responsive Repairs
HSG 41 Contractors: % of Tenants satisfied with Contractor Services	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Bill Golbourn	Paul McFaul	Asset Management Planned Repairs
HSG 42 (GI5C0) Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Paul McFaul	Eric Payne	Asset Management Planned Repairs

Directorate Public Services
Service Housing Business & Performance

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 5 % of rent lost through dwellings being vacant (GN & HfOP)	1.90%	1.85%	1.85%	1.85%	1.85%	1.85%	1.80%	Paula Evans	Robert Patterson- Smith	Voids

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 20 (HMPI220) Current tenant rent arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit (excluding HB adjustment)	3.29%	3.29%	3.29%	3.29%	3.29%	3.29%	3.29%	Paula Evans	Robert Patterson-Smith	Business & Finance
HSG 43 (KPI 10) Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed (excluding arrears b/f) (HMPI 210)	99.15%	99.15%	98.15%	98.65%	98.90%	99.15%	99.20%	Paula Evans	Robert Patterson-Smith	Business & Finance

Directorate Public Services
Service Housing Needs & Landlord Services

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 4 (H4) New tenants visits completed within 4 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Judith Snares	Fiona Gardiner	<i>None at present</i>
HSG 9 % of BME applicants on the housing register	PI TO BE PUT ON HOLD – TARGETS NEED TO BE CHECKED WITH CURRENT CENSUS DATA							Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	<i>None at present</i>
HSG 10 Average time taken (days) to process homeless applications	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	<i>None at present</i>

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 21 (SI 21b) Homelessness: Number of people accepted as homeless	60	60	15	30	45	60	55	Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options
HSG 22 (SI 22a) Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for accepted priority needs families (weeks)	0	6	6	6	6	6	6	Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options
HSG 23 (SI 22b) Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for accepted priority needs others (weeks)	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options
HSG 24 (SI 22c) Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for rejected (all groups) (weeks)	DATA NO LONGER COLLECTED - DELETE							Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options
HSG 34 % of lets to all properties allocated through the allocation scheme to BME applicants	PI TO BE PUT ON HOLD – TARGETS NEED TO BE CHECKED WITH CURRENT CENSUS DATA							Judith Snares	Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	Housing Options
HSG 35 % of Pre-Void Inspections completed on all voids that can be pre-inspected for the period	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Judith Snares	Fiona Gardiner	Voids

Directorate Public Services
Service Housing Services

PI Code & Short Name	2014/15 Target	2015/16 Target	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	2016/17 Target	Ownership Managed By	Ownership Assigned To	Linked Actions Code & Title
HSG 14 (HMGH 60) % of dwellings that are vacant and available to let (GN & HfOP)	0.75%	0.70%	COLLECTED AND REPORTED ANNUALLY				0.65%	Paula Evans	Roz Millership	Voids

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 30 June 2015

10

Title: BRE Stock Profiles and Quantitative Health Impact Assessment

Author: Marcus Watts

Item for information

Summary

1. The report provides outlines the findings of the recently commissioned BRE (British Research Establishment) Housing Stock Modelling and related Health Impact Assessment.

Recommendations

2. That the findings of the BRE modelling exercise be noted.
3. That the BRE studies are utilised to:
 - i. Develop housing strategy/private sector housing strategy
 - ii. Deliver targeted interventions to improve the condition of housing stock
 - iii. Inform the council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
 - iv. Assist in bids for additional resources

Financial Implications

4. At this time there are no cost implications for the council, however there may be resource implications for any targeted intervention work agreed.
5. The information has the potential to support funding bids for additional resources to Public Health England.

Background Papers

6. BRE Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database for Uttlesford District Council
7. BRE A Quantitative Health Impact Assessment: The cost of private sector housing and prospective housing interventions in Uttlesford District Council

Published Papers

8. The Housing Act 2004
9. Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England, CLG 2011
10. Choosing Health: Making healthier choices easier, DoH 2004
11. The Health impacts of poor private sector housing
12. Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England (HM Govt 2010)

Impact

13.

Communication/Consultation	No communication/consultation has taken place
Community Safety	No impact on community safety
Equalities	Fuel Poverty is an inequality and the survey was undertaken to look at ways of reducing this inequality
Health and Safety	No impact on employee health and safety
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Intervention work will be carried out in accordance with existing legislative framework and the Councils' enforcement policy
Sustainability	The stock profiles will allow the Council to target intervention to improve Uttlesfords private sector housing stock
Ward-specific impacts	No specific impact - information is available for all wards.
Workforce/Workplace	Resource implications for intervention initiatives

Situation

14. Section 3 of The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on the Council to assess the condition of the districts Housing Stock (all tenures) and develop strategies/approaches to address issues of concern. The frequency is not prescriptive however the commonly accepted frequency has been every five years.
15. Traditionally, these surveys involved inspections of a random sample of dwellings within the district and extrapolating their findings to form the basis of the report. The evidence provided by these assessments is limited due to the number of physical inspections that can be economically undertaken. It is also labour intensive and expensive.
16. The modelling service provided by the BRE is now favoured to the traditional survey method and provides a greater level of information.
17. The BRE model uses information from a number of recognised high quality national surveys and data sources, including the English Housing Survey and extrapolates them down to a local area level by establishing relationships between the national survey data and local area data such as census, OS data etc. The model also makes use of the Experian consumer dynamics database.

18. In utilising these various data sources and applying them into established models the BRE are able to combine information on property type, age, construction, insulation and heating method to give an overall assessment of the condition of the property and the economic status of the residents. This analysis can be made to district, ward, street and individual property level and is presented in the form of a data base and mapping detail. Specifically, it provides the council with an indication of the numbers and locations of:

- Significant hazards – in particular excess cold and falls on stairs
- Households in 'Fuel poverty'
- Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Dwellings in disrepair
- Low income households in fuel poverty

19. The link between housing and health is well defined and this is recognised in the governments Healthy Lives, Healthy People and associated outcomes framework that includes a number of indicators which specifically relate to housing ie:

- Fuel poverty (1.17)
- Older people's perception of community safety (1.19)
- Rate of emergency hospital admissions for falls or fall injuries in persons aged 65 and over (2.24)
- Mortality from all cardiovascular diseases (4.4)
- Age-sex standardised rate of emergency admissions for fractured neck of the femur in persons 65 and over per 100,000 (4.14)
- Excess Winter Deaths Index (4.15)

20. In light of the above and in addition to the housing stock modelling, UDC has commissioned a quantitative Health Impact Assessment (HIA). This enhances the information resulting from the stock modelling exercise and estimates the costs and benefits to health of possible housing intervention work based. Information is presented in costs to the NHS, costs to society (wider cost impacts inc treatment) and information on the Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs). QALYs provide a common currency to assess the extent of the benefits gained from a variety of interventions in terms of health related quality of life.

21. With this information the Council will be able to inform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and make funding bids to deliver targeted intervention projects that could potentially reduce the costs to the NHS and the wider society.

22. Summary of Findings – Headline Results

23. Uttlesford private sector housing stock generally performs worse than the East of England for 5 out of 7 key housing indicators.

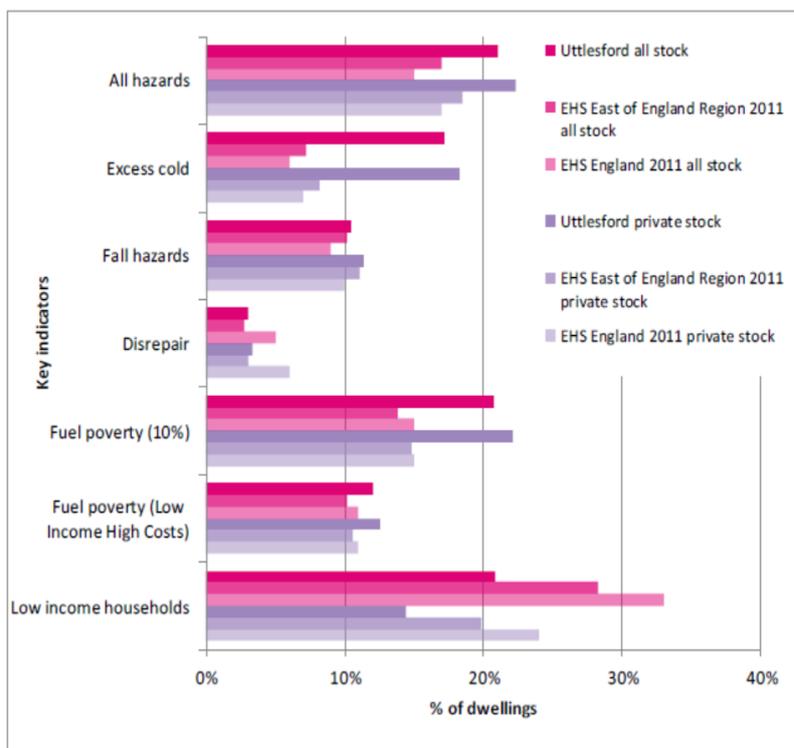
24. Excess cold is the most common category 1 hazard, found within 18% of owner occupied stock and 22% of private rented dwellings.

25. The average simple SAP ratings for all private sector dwellings in Uttlesford are 50, which is worse than the national and regional average of 55.

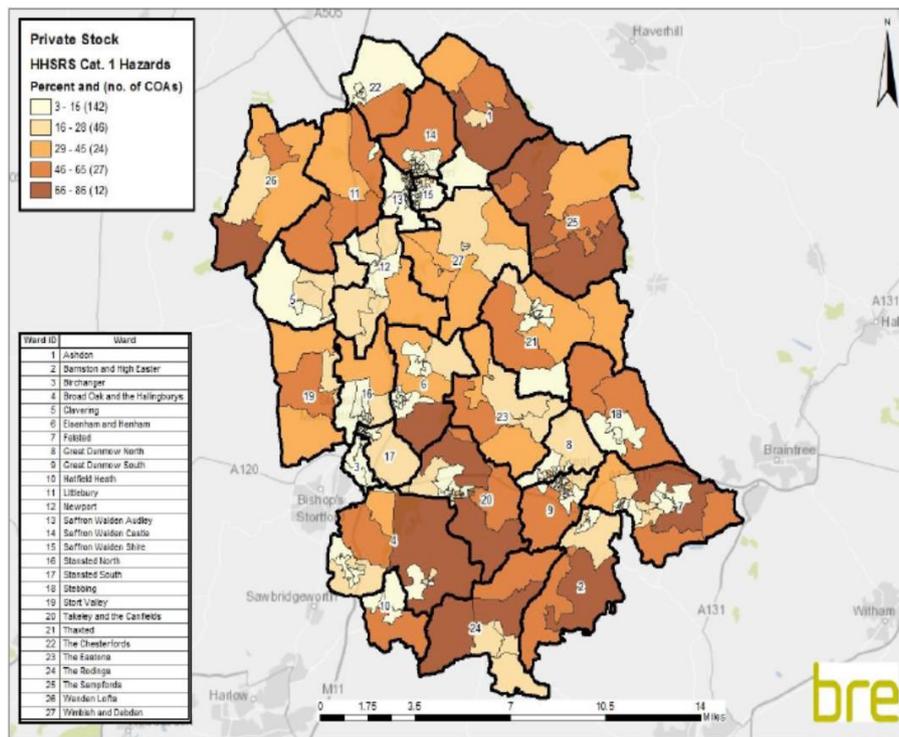
26. 28.8% of private rented dwellings in Uttlesford are estimated to have an EPC rating below band E (Note Energy Act 2011 requirement for all private rented dwellings to have an EPC rating of E or above by 2018).

27. There is an estimated total of 183 HMOs, of which 19 come under the mandatory licensing scheme. Currently, Uttlesford has 1 licensed HMO.

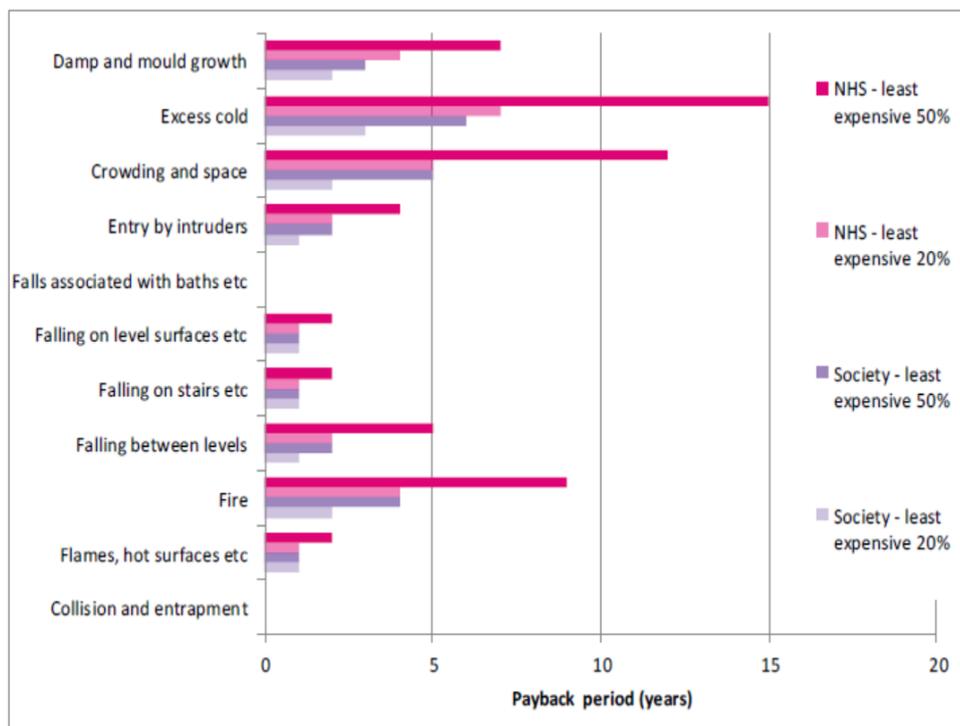
28. The table below shows the results for 7 of the key indicators compared to the east of England and England and splits these into all stock, including social housing and private sector stock (owner occupied & private rented sector).



29. Much information is presented in the form of maps that may assist with any targeted intervention strategies. The map below is an example of this and illustrates the percentage of private sector dwellings in Uttlesford with the presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard. This information can be viewed on ward, street and individual property level.



30. The quantitative information provided within the HIA provides detail on the impact of private sector housing on health and forms an evidence base detailing the costs and benefits of improving housing in the private sector, and the costs of not doing anything. Using the stock profile data, it estimates the effect of the identified poor housing conditions on health and the instances requiring medical intervention.
31. The costs to the NHS and society have been calculated for 15 of the 29 HHSRS hazards that are estimated to account for 97% of category 1 hazards in Uttlesford.
32. The headline results show that the study estimates that there are some 9,468 Hazards in Uttlesford which will give rise to 286 incidents requiring medical intervention. The greatest numbers of hazards are for excess cold and falls. The total annual cost to society is estimated to be £4million; of which 1.6 million is for falls affecting older people and 2.2 million if for cold dwellings. The poor housing in Uttlesford is estimated to cost around 190 quality adjusted life years.
33. The figures provided within the report will require careful consideration and should be fed into the JSNA and Health & Wellbeing boards. Information is also presented that outlines the benefits of intervention strategies. An example given for falls associated with baths, all hazards in the owner occupied sector could be mitigated for £97,000, saving the NHS £38,000 per year, giving a payback period of less than 3 years.
34. The chart below outlines the payback periods (the number of years to reach the break-even point) for the NHS and society by hazard focusing on the least expensive 20% and 50% of works. By focusing on less expensive works the payback periods are shorter.



35. As it can be seen, the shortest payback periods are for the hazards associated with collisions and falls. The Longest payback periods are associated with the more complex hazards of damp and mould and excessive cold. It is considered that this evidence based information will be key for seeking additional resources for targeted interventions to reduce hazards in the homes of UDC residents.

36. It is considered that this evidence based information will be key for seeking additional resources for targeted interventions to reduce hazards in the homes of UDC residents.

37. Officers will now take time to consider the findings of the BRE studies with the intention of delivering on the following work areas:

- i. Development of a private sector housing strategy to feed in and complement the wider strategic housing functions of the Council
- ii. Increase awareness of the links between housing and health to our partners
- iii. Expand on Uttlesfords JSNA relating to the cost of poor housing
- iv. Utilise the expanded JSNA to build on the relationships and develop initiatives/campaigns to improve standards with the private sector stock.
- v. Pursue funding opportunities to deliver improvements to the Councils' private sector housing services.
- vi. Develop and implement a plan for the identification of licensable HMOs.

Risk Analysis

38.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Report for information only. Any areas of risk are identified within the BRE report	n/a	n/a	n/a

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.

