



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Dawn French

Housing Board

Date: Thursday, 08 December 2016
Time: 10:00
Venue: Committee Room

Members: Councillors H Asker, A Dean, T Farthing, M Felton (Chairman), J Loughlin, A Mills, S Morris, V Ranger, J Redfern, H Ryles.

Other attendees:- A Hutton (Tenants' Forum representative)

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest
- 2 Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2016 5 - 12
- 3 Matters arising
- 4 Proposed rent and service charges 2017- 2018 13 - 16
- 5 HRA Business Plan 2016 -2021 - actionplan update 17 - 24
- 6 Development update - verbal update
- 7 Housing Strategy Action Plan - update 25 - 34

- 8 Tenancy Sustainment Strategy 2016 35 - 54
- 9 Thatched CPO PART 2
- 10 Date of next meeting - 7 March 2017

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

Telephone: 01799 510433, 510369 or 510548

Email: Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk

General Enquiries

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Telephone: 01799 510510

Fax: 01799 510550

Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

HOUSING BOARD held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 10am on 6 OCTOBER 2016

Present: Councillor M Felton (Chairman)
Councillors T Farthing, J Loughlin, A Mills, S Morris, V Ranger
and J Redfern.

Also present: Mrs Angela Hutton and Mrs Carol Mandy (Tenant Forum
Representatives)

Officers in attendance: D Malins (Housing Development Manager), R Millership
(Assistant Director Housing and Environmental Services), N
Brown (Development Manager), C Cardross Grant (Housing
Renewals and Improvement officer) M Cox (Democratic Services
Officer), H Hayden (Planning Policy Officer), J O'Boyle (District
Environmental Health Officer), J Snares (Housing and
Communities Manager), M Watts (Principal Environmental Health
Officer).

HB10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Asker, Dean and Ryles.

HB11 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2016 were received and signed by
the Chairman as a correct record.

HB12 MATTERS ARISING

(i) HB5 – Affordable Housing Update

The Development Manager updated members on the latest position on the
policy to seek an affordable housing contribution for developments of less than
10 houses. He said the Government's decision to remove this clause had been
challenged by two authorities but although the case had been accepted, this
was in relation to how the policy had been implemented rather than in relation
to the policy itself.

He said the council could consider having a policy for smaller developments in
the new Local Plan, but this was risky as being contrary to Government policy, it
might raise a soundness issue. There was also evidence that the Inspector had
disregarded this policy at other local plan examinations.

The Board was reminded that the Council's existing development management
policies in relation to affordable housing were 40% for developments over 14
houses and 20% for developments of 10 -14 houses.

The Board asked for information on the amount of affordable housing that would be lost as a result of this policy.

Councillor Redfern said the clause had been removed to ease the financial burden on developers. She agreed that it wasn't appropriate to require a contribution for developments of less than 5 houses, but it would be viable above this number. The removal of the clause appeared to be a one size fits all approach and she said that UDC should continue to lobby the Government on this issue.

HB13

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Housing Development Manager gave a verbal update on the progress of developments on council owned sites.

(i) Mead Court Stansted

There had been some delays, mainly due to the timing of works by the statutory undertakers but it was expected that the scheme would be completed by the end of October.

(ii) Catons Lane , Saffron Walden

The handover of the scheme had taken place in June and tenants had moved into their new homes.

(iii) Reynolds Court – Newport

The scheme was progressing well.

(iv) Sheds Lane, Newport

The planning application for this scheme would be considered at the Planning Committee on 19 October.

(v) Newton Grove, Great Dunmow

Consultation around this development site had revealed some concern about the potential loss of parking from the residents of the flats. Officers had sympathy with these concerns and were looking at possible options for extending the site. The Town Council was supportive of the scheme.

(vi) St Johns Close, Saffron Walden

Councillor Mills, together with officers had been looking at a potential scheme for this empty property. The next suggested action was to look at the cost of bringing the property back into use for rent. If this was not economically viable a report would be brought to Cabinet to recommend the disposal of the asset.

HB14

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE- FRAMBURY LANE

The Board was advised of progress with developing the former garage site to provide council owned homes. A scheme had been designed for 5 -2 bed houses and a pre-application discussion had agreed the best layout. The construction costs were relatively high at around £860k, due to abnormal costs associated with the length of the estate roadway and site clearance. A 10% contingency had also been added due to early stage of the scheme.

The council's SPV, Aspire had considered the option of developing this site for private sector rented homes. This would require the transfer of the site to Aspire, with the HRA being compensated the market value of the site. This option has been considered, but had been found to be commercially unviable.

The next stage would be to submit the planning application and to hold meeting with the Parish Council and residents.

The Board had also considered other options for this site, to sell a percentage of the properties on the open market to reinvest elsewhere in the district or to progress the planning application and sell the whole of the site. These options would continue to be explored and reported back to the Board.

It was AGREED to recommend to Cabinet that the site is progressed through the planning application stage, having regard to the estimated costs associated with this work, as detailed in the report.

HB15

DRAFT PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY

The Principal Environmental Health Officer presented a report on a proposed strategy for private sector housing. This had followed a recommendation from the stock condition survey to deliver a strategy for the private sector to complement the wider housing functions of the council. This formed part of the council's health and wellbeing agenda and would be proactive work focused on raising standards in the private sector for the most vulnerable in society. The key priorities were as follows:

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

The strategy included a list of actions to be taken for each priority area.

In answer to a question from Angela Hutton, officers said the Papworth Trust handyman service would continue but the council would be exploring bringing the Disabled Facilities Grants back in house.

Councillor Loughlin asked if the improvement work would be means tested. The Principal Environmental Health Officer said there was a program to determine the level of contribution but elderly residents were often asset rich but cash poor and the council was looking at different methods of funding, for example, linking a grant to the value of the property.

Members were asked to consider the draft PSH strategy and send in any comments, which would be included in the report for the next meeting of the group.

AGREED that the Housing Board considers the draft PSH Strategy and feedback any comments by the end of November 2016.

HB16

HOUSING RENEWAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Principal Environmental Health Officer presented a report which suggested changes to the existing Housing Renewal Assistance Policy. This followed the presentation to the Housing Board on the condition of the housing stock within the district, which found a range of housing problems in the private sector.

The council recognised the link between poor housing and poor health and the report suggested measures and assistance to help those most disadvantaged in society. This report had been updated to deliver some of the outcomes identified in the draft PSH Strategy and hoped to target private sector residents in poor quality housing.

Members were asked to put forward any ideas, before the report was brought back to the next meeting.

It was AGREED that the Housing Board supports a review of the existing Housing Renewal Assistance Policy.

HB17

EMPTY HOMES - CPO UPDATE

Members received a presentation from the District Environmental Health Officer and the Housing Renewal and Improvements Officer on the compulsory purchase of 1 Holly cottages Widdington. This had been a long terms empty property since 1993, and was in a poor state of repair. It had not been possible to bring it voluntarily back into use, so it was agreed to compulsory purchase the property in June 2014.

Officer explained the process which had been both technically challenging and time consuming. The order had been finally approved by the Secretary of State

and vested to UDC on 6 September 2016. The land and property would be disposed of on the open market.

It was explained that there had been limited financial implications for the council. All costs except for officer time were met through the PLACE scheme. However, having an understanding of the effort involved, Members asked why the council would embark on this process. Officers replied that a CPO would only be pursued when all other avenues had been explored. This process had enabled the property to be returned to residential use and improve the environment for neighbouring properties.

The Board thanked the officers for their presentation and noted the report.

HB18 DRAFT TENANCY SUSTAINMENT STRATEGY

The Board received the draft Tenancy Sustainability Strategy. This set out how the council would work with tenants and their families to help sustain their tenancies and address the needs of vulnerable people, to the benefit of both the council and the tenants. The document was currently in draft form but the action plan would later be populated with costs and timescales. Members were asked to submit any comments and an updated version of the strategy would be brought back to the next meeting.

AGREED that the Housing Board consider the draft Tenancy Sustainment Strategy and feeds back any comments to the Housing and Communities Manager by the end of November 2016.

HB19 DECANT AND DOWNSIZING POLICY REVIEW

The Housing and Communities Manager presented a report on the Decant and Downsizing Policy. This had been implemented in 2013 and set out the levels of compensation to be paid when it was necessary to re-house a tenant to allow major repairs to be undertaken or where a property was to be disposed of or demolished. It also detailed the payments made to tenants who decided to downsize from a property that was larger than their needs.

The review suggested two minor changes to the wording to the policy: to clarify that in some cases home loss payment and disturbance allowance could be made to the same tenant, and to make it clear that it was the giving up of bedrooms that made the tenant eligible for a grant, not just moving from general need to elderly persons accommodation.

Members were informed that the scheme was generally working well. There had been around 20 grants given when the scheme was first introduced, falling to around 10 in subsequent years. The introduction of the spare room subsidy had made it more important for the council to make best use of its stock.

In relation to compensation payments officers said they were looking to see if there was capacity to introduce enhancements to support older tenants to downside.

AGREED that the Housing Board notes the report and agrees amended wording for clarification at points 18.3 and 18.4 of the policy.

HB20

WELFARE GARDEN AND REDORATION SCHEME REVIEW

The Board were reminded that the Welfare Garden and Redecoration Policy had been amended in 2014 to ensure that the services were going to those most in need of the service and didn't have an alternative option for looking after their garden or decorating their homes. The report considered how the policy had been working since its implementation.

In relation to the Welfare Garden Scheme, after the paid for service had been introduced, the number of visits had reduced by a third. The number of households having a room decorated had also reduced which allowed the work to be done in a more timely manner.

Officers felt the balance within the service was now correct and was being provided to those most in need. There had been no complaints about overgrown hedges or gardens. There were no further revisions required but it was suggested that the charges for gardening and one of clearances should be raised in line with inflation annually.

In answer to Members questions, it was explained that the charge for the gardening work was just to cover the cost of the service. The service was only open to those receiving benefit. There was some concern about the strict criteria for decorating and how a judgement was made on the need for redecoration.

AGREED to raise the charges for gardening and one of clearances in line with inflation annually from the next financial year.

The meeting ended at 11.40am.

ACTION POINTS

<p>Minute HB3 Affordable Housing Update</p>	<p>To provide information on the amount of affordable housing that would be lost as a result of the removal of the clause to require a contribution from developments of less than 10 houses.</p> <p>To continue to lobby the Government on this issue.</p>
<p>Minute HB14 Development update - Frambury Lane</p>	<p>To consider alternative options for developing this site.</p> <p>To seek Cabinet approval for the submission of the Planning application.</p>

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 8 December 2016

4

Title: Housing Revenue Account - Proposed Rent, Service and Support Charge increase 2017/18

Author: Roz Millership – Assistant Director Housing and Health Item for decision
Angela Knight – Assistant Director Resources

Summary

1. This report sets out 2017/18 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) changes in dwelling rents, garage rents, housing related support (HRS) charges and service charges
2. The recommendations will be discussed by the Tenants Forum on Monday 5 December 2016.
3. The Housing Board and Tenants Forum's recommendations will be reviewed by Scrutiny Committee on 7 February 2017 prior to approval by Cabinet on 16 February 2017 and referral to Full Council on 23 February 2017.

Recommendations

4. The Housing Board is requested to recommend to Cabinet for approval decreases in HRA dwelling rents as detailed below:
 - General needs accommodation - a 1% reduction in rent as per central government legislation
 - Supported accommodation - a 1% reduction in rent as per central government legislation
 - All dwelling rents to be revised to the formula rent level when the property is re-let
5. The Housing Board is requested to recommend to Cabinet for approval the increases in garage rent, support and service charges as detailed below:
 - Garage rents are increased by RPI of 2%
 - Housing related support charges are increased by RPI of 2%
 - Protection for tenants at 31st March 2003 who are ineligible for supporting people grant assistance to cease as no tenants will be receiving supporting people (HRS) grant funding from April 2017

- Lifeline charges are increased by RPI of 2%
- 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

Financial Implications

6. The relevant financial implications are included in the body of the report

Background Papers

7. None

Impact

- 8.

Communication/Consultation	Tenant Forum
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Calculation of future rents is now on a statutory basis
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Background

National social rent policy

9. The Government confirmed a key change introduced from April 2016 which is a reduction in all social rents of 1% for 4 years.
10. Given the calculation of future rents is now on a statutory basis, a Rent Setting Policy/Equalities Impact Assessment is now no longer required.
11. It is also proposed that the council continue with the policy of where rent is still not at the formula rent level, then the rent be revised to the formula rent level when the property is re-let.

Financial Impact on annual rental Income

12. This will give all tenants a 1% decrease in their current rent. The average rent in 2016/17 was £99.81 and in 2017/18 the average rent will decrease to £98.80

Garage rents

13. The Council manages a total of 453 garages, of these 282 are rented by private residents. The annual proposed rental increase is by RPI of 2% (as at September 2016). The current rent is £9.70 and increasing to £9.89 (excluding VAT) for 2017/18.

Housing Related Support (HRS) charges

14. Last year the council reviewed all support charges in preparation for further cuts to HRS funding made by Essex County Council.
15. The review resulted in the introduction of an Intensive Housing Management (IHM) charge to recover a proportion of the reduction of funding from ECC. The IHM charge is covered by Housing Benefit and its introduction therefore lessened the impact of the cuts to HRS for those tenants on benefits who previously have not contributed to support costs.
16. Tenants on housing benefit were also expected to pay the remaining proportion of the reduction of funding from ECC that could not be recovered through IHM. Last year this charge was minimal to those on housing benefit.
17. Essex County Council (ECC) has confirmed that all HRS funding will now cease from April 2017. This will result in the full cost of the support charge having to be recovered from all sheltered tenants, having a significant on tenants who are currently subsidised by HRS. The rationale that ECC makes for these cuts is that people who require this type of support can claim appropriate benefits to pay for it themselves.
18. The council will continue to work with those worst affected by these cuts to ensure that they are able to financially cope with the changes.
19. It is proposed to increase by RPI of 2% the charges for the council's sheltered housing scheme management service (made up from a support charge and an IHM charge) and lifeline services. The charges to be set at:
- i. Sheltered: £16.15 per week
 - ii. Sheltered plus: £18.15 per week
 - iii. Protection for tenants at 31st March 2003 who are ineligible for supporting people grant assistance to cease as no tenants will be receiving grant funding from April 2017
 - iv. Lifeline service: 4.30 per week

Heating, service and sewerage charges

20. The Council manages leasehold and freehold properties where service and sewerage charges are payable and these will continue to be calculated and charged in line with actual costs.
21. General needs and sheltered housing service charges are calculated on the same basis as Leasehold/freehold properties.
22. Heating charges will be calculated and charged in line with actual costs.
23. Service charges for tenants as at 31st March 2012 in sheltered accommodation and not in receipt of Housing Benefit will continue to be partially subsidised from the HRA. It is recommended that the subsidy for these charges is reduced by 25% annually.

24. Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Not implementing the 1% decrease	1 – the calculation of rents is now on a statutory basis	2 – would result in the council being penalised financially at a later date	To include the rental decrease in the 2017/18 budget setting
Support charges are not passed on to the tenant receiving services	1 – Costs cannot be borne by those not receiving the service	3 – Financial risk to the HRA	Will need to look at further adjustments to the service
Tenant unable to afford to pay for support costs	2 – increase in charges is higher than expected due to Essex CC withdrawing all funding	3 – Financial risk to the HRA	Investigate whether any further costs can legitimately be covered by Housing Benefit

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.

HRA BUSINESS PLAN – PRIORITIES FOR ACTION 2016 – 2021

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update December 2016
1. Operate a sound and viable housing business in a professional and cost effective manner				
Continue to develop business plan financial model to inform investment and service planning	Ongoing	Within existing resources	HRA that continues to be managed on sound business principles	Business plan financial model has been updated and shows that the HRA business plan remains viable
Prepare for supporting people funding reductions	Mar-17	Within existing resources	Options identified to enable key services to continue to be delivered	Introduced 2 new levels of service – sheltered and sheltered plus Introduced new Intensive Housing Management (IHM) charge – this can be included in Housing Benefit claim to reduce impact on residents receiving this service
Improve performance management systems in housing services	Mar-17	Within existing resources	PI targets based on a combination of performance of peer LA's in HouseMark benchmarking group and historic UDC performance data	All PIs and targets reviewed. PI's continually monitored through new Housing Performance Management process
Maximise income to the HRA by achieving high collection rates for rents, service charges, sewage charges, garage rents and	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rent arrears action taken at an earlier stage to prevent arrears from escalating. Providing debt support and signposting to tenants/leaseholders who are struggling. Corporate approach to	Income collection has been separated from the debt support work resulting in a significant reduction in rent arrears

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update December 2016
miscellaneous invoices			rent collection to ensure join-up with individual cases	
Implement re-chargeable repairs policy	Apr-16	Within existing resources	Improve recovery of costs of repairs which are tenants' responsibility	New re-charge policy in place and working well
Evaluate the alternative options available for the delivery of housing services through strategic and /or operational partnerships	Apr-17	Within existing resources	Options identified for step change improvement in value for money	No progress to date
Review the arrangements for the management of non-housing assets	Oct-16	Within existing resources	Rationalisation of management responsibilities and clarification of development potential	Complete - new structure in place
Ensure the void turnaround figures do not exceed targets to minimise rent losses	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rent loss through voids minimalised	Further review of the void processes carried out in October 2016 following recommendations from the Housing Regulatory Panel (HRP). Review shows that new processes that have been implemented are working well
2. 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				
Review tenant strategy	Apr-17	Within existing	Updated strategy	Complete - strategy has been reviewed.

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update December 2016
to ensure that local housing need is met and assets are used effectively, utilising all available flexibilities		resources		No change to policy recommended at this time
Create a tenancy sustainment team	Aug-16	Within existing resources	Increased support for vulnerable tenants. A failed tenancy costs the Council several thousands of pounds so the success of this team will ultimately save money for re-investment in the housing stock	Complete - team in place. Successful Tenancy Sustainment Programme implemented. We have been able to prevent evictions, organise sustainable repayment programmes and tenancies, and help individuals who have been previously unable to engage with us and many other support organisations
Improve the information on the housing stock	Apr-17	Within existing resources	Accessible up to date stock data	New stock data management system (SAM) has been implemented – estimated to go live in January 2017. Work is progressing on collecting stock data - it is anticipated that a 100% stock condition survey will be achieved on a rolling 5 year basis
Continue to manage and maintain the housing stock effectively and efficiently ensuring that properties meet, as a minimum, the decent homes standard	Ongoing	Within identified resources - approximately £5.3m pa	Well maintained homes and assets to minimum decent homes standard	Ongoing - planned works programmes are progressing well - the authority is continuing to deliver a significant programme of investment in the stock

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update December 2016
<p>Deliver an improved repairs and maintenance service through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhancement of mobile technology for repairs and voids teams; 2. Electronic van stocking of operatives' vehicles 3. Online reporting of repairs 	Aug-16	£120k	<p>Homes well maintained Improved tenant satisfaction More efficient and responsive deployment of personnel</p>	<p>Project plan in place to deliver IT improvements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handhelds have been selected and are currently being trialled - will be rolled out to all operatives by April 2017 2. Decision made not to implement new electronic stock system following unsuccessful trials 3. Schedule Board to enable on-line scheduling of repairs jobs currently being tested by users – to go live by April 2017
<p>Improve average energy efficiency for council properties</p>	Apr-17	£530k	<p>Reduced fuel costs for residents</p>	<p>All works identified in Phase I, II and III now complete and included: air source heat pumps/external wall cladding/solar panels. Further properties identified for improvement works and budgets being prepared for works to be carried out in 2017/18</p>
<p>Continue to fund disabled adaptations for tenants and improve the delivery process</p>	Ongoing	£260k pa	<p>Reduction in the time people have to wait for adaptations</p>	<p>Disabled adaptations continue at a high demand – currently able to meet all requests within a reasonable timescale</p>
<p>Undertake fundamental review of policies and procedures to ensure service is 'Fit for</p>	Ongoing	Within existing resources	<p>Policies in place that reflect best practice/current legislation</p>	<p>All policies and procedures regularly reviewed. Changes identified are brought to the tenant forum and housing board for approval</p>

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update December 2016
Purpose'				
3. Help tenants and leaseholders get involved with decisions about their housing				
Continue to develop Housing Regulatory Panel to scrutinise the performance of the Housing Service and to undertake service reviews	Ongoing	5k pa - training for members	A Housing Regulatory Panel that deliver in-depth challenging inspections - achieving improvements that really matter to tenants	The HRP have carried out a review of the sheltered housing service following their successful review of the Void process. Report has been presented to officers and progress with implementing the recommendations will be reported to the HRP and Housing Board
Review the approach to gathering tenant feedback and satisfaction	Mar-17	Within existing resources	Refreshed approach to assessing tenant satisfaction to inform service improvement planning	Online satisfaction survey has been designed so that tenants can feed back immediately after repair is carried out. New STAR tenant satisfaction/feedback survey to be sent to all tenants in January 2017
Link tenant participation with opportunities for skill development	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Skilled Tenant Forum and Tenant Regulatory Panel members	Training programme in place
Publish annual tenants report	Ongoing	£3k pa	Annual report published	Annual report published in November 2016
Benchmark service with other landlords through HouseMark	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Core benchmarking data uploaded to HouseMark for full organisational review	Core benchmarking data has been submitted – performance data and comparison with other authorities reviewed by officers at section heads meeting

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update December 2016
4. Regenerate the stock/estates and build new affordable rented council housing in an efficient and effective manner				
Deliver the new homes programme	Mar-21	£6.898m	New homes to replace those lost through RTB sales - approximately 6-10 per year	<p>Development programme on track: Holloway Crescent Phase I & II - 13 properties Mead Court Phase I – 14 properties Catons Lane – 6 properties Mead Court Phase II – 15 properties (due to complete December 2016) 48 properties</p> <p>Planning permission obtained for development of garage sites in Sheds Lane – 3 properties (due to complete December 2017) 3 properties</p>
Deliver Sheltered scheme re-development programme	Mar-18	£11.5m	Fit for purpose accommodation for the elderly	<p>Development programme on track: Reynolds Court Phase I – 14 properties (due to complete June 2017) Reynolds Court Phase II – 27 properties (due to complete August 2018) 41 properties</p> <p>Hatherley Court – remodelling (26 properties) and new build (1 property) – tenders being evaluated</p>
Review housing asset management strategy	Apr-18	Within existing resources	Established a clear policy on the use of HRA assets, regeneration and development	No progress

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update December 2016
Develop and implement initiatives for improving estates	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Delivery of new estate improvement/ regeneration initiatives as part of the housing asset management strategy. Delivery of resident led improvements	Regular trailer events being held / estate inspection; projects identified for estate regeneration
Carry out development appraisals of identified sites and review business plan capacity to develop	Apr-17	Revenue cost of £50k pa for surveyor to co-ordinate works	Established housing development programme	Proposals/plans being drawn up for sites at The Moors, Little Dunmow (16 properties); Newton Grove, Great Dunmow (4 properties); Frambury Lane, Newport (5 properties) 25 properties A number of garage and infill sites and excess garden land are being assessed for development viability, or for the opportunity to sell in order to cross-subsidise the development programme 20 properties

HOUSING STRATEGY PRIORITIES FOR ACTION 2016 – 2021

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
Increasing housing supply across all tenures				
Delivering Affordable Housing	Work with the Rural Community Council for Essex to develop new rural housing schemes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 3 new housing needs surveys in identified parishes with the Rural Housing Enabler • Complete a site search in one of the identified parishes 	September 2017 January 2016	Resource identified in Planning and Building Control budget	Wimbish phase 2 complete, Chrishall, Newport and Little Hallingbury onsite
	Continue to develop LA new build scheme and deliver 15 homes per year.	April 2017	HRA funding	Reynolds Court on site
	Review potential development on Council owned land	April 2016	HRA funding	Ongoing
	Deliver in partnership with Registered Providers 100 affordable homes per year	April 2016	HCA funding	120 complete in first 6 months of 2016/17
	Review best use of commuted sum pot across the District when re established	September 2016	Within existing resources	Policy was put on hold due to change in Government agenda. Officers investigating new policy as part of the new Local Plan
	Complete a review of our developing registered	December 2016	Within existing resources	Review completed, another scheduled for 2017/18

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
	providers to ensure that residents are gaining a good service from providers.			
	Work with Hastoe to deliver the Growth Area Funding project in Newport and deliver 34 affordable homes	April 2017	Growth Area Funding	Scheme on site, 34 affordable homes will be delivered
	Work with consultants to look at viability on large scale affordable housing schemes when required	On-going	Within existing resources	Viability assessments completed when required
	Work with Access group and arrange a visit to a new development scheme to look at accessibility of new build bungalows.	July 2016	Within existing resources	Stephanie arranging this with CHP
	Implement the findings of the SHMA update	January 2016	Within existing resources	SHMA findings implemented
Helping people to live independently				
Delivering Supported Housing	Re-provision of a new Mental Health facility with Metropolitan housing	April 2017	Will require funding for the development	Scheme no longer required in Uttlesford
	Work with partners to deliver a supported unit for people with learning disabilities with Hastoe and East Thames	September 2016	Funding gained from Essex CC	Scheme due to start on site in Jan 2017
	Work with Home Farm Trust (HFT) to identify development opportunities for a new Learning disability scheme in Ugley	January 2017	Funding will be required	Scheme progressing with HFT, discussions ongoing with planning before a scheme is submitted.

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
	Work with planning policy to identify and deliver new sites for Gypsy and Travellers.	January 2017	Within existing resources.	Government policy has changed definition, new research has been completed and findings will be published as part of the new Local Plan
	Review the Government's wheelchair standards when published	April 2016	Within existing resources	Wheelchair standards reviewed and used as policy by Building Control
	Review Uttlesford's wheelchair policy, look at how many units are in the pipeline, are they meeting our needs, is the % correct	April 2016	Within existing resources	Review being carried out as part of new Local Plan
	Work with Essex CC to investigate the needs of care leavers and progress a scheme if required	September 2016	Funding would need to be sought	Scheme to be investigated, to ensure that care leavers can be housed in Uttlesford
	Work with key partners and stakeholders to ensure that we understand the specialist housing needs of those living in the District to inform the Local Plan	April 2016	Within existing resources	Paper being drafted to inform the Local Plan
Older People	Deliver an extra care scheme in Radwinter Road, Saffron Walden	September 2017	Funding gained from HCA and Essex CC	Scheme on site, will be named Cornell Court, Due to complete in March 2018
	Deliver an extra care scheme in Great Dunmow in partnership.	September 2017	S106 site to be provided by the developer	Scheme design progressing and should start on site in the New Year
	Investigate and work with a specialist provider to deliver a	September 2017	Funding will be required	Land owner decided to use the land for a general needs scheme

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
	scheme for dementia sufferers in Uttlesford.			instead. Land search ongoing for new site
	On all new developments, request 5% as one and two bedroom bungalows to meet the needs of the ageing population	April 2016	Within existing resources	Complete
	Investigate the implications of the Care Act 2014	April 2016	Within existing resources	Complete and being implemented by officers
	Deliver the sheltered housing upgrade programme ensuring that all schemes are fit for purpose	April 2018	Within existing resources	Sheltered housing upgraded
	Provide Internet cafes in all our sheltered schemes for silver surfers.	April 2016	Within existing resources	Internet cafes provided in sheltered schemes
	Publish key documents in easy read format	March 2016	Within existing resources	Documents published in easy read format
Homelessness	Investigate and deliver in partnership the provision of additional supported accommodation for vulnerable adults	June 2017	Funding will be required	Still to be developed when we understand the implications of new government policy
	Deliver a supported unit in the District for those fleeing Domestic Violence in partnership with Safer Places	April 2017	Funding identified	Scheme not being progressed
	Write and publish new Homeless Strategy 2015-20	January 2016	Within existing resources	Complete
Allocations	Review the new allocations	January 2016	Within existing	Allocations policy reviewed

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
	policy and the impact it has had on the Housing register		resources	
Ensuring decent, safe and healthy homes				
Private sector	Deliver on the new Climate Local Strategy	April 2016 and moving forwards	Within existing resources	Climate Local Strategy delivered
	Continue to identify empty homes within the district and take appropriate action to bring them back into use	On-going	£50K allocated for 2015/16 plus additional PLACE scheme funding in place	Ongoing work. Due to our continuous intervention, we have some of the lowest levels of empty dwellings in Essex
	Organise Landlords forum once a year	April 2016 and yearly after.	Within existing resources	Landlords forum held in October 2016
	Take part in a winter campaign with CAB ensuring that residents know how to keep warm, where to seek advice etc.	Winter 2015	Within existing resources	Winter campaign successfully run during 2015/16 and will be run in 2016/17 too
	Continue to administer Disabled Facilities Grants and seek additional funding from Essex County Council	On-going	Within existing resources	The service has received additional funding and we hope this will increase in 2017/18
	Continue to administer Home Repair Assistance Grants for those in greatest need	On-going	Within existing resources	Ongoing and subject to a review as part of wider changes to the Housing Assistance Policy
	Continue to investigate complaints alleging poor housing conditions	On-going	Within existing resources	All complaints made to the service are investigated and the outcomes are assessed using the Housing Health Cost Calculator
	Commission the BRE housing stock modelling service to profile housing within the	April 2015	Funding allocated in 2014/2015	Completed. The findings of the stock modelling at being integrated into the Councils GIS

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
	district			to assist with targeted housing assistance campaign work
	Develop and implement an action plan based on the findings of the stock modelling data	March 2016 and moving forwards	Within existing resources	The findings of the stock profiling have been assessed and key priorities have been identified. These key priorities have been detailed with the PSH strategy and in part support the evidence for planned changes in the Housing Assistance Policy
	Develop and implement an action plan for identifying licensed HMOs and take action to ensure that they are legally compliant	February 2015 and moving forwards	Within existing resources	Completed. The service has identified a number of licensable HMOs and are working to ensure that they are legally compliant. We also await the outcome of proposed changes to the definition of HMOs that is likely to lead to further work within this area
	Explore funding opportunities to implement projects to improve the condition of private sector housing	April 2016	Within existing resources	The Council has received additional funding from ECC to support the Disabled Facilities Grant work. In 2017 we plan to vary the existing Housing Assistance Policy that will provide the service area with the flexibility to engage with the Health & Wellbeing agenda to tackle a wider range of problems associated with poor housing. Initiatives that require additional

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
				funding will be raised with the Housing Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board
	Measure the cost savings to the NHS from the councils intervention	April 2016 and moving forwards	Within existing resources	Since 2014, the total reported savings to the NHS and to society as a result of dealing with housing service requests is approx. £43,500
	Work with Home Improvement Agency to meet local needs	On-going	Within existing resources	The service is working with the Papworth Trust to bring DFG delivery in house in 2017. We will continue to work closely and support the Papworth Trust on new housing & health initiatives in 2017.
The Councils Housing Stock and other public sector housing	Continue to implement the agreed action plan of new housing improvements and service enhancements, funded from the additional resources made available by HRA self-financing	April 2016	HRA Funding	Housing improvements completed and reviewed at Housing Board
	Publish updated HRA Business Plan	January 2016	Within existing resources	HRA Business Plan published.
	Continue to make energy efficiency improvements to the existing housing stock	On-going	Within existing resources / HRA funding	Energy efficiency improvements continue to be completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Wall Insulation programme has continued with a further 55 homes completed this year

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 thermally efficient composite door replacements this year • 200 energy efficient 'A' rated condensing boiler replacements • installed energy meters in the 288 properties fitted with roof mounted solar panels to assist tenants in using the green energy generated at home
	Continue to provide advice to tenants on saving energy	On- going	Within existing resources	Energy saving advice given to tenants through the Councils website and housing roadshows.
	Work with the Tenant Regulatory Panel to undertake detailed reviews of specific housing services	April 2016	Within existing resources	Tenant Regulatory Panel reports to Housing Board with review findings
Sustainable Communities	Investigate levels of Black and Minority Ethnic housing need and ensure that current and future housing provision meets these needs	April 2016	Within existing resources	Evidence currently being collated, will be published in early 2017
	Undertake equality impact assessments on new and existing housing policies	October 2016	Within existing resources	Equality impact assessments completed on new documents
	Continue to work towards Equality standards	April 2016	Within existing resources	Progress on meetings equality standards
	Involve service users in shaping the services that they	March 2016	Within existing resources	Service users fully involved in key decisions.

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
	<p>use and that affect their lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through tenant forum • Ongoing consultation events with older people, young people, those with specialist needs. • Yearly Housing Strategy conference 			
	<p>Work with Planning and Health colleagues within the Council to ensure that adequate facilities are provided alongside housing. (Community facilities, health centres and schools)</p>	On-going	Within existing resources	The new Local Plan needs to ensure that good facilities are provided alongside new development
	<p>Work with Uttlesford Futures to ensure that the Housing Strategy can inform the West Essex Health and Wellbeing Strategy</p>	April 2016	Within existing resources	To be developed with the Health and Wellbeing team
	<p>Publish an easy read executive summary of the Housing Strategy to ensure that all service users can understand and shape our priorities</p>	December 2015	Voices to be Heard Group providing support.	Easy read executive summary of the Housing Strategy published
Housing Strategy	<p>Organise Housing Strategy conference to review progress,</p>	October 2015	Within existing resources	Housing Strategy conference held

Priority	Action	Timescale	Resources	Update December 2016
Review	set new targets and celebrate success			
	Review action plan twice a year and report to Housing Board	Six monthly report to Housing Board and Tenant Forum	Within existing resources	Action plan reviewed

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 6 October 2016

8

Title: Tenancy Sustainment Strategy

Author: Judith Snares –Housing and Communities
Manager Ext 671

Summary

1. This report brings to the attention of the Housing Board the final version of the council's first Tenancy Sustainment Strategy.

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Board approves the final Tenancy Sustainment Strategy.

Financial Implications

3. It is envisaged that the strategy's Action Plan will be delivered from within existing resources.

Impact

- 4.

Communication/Consultation	Members, tenants, all partner agencies and public consultation via the website
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	EQA completed
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	All wards
Workforce/Workplace	Housing, Benefits and Council Tax department

Situation

5. The Strategy has been out for consultation since October there have been no comments received and the Action Plan has now been completed. The Strategy is now ready for approval and adoption.

Risk Analysis

17.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The council fails to prevent the loss of council tenancies by vulnerable tenants	2 - Changes to the welfare system and the increasingly complex needs of tenants and prospective tenants increases the likelihood of tenants getting into difficulties with their tenancies	2 – Social impact. Increased legal and void costs to the housing department. Increased workload for the housing options and homelessness team	The document details how the housing team will identify and intervene early with those tenants most likely to be at risk of losing their tenancies

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

DRAFT

Tenancy Sustainment Strategy

2016 - 2020

Dec 2016

Introduction

Uttlesford Council believes that its role as a landlord to nearly 2900 tenants is one of its most important. There is nothing more fundamental to a person's health and wellbeing than to have a safe and secure home, this is why working with tenants and their families to help them sustain their tenancies is so important to us and is set to become one of our core housing management functions.

The Council also recognises the important business case for sustaining tenancies and addressing the needs of vulnerable people. Many of the risks faced by those who are vulnerable get passed on to the council through increases in serious housing need and homelessness, rent arrears, poorer maintenance of properties, and increased tenancy turnover. It is therefore in the council's interest to help its tenants and prospective tenants meet their housing needs, sustain their tenancies, and maintain their homes.

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that the council has the right tools in place and has the right approach to tenancy sustainment. By getting it right we can reduce tenancy failures, improve tenant satisfaction and ultimately maximize rental income, more importantly we can help tenants maintain a home for them and their family so they can enjoy a better quality of life and live in stable and strong communities.

Strategy Key Objectives

The Health and Wellbeing of residents is at the heart of Uttlesford Council's Corporate Plan. This tenancy sustainment strategy supports that plan and has three objectives to be delivered over the next four years, these are:

- To improve the Council's understanding of tenancy failure and its causes
- Be proactive in identifying vulnerability in tenants and prospective tenants
- To provide a holistic tenancy sustainment service to prevent vulnerable tenants from losing their tenancies

The council's Housing Options Team works with many people who are in need of housing for a variety of reasons and who may themselves have a variety of different personal issues that they are dealing with. Some of these people will be facing homelessness which in itself can make them vulnerable. Although homelessness can happen to anyone at any time, those who approach the council are often those least able to financially and emotionally cope with their situation, meaning that they are more likely to find sustaining settled housing in the future more difficult. This is

why it is important that prospective new council tenants who may be vulnerable and find it difficult to sustain their new tenancy are identified at the earliest opportunity.

It is not uncommon for new tenants to struggle to maintain their tenancies within the first year. This can be for many reasons. For some this will be their first independent home and they lack the experience or knowledge of how to run a home and be responsible for paying the bills. Others may simply lack the confidence or ability to regulate the behavior of other household members or visitors which may lead to complaints of anti-social behavior. For some this may be because they are vulnerable through physical or mental disability and are therefore more easily taken advantage of by others.

The council's Housing Management Team works with existing council tenants and are therefore in a position to identify at an early stage where a tenant may be having difficulties that might eventually result in the loss of their tenancy. It may be that the tenant's circumstances have changed because of a loss of income from a period of unemployment or reduction in benefits and rent arrears are accruing, or there have been complaints of anti-social behavior emanating from within their household.

Frontline officers come in to contact with tenants and potential tenants on a day to day basis, so the council needs to ensure that its officers are confident in identifying and reporting tenants who they may feel are vulnerable and not coping.

The council also has a number of housing operatives and contractors who regularly go into tenant's homes and it is important that these staff are equally confident in identifying and reporting vulnerability and know how to highlight issues that may require urgent action.

Key Objective 1 - To improve the Council's understanding of tenancy failure and its causes

By looking at the reasons for abandonment, termination and eviction we can better understand why tenancies fail and can then develop meaningful interventions to help our tenants create sustainable tenancies.

Risk factors associated with tenancy failure include:

- Young first time tenants
- Elderly tenants with support needs
- Living somewhere the tenant didn't really want to be
- Antisocial behavior and harassment
- Property in poor condition
- Poverty, low income, debt problems
- Mental Health problems
- Ill health and disability

- Offending behavior background
- Relationship breakdowns
- Lack of appropriate support when it is needed

To meet this objective the council will:

- Carry out analysis of the reasons for eviction and other tenancy terminations to use this information to shape our future tenancy sustainment services
- Consider the need to develop a pre-tenancy 'training programme' for all prospective new council tenants prior to the point of tenancy sign up

Key Objective 2 – Be proactive in identifying vulnerability in tenants and prospective tenants

To meet this objective the council will:

- Ensure all key staff are trained to identify vulnerable tenants or prospective tenants and know how to refer to them to the appropriate officers
- Ensure there are joined up procedures between the council's housing options and housing management teams for the seamless handover of vulnerable new tenants
- Develop a tenant profile database to help identify those with complex problems, how well they are coping with their tenancy and that they are receiving the appropriate level of support to sustain their tenancy
- Ensure that the appropriate staff within housing engage with housing benefits staff and the Benefits Agency particularly in relation to the roll out of Universal Credit
- Use the existing 4 week new tenancy visit to identify tenants who may require further assistance in managing a successful tenancy
- Use the annual new tenancy inspection process to identify at an early stage tenants who may have had a change in circumstances that could put their tenancy at risk

Key Objective 3 – To provide a holistic tenancy sustainment service to prevent vulnerable tenants from losing their tenancies

To meet this objective the council will:

- Provide a dedicated tenancy sustainment officer to work across the council and with other agencies
- Provide a tenancy sustainment service that will:-
 - Assess the needs of tenants and prospective tenants and advise them on the support offered by organisations both statutory and voluntary
 - Help vulnerable tenants settle into their new homes.
 - Ensure that young people and new households who have little or no experience of living independently and who may struggle at first to manage their tenancy and money or utility services are supported until they are confident on how to sustain their tenancy
 - Refer vulnerable tenants to appropriate agencies so they can be given the support they require to help them sustain their tenancies successfully
 - Encourage tenants who are receiving support to continue their engagement with any agencies offering them assistance
 - Help tenants to maximize their income, and ensure they are in receipt of all benefits they are entitled to.
 - Help tenants to identify where they have problems with debt and make referrals to specialist debt advice services
 - Advise tenants and prospective tenants on how to look after their property and be good neighbours
 - Refer vulnerable tenants to other teams or services that can improve their independence, quality or life, health and well-being.
 - Ensure new tenants who have been homeless have the right support to adjust to living independently and managing their homes and money in place at the start of their tenancy.
 - Help tenants who have lost their job or who have had some other change in their financial circumstances to make sustainable arrangements to continue to pay their rent

Consultation and Engagement

We will consult with the Tenants Forum, the Housing Board and other interested parties on the general approach of this strategy and provide updates on the strategy action plan once implemented. We will carry out customer consultation via survey's and face to face interviews to ensure that the tenancy sustainment service develops to meet the needs vulnerable clients

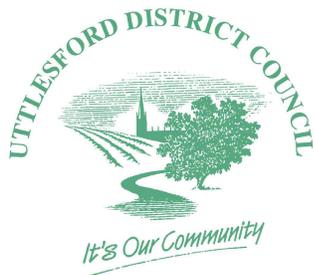
Conclusion

This strategy has been written in times of continuing economic difficulty for many of the clients seen within the housing department and wider community, however, with the further changes to the benefit system and roll out of Universal Credit, we are hopeful that the actions contained in this strategy will have the positive effect of improving the wellbeing of vulnerable council's tenants and of sustaining tenancies.

Action Plan

Key Objective	Action	Outcome	Responsible Officer	Timescale
KO 1	Carry out analysis of the key reasons for tenancy loss	Understanding of reasons for tenancy loss	Fiona Gardiner	April 2017
	Investigate and consult on the benefits of having pre-tenancy training	Decision made on benefits of having pre-tenancy training	Jane Hurst	April 2017
KO 2	Train key front line staff to enable them to identify vulnerable tenants	Front line staff trained to identify vulnerable tenants	Fiona Gardiner	June 2017
	Ensure frontline staff know who to report concerns over vulnerable tenants to	Front line staff fully aware of reporting structures for reporting concerns	Fiona Gardiner	June 2017
	Review procedures on how vulnerable clients are handed over from one team to another within the department	Procedures in place to ensure seamless referral process between teams	Fiona Gardiner/ Charmaine Horsfield/ Becca Collins	June 2017

	Develop a tenant profile data base	Tenant profile data base developed	Fiona Gardiner	Dec 2017
	Ensure that channels of communication are open and working between housing and benefits staff	Free flowing information sharing between departments	Jane Hurst	April 2017
	Ensure procedures for 4 week new tenancy visits are reviewed and revised where necessary	New tenancy visit procedure reviewed	Lisa Higgon	Feb 2017
	Ensure procedures for annual tenancy inspections are reviewed and revised where necessary	Annual tenancy inspection procedures revised	Lisa Higgon	Feb 2017
KO 3	Have a dedicated tenancy sustainment officer within the housing department	Tenancy Sustainment Officer in post		Completed
	Write procedures for a tenancy sustainment service – including appropriate referral forms and arrangements	Procedures for tenancy sustainment service in place	Fiona Gardiner/ Jane Hurst	Jan 2017



Uttlesford District Council

Fast-track equality impact assessment (EqIA) tool

What is this tool for?

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

What should be equality impact assessed?

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

How do I use the tool?

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

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

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

General information												
1	Name of strategy, policy, project, contract or decision.	Tenancy Sustainment Strategy										
2	What is the overall purpose of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	To establish policy and procedures to deliver a service that supports council tenants to enable them to sustain their tenancies										
3	Who may be affected by the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision? Uttlesford District Council Tenants in receipt of health related benefits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A specific client group/s e.g. linked by geographical location, social economic factors, age, disabilities, gender, transgender, race, religion or sexual orientation (please state)										
4	Responsible department and Head of Division.	Department: Housing Services Head of Division: Roz Millership										
5	Are other departments or partners involved in delivery of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes Housing Benefits, Vouluntary Sector Charities										
Gathering performance data												
6	Do you (or do you intend to) collect this monitoring data in relation to any of the following <u>diverse groups</u> ? Core monitoring data and tenants surveys	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion & Belief</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and Maternity</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage and Civil Partnerships</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural Isolation</td> </tr> </table>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion & Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage and Civil Partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural Isolation
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion & Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and Maternity											
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage and Civil Partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural Isolation											

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

8	Consider the impact the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision has already achieved, measured by the monitoring data you collect. Is the same impact being achieved for diverse groups as is being achieved across the population or workforce as a whole?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes * <input type="checkbox"/> No* <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient  <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable  <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p>
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9	<p>Is uptake of any services, benefits or opportunities associated with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision generally representative of <u>diverse groups</u>?</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Yes *</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>No*</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Insufficient </td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Not applicable </td> </tr> </table> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified: These services are only available to tenants who meet the eligibility criteria of the policy</i></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes *	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient 	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable 
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes *									
<input type="checkbox"/>	No*									
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient 									
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable 									

Checking delivery arrangements

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

Checking information and communication arrangements

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

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

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

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

Future Impact

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

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

- No
- Yes * 
- Insufficient evidence 

*Please state any potential issues Identified.

OVERVIEW
70,000 residents
Demographic make up according to diverse groups.

Improvement actions	
13	<p>If your assessment has highlighted any potential issues or red flags, can these be easily addressed?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No* </p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable</p> <p><i>*If Yes, please describe your proposed action/s, intended impact, monitoring arrangements implementation date and lead officer:</i></p>
Making a judgement – conclusions and next steps	
14	<p>Following this fast-track assessment, please confirm the following:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified  No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.  Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.  Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).</p>
15	<p>If you have any additional comments to make, please include here.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p>
Completion	
16	<p>Name and job title (Assessment lead officer) Judith Snares</p> <p>Name/s of any assisting officers and people consulted during assessment: Fiona Gardiner</p> <p>Date: 29/11/2016</p> <p>Date of next review: 01/01/2018</p> <p><i>For new strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions this should be one year from implementation.</i></p>
<p>When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project,</p>	

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

Additional evidence gathering and action planning

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

	(f) Having gathered evidence re-evaluate this assessment.	
	(g) Following completion of the above, please confirm the following:	
18	The conclusions and agreed proposals: Draft Strategy until it has been agreed by the Tenants Forum and the Housing Board	
	Summary of evidence gathered, including any internal and external consultation (please include full document titles and dates of publication and consultation for audit purposes): Tenants, housing officers, members. Other LA's and Housing Associations	
	Date proposals to be implemented and lead officer: 01 Jan 2017 – Fiona Gardiner	
	Where implementation is not immediate, please state in which service plan or strategy the proposed actions will be integrated: Housing Service Plan	
	Monitor arrangements (please include full details for audit purposes): Monitoring of evictions, rent arrears and complaints	
Additional Comments		
19	If you have any additional comments to make, please include here:	<input type="checkbox"/> None
Completion		
20	Name and job title (Lead Officer): Name/s of other assisting officers: Date: Date of next review (if any):	Judith Snares Housing and Communities Manager Fiona Gardiner 29/11/2016 01/01/2018
When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.		

