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Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 18th April, 2024

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Broadcast: <https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=6153>

Leader and Chair: Councillor P Lees

Members: Councillors A Coote, J Evans, N Hargreaves (Vice-Chair), N Reeve and M Sutton

Other Attendees: Councillors S Barker (Conservative Party Group Leader), N Gregory (Chair of Scrutiny Committee), R Pavitt (Uttlesford Independent Party Group Leader) and G Sell (Liberal Democrat Group Leader),

Public Speaking

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AGENDA

PART 1

Open to Public and Press

1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

6 - 10

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2024.

3 Questions or Statements from Non-Executive Members of the Council (standing item)

To receive questions or statements from non-executive members on matters included on the agenda.

4 Matters Referred to the Executive by the Scrutiny Committee or by the Council (standing item)

To consider matters referred to the Executive for reconsideration in accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Rules.

- No matters referred.

5 Consideration of reports from overview and scrutiny committees (standing item)

To consider any reports from Scrutiny Committee.

6 Report of Delegated Decisions taken by Cabinet Members or Committees (standing item)

To receive for information any delegated decisions taken by Cabinet Committees or Members since the previous Cabinet meeting:

- [Executive Decision on 27 March 2024 - Response to ECC consultation: Replacement Essex Minerals Local Plan \(Regulation 18\)](#)

7 Designation of Debden Neighbourhood Plan Area

11 - 17

To consider the designation of the Debden Neighbourhood Plan Area.

- | | | |
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| 8 | Corporate Core Indicators - Target Setting 2024/25 | 18 - 23 |
| | To consider the Corporate Core indicators – Target Setting 2024/25 report. | |
| 9 | Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan | 24 - 38 |
| | To consider the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan. | |
| 10 | Blueprint Uttlesford audit | 39 - 51 |
| | To consider the report regarding the Blueprint Uttlesford Audit. | |
| 11 | Car Park Update | 52 - 55 |
| | To consider the Car Park Update report. | |
| 12 | Amendments to the Councils Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy | 56 - 110 |
| | To consider amendemnts to the Council Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy. | |
| 13 | Empty Homes Policy | 111 - 151 |
| | To consider the Empty Homes Policy. | |
| 14 | Strategic Grants - Asylum Seeker and Refugee | 152 - 180 |
| | To consider the Strategic Grants – Asylum Seeker and Refugee report. | |
| 15 | Housing support under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme | 181 - 210 |
| | To consider the report regarding Housing Support under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. | |
| 16 | Chesterford Research Park Building 800 and Solar Farm funding update - WITHDRAWN | |
| | Item withdrawn. | |
| 17 | Exclusion of Public and Press | |
| | To exclude the public and press due to consideration of a report containing exempt information within the meaning of section 100I and paragraph 3 part 1 Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972. | |

PART 2

Exclusion of Public and Press

- 18 Procurement of Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Capital Improvements provision from 2025** 211 - 286
To consider the report regarding the Procurement of Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Capital Improvements Provision from 2025.

PART 2

Exclusion of Public and Press

- 19 Debt refinancing opportunity** 287 - 291
Item for information.

MEETINGS AND THE PUBLIC

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

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Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Agenda Item 2

CABINET held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on TUESDAY, 19 MARCH 2024 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor P Lees (Chair)
Councillors A Coote, J Evans, N Hargreaves, N Reeve and M Sutton

Officers in attendance: P Holt (Chief Executive), N Brown (Development Manager), J Etherington (Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Manager), N Katevu (Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services), A Knight (Director of Business Performance and People) and M Watts (Environmental Health Manager – Protection)

Also present: Councillors N Gregory (Chair of the Scrutiny Committee), J Moran (deputising as Conservative Group Leader) and G Sell (Liberal Democrat Group Leader).

CAB76 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Councillors Barker (Conservative Group Leader) and Pavitt (Uttlesford Independents' Group Leader).

Councillor Moran substituted for Councillor Barker.

CAB77 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 February 2024 were approved as a correct record.

CAB78 QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS FROM NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (STANDING ITEM)

There were no questions from non-executive members.

CAB79 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (STANDING ITEM)

Councillor Gregory said there was nothing to report as the Scrutiny Committee had not met since the previous Cabinet meeting held on 20 February. However, he said the Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group had already met twice and he had faith that progress would be made.

CAB80 REPORT OF DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBERS AND

COMMITTEES

The Voluntary Support Grants Committee decision made on 29 February 2024 was noted for information.

In response to a question, the Chair said this would be the final year that grants were awarded on an annual basis. Moving forward, funding would be allocated on a three year cycle, in order to provide voluntary organisations in receipt of the grant a degree of financial certainty.

CAB81 REVOCATION OF THE SAFFRON WALDEN AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA

The Chair moved Item 9 forward in proceedings.

Councillor Reeve presented the report regarding the Revocation of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Saffron Walden. He said the area had been monitored since 2012 in line with National Air Quality Objectives and readings were now below the 40µgm³ Air Quality Objective for Nitrogen Dioxide, and this had been the case since 2017. As per the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Policy Guidance, the Council was now looking to revoke the AQMA as compliance with the relevant objective had been achieved for over five consecutive years. He proposed approval of the recommendation.

Councillor Evans seconded the proposal.

The Environmental Health Manager (Protection) said that work would continue to improve air quality in the area and a Local Air Quality Strategy would be developed over the next twelve months.

Councillor Reeve said lessons would be learnt from this AQMA and applied where relevant across the district.

RESOLVED to agree the Order to revoke the Air Quality Management Area for Nitrogen Dioxide at Saffron Waden as provided within Appendix A.

CAB82 ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Councillor Sutton presented the report regarding Assets of Community Value, which set out decisions relating to the designation of Assets of Community Value made under delegated powers. She asked Cabinet to note the report.

Members discussed the Assets of Community Value and there was agreement that the process was important to local communities across the district.

Councillor Evans welcomed the report and said the delegated process worked well. He said the reason that the Saffron Hotel had not been designated was because hotels were not applicable for listing as an Asset of Community Value.

The report was noted.

CAB83 REMOVAL OF ARTICLE 4 HATFIELD HEATH

The Chair moved both Items 10 and 11 forward in proceedings.

Councillor Evans presented the report regarding the removal of an Article 4 Direction in Friars Lane, Hatfield Heath, which had been in place since 2012. He said the Council was legally bound to review Article 4 Directions within the district on a regular basis and the owners of the land in question had approached the Council and requested that this Article 4 Direction be reviewed. Following completion of the review, it had been recommended that it was no longer required. Councillor Evans proposed the removal of the Article 4 Direction.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Reeve.

RESOLVED that the Article 4 Direction be removed from the land defined as Friars Lane (off Chelmsford Road), Hatfield Heath.

CAB84 ARTICLE 4 - HIGH RODING

Councillor Evans presented the report regarding the making of an Article 4 Direction for land at Attridges Farm, High Roding. He said that since 2021 the land had been the subject of online advertising and individual plots had been presented for unconditional sale. The land had little, if any, planning potential, and the sales of individual strips and plots has resulted in the introduction of some fences and enclosures, which was detrimental to the surrounding countryside. It was therefore considered prudent to make an Article 4 Direction restricting some of the permitted development activity. He proposed the recommendation set out in the report.

In response to a question, the Development Manager said that there were potentially other sites in the district with a similar issue, but this was a large site and it was affecting the character of the surrounding countryside. He asked that members bring any similar sites to his attention.

Councillor Sutton seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED that an Article 4 Direction be defined for Land at Attridges Farm, High Roding.

CAB85 2023/24 Q3 CORPORATE CORE INDICATORS (CCIS) OUTTURN REPORT

The Chair presented the report regarding Corporate Core Indicators for Quarter 3 2023/24. She thanked the Director of Business Performance and People and the Contract, Performance and Risk Manager for producing the report, which outlined performance for quarter 3 of 2023/24 and included a comparison to the

Council's "statistical near neighbours" (SNN). She explained that the authorities selected as SNNs were similar to Uttlesford, in regard to factors such as population size, demographics and rural character. This helped interpret results and analyse how statistical differences between other authorities had arisen during the benchmarking process. She asked members to note the report for information.

In response to a question regarding the damp and mould indicator (CCI 19), Councillor Coote said the target had originally been to resolve the issue of mould within seven days but this had been changed to fourteen days. A return visit would then be carried out three weeks later to ensure the mould had not returned.

In response to a question regarding long term-sickness of staff (CCI 02), the Chief Executive said there was a danger of using percentages for very small numbers and that the 39% figure cited with anxiety or stress issues was in relation to only two or three people. He said that staff were being supported in order to return to work.

In response to a question regarding SNNs, the Director of Business Performance and People said that it was important to compare the Council with similar authorities in order to extract real value from the process. For instance, there was very little point in comparing Uttlesford bin collections with those of an urban authority, as the problems faced by a smaller, more densely populated area would be very different from the issues faced in a large and rural district.

The report was noted.

CAB86 QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL FORECAST - 2023/24

Councillor Hargreaves presented the Quarter 3 Financial Forecast 2023/24 report and highlighted the latest forecast financial performance of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, and capital programme, together with a summary of the Council's treasury management position and updated prudential indicators. It was based upon actual income and expenditure from April to December 2023, together with forecasts for the remainder of the financial year. He proposed to note the report and to approve the General Fund virements as set out in paragraph 19.

Councillor Coote seconded the proposal.

Members discussed the report and raised issues relating to the signing off of accounts and the local authority demand faced by auditors across the country. There was also praise for the Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits and his team for their outstanding work.

The Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits said he had pushed for accurate financial forecasts, including underspends, in order to feed the correct information into the budget setting process. He said the relative accuracy of quarters 2 and 3 demonstrated that the process was working.

RESOLVED to:

- i. Note the contents of this report, in particular the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and capital programme forecast outturn positions, and updated prudential indicators.
- ii. Approve the General Fund revenue virements set out at paragraph 19.

CAB87 QUARTER 3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2023/24

Councillor Hargreaves presented the report regarding Quarter 3 Treasury Management 2023/24, which stated that during the quarter, all treasury management activity has been undertaken in line with the approved Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24, with the exception of two minor breaches of the counterparty investment limit in respect of overnight balances with Barclays Bank.

The report was noted.

The meeting was closed at 8.35pm.

Committee:	Cabinet	Date: Thursday, 18 April 2024
Title:	Designation of Debden Neighbourhood Plan Area	
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr John Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning	
Report Author:	Demetria Macdonald, Planning Policy Officer dmacdonald@uttlesford.gov.uk Tel: 01799 510518	Key decision: No

Summary

1. The Council received an application from Debden Parish Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area on 26 January 2024.
2. In accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (Amended 2015 and 2016) the application is for the whole Debden Parish area and the Council is required to designate the specified area as a neighbourhood area.

Recommendations

3. To designate the Parish of Debden as a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.
4. The Plan Area as submitted by Debden Parish Council should be supported and adopted as the Debden Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Financial Implications

5. The Council Neighbourhood Fund is depleted and no longer offers funding for neighbourhood planning. Debden Parish Council has been advised to apply for Locality Funding.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None

Impact

7.

Communication/Consultation	Decision to Designate Debden Neighbourhood Plan Area will be published on the UDC website together with the application letter and a map of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	Debden
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

8. The Council received an application from Debden Parish Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area on 26 January 2024. This request was made under Section 5-7 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as Amended 2015 and 2016).
9. No consultation is required as per regulation 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment Regulations 2016) but the Designation Decision is required to be published on the Council website.
10. The application includes the requisite map relating to the parish, a statement explaining why the area is considered appropriate for designation as a neighbourhood area and a statement confirming that the application has been made by a relevant body i.e., Parish Council in this case (see Appendix 1).
11. The Parish Council has confirmed that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area is contiguous with the Parish Boundary of Debden Parish Council (see Appendix 2). The Parish Council consider that this is the appropriate area to be designated as it is the area administered by Debden Parish Council.
12. As the application is for the entirety of the parish council area, with no part falling outside the parish boundary, the Council is obliged to approve the proposed "neighbourhood area" for the purposes of a neighbourhood plan. (Regulation 5A (1), Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012).

13. At this stage no ideas have been developed about the type of policies which the Plan would include. However, this would be led by the Parish Council and their public consultation. To be accepted the Neighbourhood Development Plan will need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the District Local Plan, have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.

Risk Analysis

14.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Concerns and complaints may be raised about the area designated	1 – Low likelihood as the boundary is contiguous with that of the Parish Council which is a logical boundary.	1 – Little or no impact would occur.	Publicising the Designation Decision in accordance with the Regulations together with the application for Designation.

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.

APPENDIX 1

Application for the Designation of a Neighbourhood Area Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [section 61G] The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 [Regulation 5]

Publication of application on the Uttlesford District Council website

Please note that the information provided on this application form and relevant supporting documents will be published on the Uttlesford District Council website. If you require any further clarification, please contact the planning policy department using the email address: planningpolicy@Uttlesford.gov.uk

Please complete using block capitals and black ink.

Please also refer to the Notes below as incorrect submissions will delay the processing of your application.

1. Name of Submitting Body (e.g. Parish Council) Debden Parish Council	
2. Contact details	
Name:	Andrew Hogbin
Address:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Telephone:	[REDACTED]
3. Proposed name of neighbourhood area Please give the name by which your neighbourhood area will be formally known Debden Neighbourhood plan	
Name of neighbourhood area: Parish of Debden	
4. Extent of the area (see Notes 1- 4) Please attach a map which identifies the area to which the application relates. Map attached	
5. Does the proposed neighbourhood area lie partly within other Local Authority Boundary? No.	

6. Please give a statement confirming that the applicant is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act (see Note 5) Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Debden Parish Council is the relevant body for the purposes of establishing a Neighbourhood Plan as defined in section 61G(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

7. Please give a statement explaining why it is considered appropriate to designate the area as a neighbourhood area

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

We consider that this area is appropriate to be designated as it represents the whole parish. The attached map sets out the area we wish to be designated, being the parish of Debden.

8. Has this area been designated a neighbourhood area in the past?


NO

9. Has the applicant previously applied to designate the area as a neighbourhood area?

NO

10. Declaration

I hereby apply for the area described in this form and on the accompanying map to be designated as a neighbourhood area.

Name:	Andrew Hogbin
Signature:	
Position in relevant body:	Parish Clerk
Date:	26.01.2024

A map which clearly identifies the area

Please submit the completed form to:
Planning Policy, Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Or by email to: planningpolicy@uttlesford.gov.uk

Please read the following notes before completing this form.

Notes

Note 1. Where the parish council is the applicant the proposed neighbourhood area must be one that consists of or includes the whole or any part of the parish council area. Where a parish council is not the applicant the proposed neighbourhood area cannot consist of or include the whole or any part of a parish council area.

Note 2. The proposed neighbourhood area cannot overlap with an already designated neighbourhood area.

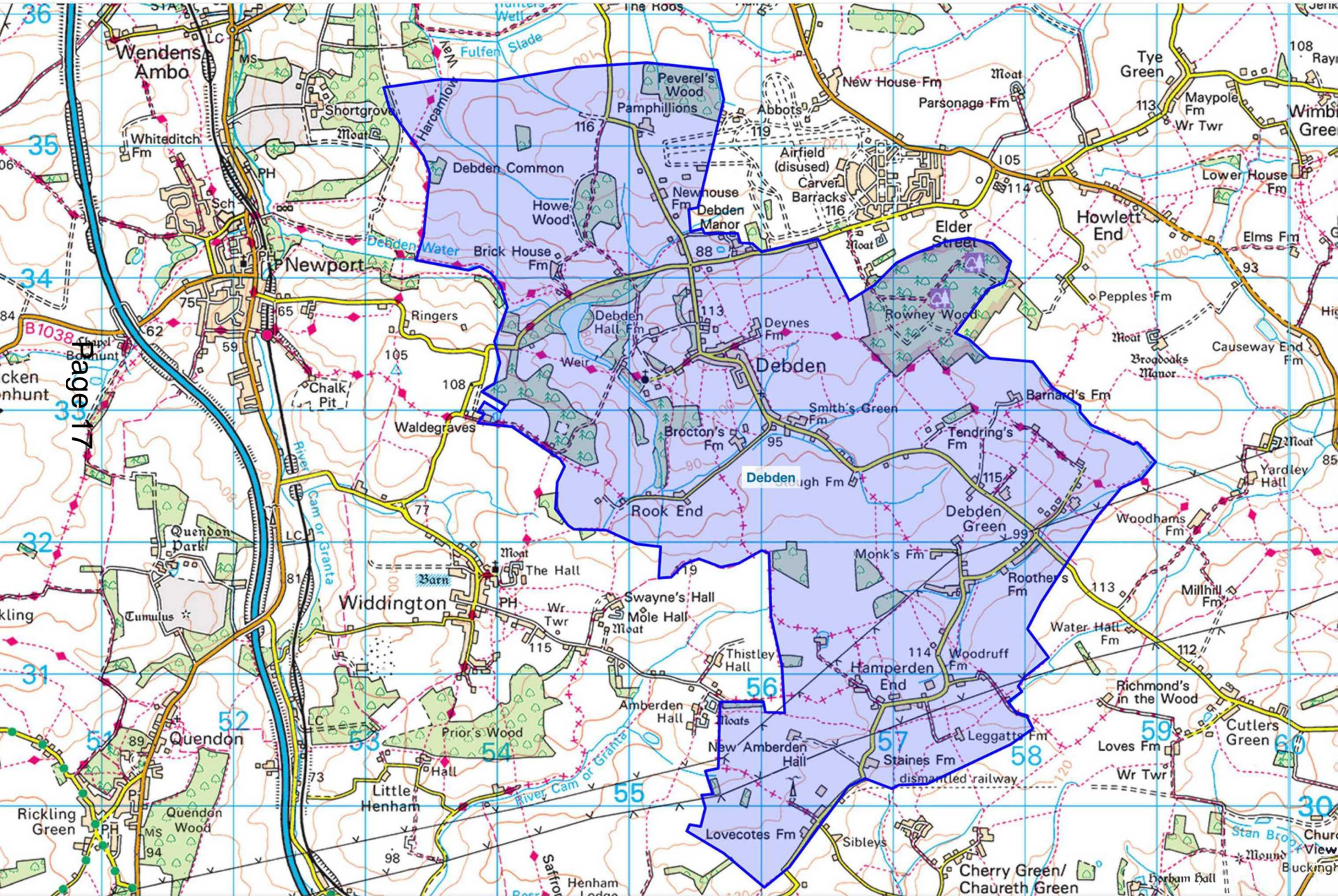
Note 3. The map must clearly identify the area to be covered by the proposed neighbourhood area and should be of an appropriate standard scale so that boundaries can be clearly seen (e.g. 1:2500; 1:1250 or 1:500). Where possible the boundary of the area should follow the parish boundaries and should not cut through properties.

Note 4. In determining the application, the Council must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council/s as a neighbourhood area and the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.

Note 5. In order to make an application for a neighbourhood area the applicant must be a "relevant body" as defined in section 61G(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, namely, "a parish council or an organisation or body which is, or is capable of being, designated as a neighbourhood forum (on the assumption that, for this purpose, the specified area is designated as a neighbourhood area)". Please note that parish councils are the relevant body within a parish in respect of neighbourhood planning.

APPENDIX 2

Debden Neighbourhood Plan Area



Agenda Item 8

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** Thursday, 18th April 2024

Title: Corporate Core Indicators (CCIs) 2024/25 Target Setting

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Petrina Lees, Leader of the Council

Report Author: Angela Knight, Director of Business Performance and People **Key decision:** N
aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk
Paula Evans, Contract, Performance and Risk Manager
pevans@uttlesford.gov.uk

Summary

1. This report presents the targets for all Corporate Core Indicators (CCIs) to be monitored and reported during the 2024/25 performance year.
2. The CCIs have been selected to enable the Corporate Management Team and Members to continue to focus on key areas of performance across the council.
3. Where possible, benchmarking comparisons to other similar Local Authorities will be conducted and presented as part of the corporate quarterly performance updates.

Recommendations

4. The Cabinet is requested to approve the Corporate Core Indicator targets for 2024/25 as set out in the body of this report and Appendix A.

Financial Implications

5. There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report:

None.

Impact

- 7.

Communication/Consultation	Reviewed by Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Informal Cabinet Board (ICB)
Community Safety	None

Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Corporate Core Indicators (CCI's)

8. The CCI's have been developed to provide focus on key service provision areas across the authority. The indicators will be monitored and reported on a quarterly basis through both the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet.
9. The CCIs were introduced in 2023/24 and have been reviewed to ensure that they continue to provide members with the correct level of performance information with regards to the councils performance and compliance in these key areas.
10. There are currently 30 CCI's identified; of these 28 have data available to enable monitoring to commence at the end of quarter one (end June) and two are currently being developed whereby it is anticipated monitoring data will be available during the year. The CCI's are identified into 5 key performance areas,
 - Organisation and Governance
 - Cost of Living
 - Health and Safety
 - Finance and Income
 - Environment and Communities and Development
11. Appendix A sets out the proposed targets for all Corporate Core Indicators (CCI's) to be monitored during the 2024/25 performance year. For reference, previous targets for 2023/24 have been included along with any quarterly profiling and officer responsibilities.
12. When reviewing the indicators and their targets, the following should be noted:
 - Indicators denoted with 'max' means a **higher** outturn is good performance,
 - Indicators denoted with 'min' means a **lower** outturn is a good performance.
13. Targets have been set using historical performance data where this is available; for those indicators where the measure was introduced in 2023/24, most targets have remained the same. However, the following table provides additional information and comments that should be particularly noted for some of the 30 indicators:

Indicator:	Title:	Comment:
CCI 01	Average days lost per FTE through short-term sickness absence	<p>Change target from 4.7 to 5.4 days</p> <p>Previous years targets would have taken into account lower sickness outturns due to the reduction in sickness during Covid and being hopeful that it wouldn't increase back to pre-covid figures but unfortunately, they have. Average sickness levels during 2023/24 have fluctuated between 5.75 and 5.03 days.</p>
CCI 07	Contract Management	It is proposed that the indicator remains in the suite as measures will be identified and approved over the next few months as the revised process is embedded.
CCI 08	Resident Satisfaction	We will be reporting district results for resident satisfaction that are directly comparable with the national survey conducted by the Local Government Association. These survey results will be available in February 2025.
CCI 12	% Households claiming LCTS against total CT base	<p>Target to remain at 8.15%</p> <p>As this is an indicator to highlight movement against an average baseline, the target remains the same as 2023/24.</p>
CCI 15 - 17	Various Council Housing Health & Safety Indicators	The measure and target for these indicators has been changed from 0% outstanding to a 100% completion of high priority recommendations target for this performance year.
CCI 23	Council Housing: Average re-let time in days	The target for this indicator will remain at 35 days for the 2024/25 performance year. There will however be an intention to reduce the number of days to complete voids further as new processes are embedded.
CCI 29	Climate Change	<p>After discussions with the Climate Change lead officer, it is proposed that the current indicator be changed to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of actions from the carbon emission reduction plan progressing to an acceptable level within identified timescales <p>Monitoring will commence at the start of the 2024/25 performance year and be reported on a quarterly basis using the end of the quarter as a status marker.</p>

Benchmarking

14. Benchmarking data will be sourced and analysed where the equivalent data is available for as many of the CCIs as possible.
15. As far as practicably possible, data will be obtained from the CIPFA Statistical Near Neighbour group and reported retrospectively on a quarterly basis, i.e. Q1 benchmarking data will be reported as part of the Q2 reporting process.
16. Reporting benchmarking data in this way will enable greater opportunity to obtain comparable information for as broader a range of the CCIs as possible.

Risk Analysis

10.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
If performance indicators do not meet quarterly/annual targets then areas such as customer satisfaction and statutory adherence to government led requirements could be affected leading to a loss in reputation for the Council.	2 – The majority of performance measures perform on or above target. Where necessary, accompanying notes to individual performance indicators detail improvement plans.	3 – The majority of service areas in the Council are customer-facing so there is the potential to impact reputationally, service delivery and financially.	Performance is monitored by CMT, and Cabinet on a quarterly basis. Short and long term analysis is carried out to identify performance trends, this supports the appropriate action/improvement plans to be put in place to address issues.

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.

2024/25 Corporate Core Indicators (CCIs) & Targets

PI No:	PI Title:	minimise/ maximise	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Cabinet Member	Managed by	Assigned to
ORGANISATION/GOVERNANCE											
CCI 01	Average days lost per FTE through short-term sickness absence	min	4.7	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	Clr Lees	Nicola Roberts	Claire Neale
CCI 02	Average days lost per FTE through long-term sickness absence	min	4	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	Clr Lees	Nicola Roberts	Claire Neale
CCI 03	Average days taken to complete candidate pre-employment checks	min	15	15	15	15	15	15	Clr Lees	Angela Knight	Nicola Roberts Claire Neale
CCI 04	% of Leavers that leave within their first year of employment	min	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	Clr Lees	Angela Knight	Nicola Roberts Claire Neale
CCI 05	% Information Governance requests (FOIs & EIRs) dealt with in 20 days	max	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	Clr Lees	Nicola Wittman	Tom Falconer
CCI 06	% of calls answered vs number of calls received across the council	max	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	Clr Lees	Richard Auty	Jillma Jadav Izzy Jarvis Mary Dale-Cooke Suzi Curtis
CCI 07	Contract Management - Phase I	<i>See supporting report for indicator proposals</i>							Clr Hargreaves	Angela Knight	Paula Evans
CCI 08	Resident Satisfaction	<i>See supporting report for indicator proposals</i>							Clr Lees	Richard Auty	Bruce Tice
COST OF LIVING CRISIS											
CCI 09	% of Council Tax collected	max	98.70%	98.60%	24%	49%	74%	98.60%	Clr Hargreaves	Jody Etherington Sue Ellis Caroline Saych	Alistair Clarke
CCI 10	% of Non-domestic Rates Collected	max	97.50%	98%	24%	49%	74%	98%	Clr Hargreaves	Jody Etherington Sue Ellis Caroline Saych	Alistair Clarke
CCI 11	Council Housing: Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed	max	98.00%	98.50%	89%	94%	95%	98.50%	Clr Hargreaves	Jody Etherington Sue Ellis Caroline Saych	Robert Patterson-Smith
CCI 12	% Households claiming LCTS against total CT base	min	8.15%	8.15%	8.15%	8.15%	8.15%	8.15%	Clr Hargreaves	Jody Etherington	Caroline Saych
HEALTH & SAFETY											
CCI 13	Council Housing: % properties with valid LGSR gas safety certificate	max	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Clr Coote	Brian Burton	Mark Dyer
CCI 14	Council Housing: % properties compliant with Carbon Monoxide and smoke detector regulations	max	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Clr Coote	Brian Burton	Mark Dyer
CCI 15	Council Housing: Asbestos Management - % of High Priority recommendations completed from current and previous RA's	max	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Clr Coote	Brian Burton	Mark Dyer
CCI 16	Council Housing: Water Hygiene - % of High Priority recommendations completed from current and previous RA's	max	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Clr Coote	Brian Burton	Mark Dyer
CCI 17	Council Housing: Fire Safety - % of High Priority recommendations completed from current and previous RA's	max	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Clr Coote	Brian Burton	Mark Dyer

CCI 18	Council Housing: Lift Safety - % lifts with an-in date safety inspection (LOLER)	max	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Cllr Coote	Brian Burton	Mark Dyer
CCI 19	Council Housing: Damp & Mould - % reported damp & mould cases responded to within 14 days/ 7 days)	max	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Cllr Coote	Brian Burton	Mark Dyer
CCI 20	Average no. of days sickness lost due to staff incidents or accidents	min	0.3 days	0.3 days	0.3 days	0.3 days	0.3 days	0.3 days	0.3 days	Cllr Lees	Angela Knight	Nicola Roberts Claire Neale
FINANCE & INCOME												
CCI 21	% of commercial property net income against budget	max	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Cllr Hargreaves	Adrian Webb	Nicola Wittman
CCI 22	% of invoices paid within 30 days	max	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	Cllr Hargreaves	Jody Etherington	Natasha Bourke
CCI 23	Council Housing: Average re-let time in days	min	35	35	35 days	35 days	35 days	35 days	35 days	Cllr Coote	Simone Russell Brian Burton	Judith Snares Rebecca Flowers
ENVIRONMENT/COMMUNITIES & DEVELOPMENT												
CCI 24	Processing of Planning Applications: Major Applications (within 13 - 16 weeks with EIA or including any Extension of Time)	max	80%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	Cllr Evans	Dean Hermitage	Nigel Brown
CCI 25	Processing of Planning Applications: Non-major Applications (within 8 weeks or including any Extension of Time)	max	80%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	Cllr Evans	Dean Hermitage	Nigel Brown
CCI 26	% of Appeals upheld for Major Applications	min	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	Cllr Evans	Dean Hermitage	Nigel Brown
CCI 27	% 'red' status tasks from Local Plan project plan	min	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	Cllr Evans	Dean Hermitage	Ann Howells Andrew Maxted
CCI 28	% Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	max	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	Cllr N Reeve	Ben Brown	Becky Tomkins
CCI 29	% of actions from the carbon emission reduction plan progressing to an acceptable level within identified timescales	max	n/a	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	Cllr N Reeve	Ben Brown	Victoria Reed Rebecca Griffiths
CCI 30	% staff completed safeguarding training (bi-annual)	max	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Cllr Coote	Simone Russell	TBC *

* the Communities Manager role will take on this responsibility once a newly appointed officer commences employment in June 24.

Agenda Item 9

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 18
April 2024

Title: Climate Change Action Plan

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Neil Reeve, Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Climate Change

Report Author: Vicky Reed, Lead Officer Climate Change
vreed@uttlesford.gov.uk

Key decision: No

Summary

1. Uttlesford District Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and we have pledged to take local action to prevent a climate and ecological catastrophe through the development of practices and policies which aim to achieve net zero carbon status by 2030 and to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.
2. A progress report on the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was presented at a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 31st January 2023. Concern was raised that there was a lack of clarity about whether the activities and initiatives in the plan were having the desired impact on the UDC net zero commitment.
3. A review of the CCAP was proposed and agreed, with an objective to develop a more focused delivery plan and updated set of actions. Following the Scrutiny Committee, the Corporate Management Team agreed that an updated CCAP would be developed and agreed by 31st March 2024.
4. This paper provides a highlight report on the UDC Climate Change programme including achievements over the last 12 months and presents the proposed updated Climate Change Action plan for April 2024 to March 25, detailing key programme priorities, activities, and measures of success.
5. This report is to be considered at Scrutiny Committee on 16 April 2024 and the Committee have been invited to comment on the Action Plan. The Committee's comments will be reported at the Cabinet meeting on 18 April 2024.

Recommendations

- I. To note the achievements and progress made delivering the UDC Climate Change Action Plan in 2023/24 as set out below.
- II. To note highlights, arising issues, follow-on actions, and the updated Climate Change Action Plan proposed by the Climate Change, Lead Officer, to be delivered April 2024 to March 25. *Appendix 1.*
- III. To approve the updated Climate Change Action Plan.

Financial Implications

6. The Council previously agreed a specific climate change budget of £1,000,000 budget over 3 years.
7. To date a total of £842,000 of the climate Change Reserve budget has been committed or spent. Of this expenditure £300,000 was agreed to provide grants for community projects that will deliver on the Council's climate action priorities, via the Zero Carbon Communities Fund (note that in Round 2 funding of £84,371.15 was agreed from the Rural England Prosperity Fund for projects that met criteria for community net zero infrastructure. A total of £226,721 funding has been awarded as grants from the Climate Reserve Budget to date).
8. The Council are in receipt of a DEFRA Air Quality grant of £517k to deliver the Saffron Walden Clean Air project.

Background Papers

9. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report:

[The Council Climate Action Strategy and Climate Action Plan.](#)

Impact

10.

Communication/Consultation	<p>'Take Action on Climate Change' is a Corporate Priority. Progress against actions is overseen by the Corporate Management Team.</p> <p>Regular update reports are presented to the Corporate Management Team for direction and comment.</p> <p>The CCAP is underpinned by a robust supporting communication and engagement plan.</p> <p>The DEFRA Air Quality project reports to the Saffron Walden Clean Air Stakeholder Steering Group.</p>
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Community Safety	The health effects of climate change have grown significantly, with health threats from heat, flooding, and food security. Building community resilience and adapting to climate change are integral to the CCAP.
Equalities	Evidence suggests Climate change will disproportionately impact the most vulnerable in our communities. Scoping and delivery of climate change action takes account of a range of impacts including health and wellbeing and fuel poverty.
Health and Safety	n/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	2008 Climate Change Act commitment to bring all greenhouse gas emissions in the UK to net zero by 2050. The council also have responsibilities under the Environment Act, to protect our environment, clean up our air and rivers and boost nature.
Sustainability	To successfully deliver the Council Climate Crisis Strategy all council committees must consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions; and develop and implement policies and strategies as required.
Ward-specific impacts	The council have a responsibility to lead and influence action on climate change and biodiversity restoration across the district.
Workforce/Workplace	A new council operational 'Climate Change Board' has been agreed to oversee the delivery of UDC actions on Climate Change across all key services and teams. The Council Corporate plan includes a commitment to providing carbon literacy training for all staff.

Situation

Climate Change Action Plan – Achievements

12. The existing CCAP describes actions that were due to be completed during the financial year April 2022-March 2023 with other actions marked as 'beyond this period or ongoing'. This action plan has been reviewed, and actions marked as 'closed', 'complete' or 'open' (see *Appendix 2*). We have highlighted actions within the plan that will be taken forward or updated in the new annual CCAP April 2024 to March 2025 (see *Appendix 1*).

Summary highlights of progress against the existing action plan as follows.

Decarbonisation of Council Operations

Over the last year we have achieved the following:

13. Successful Social Housing De-Carbonisation Fund (SHDF) grant application, securing over £3.8million in funding, which will deliver a programme of works and retrofit measures over the next two years to 276 of our most energy in-efficient homes. This is a two- year project that will deliver a measurable % reduction in carbon emissions whilst delivering improvements to energy efficiency that will benefit the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents.
14. In March we awarded a contract to commence the delivery of a Heat Decarbonisation Plan for the London Road and Canfield sites. This project will identify energy efficiency measures the Council can install that will deliver quantifiable % reduction in carbon emissions. Working with energy and architectural consultants, will also enable readiness for the Council to apply for capital grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation funding scheme which is expected to be open for applications in late summer/autumn 2024.
15. Two Carbon Literacy Training pilots have been delivered. In September a half-day in person workshop was delivered for senior managers, attended by 20 staff. In January this year, 15 Councillors signed up to an online training pilot which took place over two half days. The carbon literacy training pilots are now being evaluated and we will commission and deliver further training for officers in 2024/25.
16. We have set up a corporate account for the Co Wheels EV Car Club based at the London Road office, to enable staff to reduce their carbon footprint when travelling from this site to off-site work meetings and other work events. The impact of this project will be monitored through the Saffron Walden Clean Air project, including reduction in carbon emissions.
17. We purchased a Council electric cargo bike for staff to use to travel from the London Road office to off-site work meetings and events. The bike will initially be piloted at the London Road office as part of the Saffron Walden Clean Air project.

18. We have commenced and are due to complete a Travel Plan for staff travelling to the Saffron Walden Office as part of the Saffron Walden Clean Air project. The expected output is to develop opportunities for car share and mode shift where this is possible.

Air Quality and Sustainable Transport

19. The DEFRA funded Saffron Walden Clean Air project was launched and mobilised in February 2023. This project is being delivered over two years. The vision for Saffron Walden is for the town to be 'cleaner, healthier and greener' and for residents to see walking or cycling as their first choice for short in-town journeys. Alongside piloting of shared mobility schemes, the project is raising awareness of pollution from transport emissions and is also delivering a public health awareness campaign on the impacts of pollution from domestic wood burning.

20. In phase 1 of the project, we delivered a stakeholder engagement plan, including gathering feedback from residents and businesses on the opportunities for bike share schemes (over 200 respondents), and a survey measuring perceptions of air quality (850 respondents). We have delivered community engagement events, bike training for adults and children, and cargo bike try-outs. Research was also undertaken to inform the development of a procurement plan for the shared mobility schemes and behaviour change projects.

21. In October we launched the first [Co Wheels EV Car Club vehicle](#) at the London Road Car Park. The second vehicle is due to launch in April at The Common Car Park.

22. The first Wood Burning Public Health Campaign was delivered in January this year via local print media and online social media platforms, concluding with Clean Air Night on 24th January, a second campaign burst will be delivered in Dec 2024.

23. All 6 schools in Saffron Walden are engaged in a pollution awareness project including [anti-idling action](#), and a monitoring project with children and families invited to take home an 'air aware' monitor and diary. The project is supporting all schools to complete and progress a travel plan including Mode Shift Stars for schools. Grants have been made available through the project to support schools to implement measures that will encourage mode shift and active travel e.g. scooter pods.

24. To date 21 businesses/organisations in the Town have been engaged in undertaking a pollution awareness project, with 128 Travel Surveys completed. We are on track for 12 businesses to complete and publish a travel plan for their organisation, in addition to the creation of mode shift case studies that can be shared.

25. Phase 2 (Sept 23 to July 24) of the Saffron Walden Clean Air project implementation plan is in progress to deliver and complete the pollution awareness and behaviour change projects; complete the roll out of all zero emission transport pilots (EV car club, bike share, bike loan schemes), in addition

to completion of a Saffron Walden transport strategy (a draft document has now been received for comment).

26. On 9th April we will launch the shared bike network in the town, and a bike library loan scheme, and community cargo bike hire scheme. Community events are also planned, including free bike training, bike try-outs and a community bike ride and picnic, which will be taking place during the spring and summer months this year. A monitoring and evaluation plan is being developed for the shared mobility schemes, as these will be operational for the next 2-3 years.
27. The project has attracted interest from residents across the district who would like to see the Council focus on raising awareness of pollution in other settlements. In September we developed a proposal to replicate these projects and shared mobility schemes in other settlements and submitted a grant application to the DEFRA Air Quality Grant scheme. If successful, an 'Uttlesford Clean Air project' will be mobilised in May 2024. □

In addition to the above projects, we have also delivered the following:

28. In March, building on the learning from the Saffron Walden Clean Air project to date, a project was commissioned with [CoMoUk](#) to complete an appraisal of options and supporting evidence for the inclusion of shared transport models in new housing development. This will form part of the local plan climate and sustainable transport policy.
29. We have commissioned and overseen the delivery of the Uttlesford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan (LCWIP), working collaboratively with Essex County Council. This project was extended in February, in order to complete additional work ensuring alignment to the draft local plan policy and growth sites. With support from Essex County Council a public consultation on the LCWIP will be delivered in late spring 24.
30. In December, we completed a data submission to Essex County Council to inform the Essex Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund business case. We have secured a funded project for Uttlesford that will deliver an increase in available electric vehicle chargers across the district to meet levelling up priorities and the needs of residents without access to off-street parking. Project allocation will be confirmed later this year along with phasing of project delivery.
31. In January we delivered an officer workshop with the Energy Savings Trust, commencing the development of a district wide EV strategy which will be produced in 2024/25.

Enabling Local Action on Climate Change

Over the last 12 months we have supported and enabled community action on climate change through:

32. Regular communication on climate matters, including funding and resources, via the council newsletters and social media platforms, and via attendance at the parish forum and community events.
33. We delivered Round 2 of the Zero Carbon Communities Grant Scheme. A webinar was held in September 23 to launch the scheme. 21 applications were received in December, and [15 grant awards](#) were awarded to community projects that will deliver reduction in carbon emissions, biodiversity restoration and enhancement and community engagement on climate change. To date the grant scheme has funded 14 net zero infrastructure community projects. A review of the Zero Carbon Communities grant fund will be undertaken in Q2 2024/25 to develop and agree a proposal for Round 3 of the grant scheme, subject to funds available.
34. We have delivered a quarterly Zero Carbon Communities newsletter (c.1500 subscribers), sharing updates on the Zero carbon community projects, climate resources and climate change campaigns.
35. We are delivering the government Home Upgrade Grant scheme (HUG2) through targeted promotion to eligible residents. The Council funding allocation is for 31 properties in the district to receive installation of energy efficiency measures within the next 2 years (value £500k). The council need to refer a minimum of 96 off-gas households to the scheme who meet the eligibility criteria, 55 referrals have been made to date. We are also participating in the government Energy Company Obligation scheme (ECO4 flex) and are providing the eligibility checks and declarations for applicants.
36. We have supported the growth of Community Energy projects in the district through coordinating and directing resources via the Zero Carbon Communities Grant scheme and other sources. Two internal workshops on Community Energy have been delivered, involving council officers and members, local partner organisations, Community Energy South and Essex County Council.
37. Community Energy Saffron Walden has been supported to deliver phase 2 of the Littlebury Energy project. Council grant funding has enabled direct support to householders, through appointment of a domestic energy community support worker to provide energy surveys and support residents to install retrofit measures via their own means or via available government grant schemes. The Council Planning Conservation Officer has partnered with this project to support improving consistency of advice on retrofit in listed buildings, using Littlebury as a case study.
38. In 2024 we will continue to partner with Essex County Council and Saffron Walden Community Energy, creating a partnership agreement that will support the latter to become 'Uttlesford Community Energy', and to strengthen and support the network of emerging multiple community energy groups and projects in the district.

Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way

39. We have participated in the development of the new Waste Strategy for Essex which will set out how we will reduce reliance on landfill, increase recycling and reduce waste over the next 25 years.
40. We have engaged with the Waste Resources Action Programme to undertake a review of our specific services to ensure that they align with emerging legislation and best practice. The review will continue in 2024/25 and include looking at how our services can be made more efficient against a range of measures including environmental performance.
41. We have participated in the Essex campaign to promote food waste recycling across the district providing compostable caddy liners to all households.
42. We continue to explore the potential to introduce recycling services for trade / commercial premises and these actions are reflected in the annual plan for 2024/25.

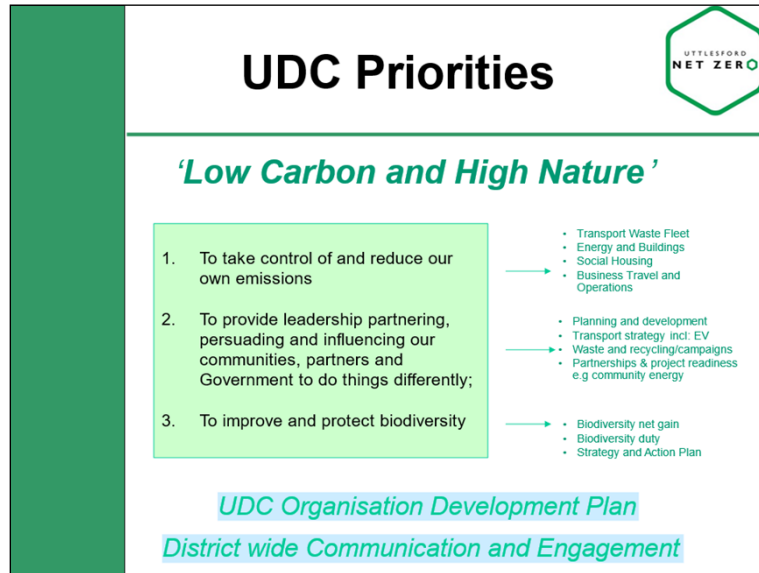
Planning and Development / Ecology and Biodiversity

43. The Planning Policy team are progressing the draft local plan policies that will set out the standards for net zero and sustainable building requirements in all new development, including green and blue infrastructure and transport.
45. In August, a Principal Ecologist joined the Planning Policy Team and commenced the development and implementation of priority operational systems and process, including delivering officer training in readiness to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain.
46. District biodiversity data and mapping has been shared with the Essex Local Nature Recovery Partnership to support delivery of the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). As a supporting authority, the council will support the delivery of the public consultation on the LNRS which is expected to commence in early summer.
47. To date the Council Zero Carbon Communities, grant scheme has supported 13 community biodiversity and nature projects. This year projects include the development and coordination of the Roding Farm Cluster Group which will bring together farmers from the Uttlesford area to deliver collaborative projects to benefit the health of the Roding catchment; we have also funded 2 river restoration projects, in Newport and at Pounce Hall.
48. The updated CCAP for 2024/25 includes a detailed set of activities and tasks that will be delivered over the next 12 months to support both Biodiversity Net Gain implementation, delivery of Biodiversity Duty and improve the districts most degraded habitats, including how we will reduce pollution in our rivers and water courses.
49. The Planning team were successful in obtaining grant funding that has enabled the appointment of an Assistant Ecologist on a 6mth contract starting in March 24, to support the delivery of this rapidly expanding programme of work.

50. 'Low Carbon and High Nature' is at the centre of the updated annual CCAP 2024/25 and our community engagement on climate action, recognising that climate change and nature emergencies are 'two sides of the same coin'.

Climate Change Action Plan – Monitoring and Measurement

51. The updated CCAP 2024/25 is underpinned by the themes and priorities contained within the Council Climate Crisis Strategy as illustrated below:



52. In the updated Climate Change Action Annual Plan 2024/25 activities and tasks have been framed using the Council Corporate priorities, where possible.

52. A priority in the 2024/25 action plan is to develop and agree a Carbon Reduction Management plan, building on best practice in carbon and energy management. This plan will be crucial to achieving the Council commitment of Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2030. The aims of the carbon management plan include a robust framework to track carbon emission reduction, and more formal procedures and awareness of energy management responsibilities of all staff that have control or influence over energy, fuel, and water consumption.

53. To support the successful delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan and activities, the council have agreed to improve operational governance by creating an officer level 'Climate Change Board' that will provide oversight to the action plan and which will mitigate any arising risks to delivery. The first meeting of this group is due to take place on 4th April.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
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Gap in programme staff resources, leading to reduced capacity to deliver CCAP and complete the Saffron Walden Clean Air Project	2	2	Priority growth bid agreed to ensure Climate Team resources are made permanent.
Gap in staff resources leading to reduced service or team capacity to support or deliver critical decarbonisation projects e.g. social housing and estates	3	3	Monitoring and oversight by Corporate Management Team and Chief Executive Officer.
Lack of detailed scoping and clarity of outcomes for climate change actions which may lead to projects being delivered that do not contribute to the achievement of Council net zero carbon targets and/or climate change objectives.	2	3	Ongoing monitoring and review of actions and scope, with success measures. Develop and agree a Carbon Management reduction plan, with baseline data and identified projects that will deliver a quantifiable reduction in emissions.

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.

1 Take Action on Climate Change	Activities /Tasks	Service or Team	Timescale	Measurement of Success	RAG
1.1 Decarbonisation of council operations (buildings, fleet, housing)					
<i>Fleet Decarbonisation Plan in place that maps the transition of our own fleet to low or zero emission by 2030 including detailing carbon savings.</i>	Commission Energy Savings Trust to undertake review of waste and recycling fleet and produce costed plan	Environmental Health Waste	Sep-24	Timeline with expected milestones and investment needed	
<i>Reduce direct emissions from council housing stock. This includes new-build homes being planned/developed.</i>	Successful application to government social housing decarbonisation fund for capital grant to deliver retrofit works to c300 homes.	Housing and Communities	Mar-24	Successful Grant Award	
	Deliver year 1 of social housing decarbonisation project. Procure retrofit suppliers. Oversee delivery of works to the quality and timeline as set out in project plan.	Housing and Communities	March 25	Retrofit measures installed. % reduction in carbon emissions.	
<i>Reduce carbon footprint of UDC business travel</i>	Pilot Corporate Account for the electric car club in Saffron Walden	Human Resources and Climate Change	Mar-25	Uptake and useage EV Car Club. % reduction in carbon emissions from business travel.	
	Complete a travel plan for staff travelling to London Road office, promote opportunities for car share.	Human Resources and Climate Change	May-24	Staff travel plan published. Mode shift case studies.	
<i>Improve the measurement and monitoring of carbon emission reduction across council operations (estate and fleet)</i>	Develop and Agree Carbon Reduction Management plan including baseline and trajectory to 2030 for emission reduction against identified GHG scope and projects.	Climate Change Team and Corporate Management Team	Sep-24	Timeline in place with costed actions and achievable milestones	
	Annual report measuring UDC operational Green House Gas Emissions and trajectory published on website.	Climate Change Team and Coporate Management Team	Apr-24	Annual report published with performance linked to the carbon reduction management plan	
<i>Opportunities identified across the Council estate/assets for water reduction</i>	Baseline data and opportunities to reduce consumption included in Carbon Reduction Management Plan	Climate Change Team, Estates Team, Environmental Waste, HR Team	Sep-24	Baseline data agreed, with supporting action plan.	
1.2 Embed sustainability and environmental priorities into council decision making and ways of working					
<i>Engage and support all staff to develop sustainable ways of working and take action on climate change (low carbon, high nature)</i>	Carbon Literacy training delivered to Council Leadership and Senior Management team	Human Resources and Climate Change Team	Mar-24	Training Evaluation. Climate Action Pledges implemented and project impacts shared.	
	Pilot carbon literacy learning package for all council officers	Senior Management Team	Sep-24	Training Evaluation. Climate Action Pledges implemented and project impacts shared.	
<i>Identify and track service and operational initiatives and actions that support reducing organisational carbon footprint and delivery of biodiversity duty</i>	Establish Senior Officer Climate Change Board including operational/service work plan priorities and owners.	Corporate Management Team	Apr-24	Work plan with deliverables and key milestones identified. Progress and good practice shared via senior team meeting, staff newsletter and conferences	
<i>Mitigate and measure sustainability and environmental impacts within council procurement and contract management</i>	Review procurement policy and supplier contract management to ensure sustainability and environmental impacts are mitigated and key performance monitored when procuring goods and services	Senior Management Team	Sep-24	Standard terms and conditions/contract template updated including quantifiable service KPIs where appropriate	
1.3 Provide community leadership and enable local action on climate change					
<i>Support Communities to deliver projects that are 'low carbon and high nature'</i>	Deliver the Zero Carbon Communities funding scheme to support delivery of community projects that are focused on carbon emission reduction and biodiversity restoration or enhancement.	Climate Change Team and Corporate Management Team	Jun-23	Grant scheme launched Sept 24. Community projects delivered from March 2025	
<i>Support residents/householders and communities to install energy efficiency measures and retrofit their homes, including renewable energy.</i>	Deliver the Government Home Upgrade Grant Scheme in off gas areas to improve energy efficiency and address fuel poverty	Climate Change Team, Environmental Health Protection	Mar-25	Achieve referrel target for council funding allocation. Number of retrofit measures installed.	
	Promote The Energy Company Obligation (ECO4 Flex) Scheme (ECO4) and administer referrals.	Climate Change Team, Environmental Health Protection	Mar-25	Number of referrels ECO 4 Flex. Onboarded energy providers.	
	Improve consistency of planning advice for retrofit in listed buildings (Littlebury Case Study)	Planning and Development	Ongoing	Information available on planning web page. Retrofit case studies.	
	Partner with and contribute to the development of Saffron Walden (Uttlesford) Community Energy. Help coordinate available resources to support the network of community energy and action groups across the district.	Climate Change Team	Nov-25	Partnership Terms of Reference. Community events and regular newsletter. Updated UDC web page for energy efficiency and retrofit. Number of groups, individuals engaged in delivering energy advice or projects	
	Collaborate with ECC and Community Energy South to support successful delivery of the Communipower project in Uttlesford	Climate Change Team	Nov-25	Number of energy advisors trained and active in the district. Number of events, and number of households given energy advice (Communipower KPI)	
1.4 Plan for future housing needs in a sustainable way (low carbon and high nature)					
	Deliver Local Plan policy and standards to address climate change, meeting future development needs in a planned and managed way (Net Zero Sustainable Building and Transport, Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity Net Gain)	Planning Policy Team	Nov-24	Production Reg 19 Local Plan	
1.5 Support community renewable energy projects at scale that deliver energy security and communtiy benefits					
	Collaborate with ECC and the North Essex Climate Change Partnership to inform the development of a renewable energy strategy for the district	Climate Change Team, Planning Policy Team	Mar-25	Knowledge shared from North Essex Climate Partnership Group working group.	

1.6 Support the development of a local area energy plan to ensure sufficient supply for the anticipated uptake of electric vehicles, heat pumps and renewables generation in the district.					
	Input to the development of a Local Area energy plan working with the UKPN DSO and partners to inform district and Essex wide energy demand management strategy and plans	Climate Change Team, Planning and Development, ECC.	Mar-25	Projects shared and mapping undertaken	
2 Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way	Key Activities/Tasks				
2.1 Work with partners across Essex on a new waste strategy for the county	Seek agreement from members on final draft of waste strategy for Essex.	Environmental Services (waste)	Jul-24	Published strategy	
2.2 Improve performance in council waste and recycling operations					
Complete Uttlesford Waste Strategy Review	Work alongside WRAP, ECC and the Essex Waste Partnership Board, to develop a revised waste strategy for Uttlesford and service implementation plan.	Environmental Services (waste)	Mar-25	Strategy in place with implementation plan, including key milestones.	
Reduce Residual Waste and Increase Recycling	Develop a recycling plan to improve recycling performance and reduce contamination at flats	Environmental Services (waste)	Mar-25	Increased number of recycling facilities at flats across the district	
	Research and undertake feasibility study for Trade Waste recycling.	Environmental Services (waste)	Mar-25	Study and options appraisal complete	
Encourage behaviour change that will support delivering reduction in waste and increase recycling rates	Run at least two multi-media publicity campaigns with identified outcome measures. Focused on low participation areas.	Environmental Services (waste) and Communications Team	Mar-25	Campaign resources published and disseminated. Pre and post campaign resident survey. Monitoring yields and participation rates.	
Encourage waste avoidance and minimisation	Research opportunities and potential pilot/s for new waste and recycling circular economy projects	Environmental Services (waste), Climate Change and Economic Development	Mar-25	Pilot project initiated.	
3 Work with partners to deliver sustainable transport	Key Activities / Tasks				
3.1 Work with partners to deliver district transport strategy					
Work in partnership with ECC to develop an overarching Uttlesford District Future Transport Strategy	Undertake review of Uttlesford strategies, projects and evidence commissioned to date including parking studies, local plan modelling	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Sep-24	Scoping and delivery plan agreed with ECC	
	Complete the Saffron Walden Clean Air Traffic Management Strategy and scheme prioritisation for S106 investment	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Sep-24	Published strategy with follow on action plan including key milestones	
3.2 Increase walking and cycling in the district					
	Deliver a public consultation on the LCWIP	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Jun-24	Stakeholder feedback received and publication of LCWIP	
	Agree priority LCWIP infrastructure projects and identify funding streams to deliver	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Dec-24	Forward plan agreed with key milestones.	
	Pilot shared mobility schemes including bike hire and community cargo bike. Complete implementation of the DEFRA funded Saffron Walden Clean Air project plan and work streams.	Climate Change Team	Mar-26	Shared mobility schemes operational. Monitoring and evaluation plan and reports	
3.3 Increase the availability of EV charge points in the district					
	Business case submitted for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Project; work in partnership with ECC to agree project allocation and delivery plan	Climate Change Team, ECC	Mar-25	Project allocation confirmed. Project delivery plan with timeline and milestones.	
	Coordinate Senior Officer working group to Develop a district Wide Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy	Senior Management Team	Nov-25	Draft Framework published	
	Pilot EV Car Club in Saffron Walden (DEFRA Clean Air project)	Climate Change Team, ECC	Oct-26	EV Car Club Vehicles Available. Monitoring and Evaluation plan and reports	
4 Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife					
4.1 Meet mandatory Biodiversity Duty requirements					
	Biodiversity Duty Action Plan in place with targets for delivery 2024/25	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Feb-24	Annual report published detailing progress	
4.2 Deliver mandatory BNG for Uttlesford					
Put in place the required systems and process to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the district as set out in the Environment Act 2021	Establish terrestrial, water and hedge baselines for Uttlesford	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Mar-25	Desk based survey complete. Commissioning Plan agreed	
	Create database and map to identify known potential gain sites within the district and match with emerging local need.	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Sep-24	Database and Map Created	
	Communicate with landowners across the district to identify potential sites	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Dec-24	Landowner stakeholder outreach plan	
	Staff Training delivered on software and BNG metric processing	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Jun-24	Software embedded and utilised in planning process	
	Research and evaluate feasibility of commercial operating model for the council to deliver, manage and monitor BNG units across district	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Sep-24	Research report with options appraisal and recommendations.	
Develop and implement planning policies as part of the Local Plan which will deliver habitat protection, enhancement and creation.	Develop and adopt Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy for Uttlesford.	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Oct-24	Supplementary Planning Document published	
	Ensure requirement for 'high nature' is evidenced in the local plan.	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Oct-24	Publication of local plan policies for embedding high nature approach.	

Action No.	Initiative	UDC Corporate Priority	Status	Action Plan 2024 to 2025
PHASE 2 Delivery by MAR 2022				
Action 01	By March 2022, create a Fleet Decarbonisation Plan that maps the transition of our own fleet to low or zero emission by 2030 including detailing carbon savings.	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 02	Review consumer advice provided via our communications channels	<i>Not applicable</i>	Ongoing business as usual activity	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan.
Action 03	Governance processes established for future decision making on climate change project spending.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan. Senior Officer Climate Change Board Agreed
Action 04	Scoping and delivery of district-wide decarbonisation projects (for instance mapping where EV charging points need to go, how to take whole villages off oil and onto renewable energy) and local energy generation projects identified.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change + Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Revised actions set out in updated Action Plan
Action 05	Travel survey Map to understand where and how people travel (building on the Local Plan consultation feedback that travel is an important issue)	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Complete	No further action
Action 06	Installing EV charging points at housing owned by UDC	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Taken forward in updated action plan - District EV infrastructure strategy/plan
Action 07	Information campaign to highlight dangers to health from the pollution generated by idling engines.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	Clean Air campaign delivered Saffron Walden. Campaigns to be taken forward in updated action plan
Action 08	Review the procurement process including Scope 3 (which are essentially indirectly created emissions) and social value	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Procurement and Contract management taken forward in updated action plan
Action 09	Review energy use footprint of our fuel.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Updated actions on monitoring and measuring in updated Action Plan. UDC Carbon Management Plan.
Action 10	Review resilience plans in the light of potential for heatwaves and flooding.	<i>Adapting to Climate Change</i>	Closed	Revised actions included in updated Action Plan
Action 11	Map opportunities for biodiversity	<i>Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife</i>	Complete	No further action. Stakeholder survey complete. New Ecology actions in updated action plan.
Action 12	Working with ECC to develop a greater understanding of the carbon impact of UDC recycling services to enable future service changes to be fully understood, in terms of both carbon reduction and recycling performance	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
PHASE 3 Delivery by DEC 2022				
Action 13	Reduce carbon footprint of UDC business travel and travel to work through use of zero emission vehicles and or changes in ways of working, seeking to be	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 14	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan (LCWIP)	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 15	Encouraging active travel: Micro-mobility schemes (Case Study Saffron Walden Clean Air Project)	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 16	Car club (EVs). This could be tied in with pool cars for business use by UDC staff, for instance if available to hire as a part of a car club.	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport. Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	Pilot underway Clean Air project Saffron Walden. Follow on actions in updated Action Plan
Action 17	EV Infrastructure. Bundle on-street parking spaces so that profitable and unprofitable spaces are combined in packages, to prevent cherry picking of the profitable spaces and future public subsidy of unprofitable spaces.	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Revised actions taken forward in updated action plan.
Action 18	Enforce Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Closed	No further action. Embedded in Environmental Health Protection role.

Action 19	A published checklist relating to energy efficiency standards be published for developers to consider as part of their proposals	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Closed	Interim policy in place. New Net Zero Climate and Environment Policy Draft Local Plan.
Action 20	Retrofit community buildings in Uttlesford - partnership between UDC and parishes where advantages of scale can be identified.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan. Zero Carbon Communities Grant Scheme
Action 21	Improve biodiversity net gain (BNG) as per Environment Act.	<i>Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan. New Ecology Actions.
Action 22	Reviewing our domestic and commercial waste collection offers	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 23	Promote ways to reduce food waste and promote food waste recycling	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 24	Shift residents thinking from 'avoiding landfill' towards minimising resource usage and a circular economy (including reducing single-use plastic).	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 25	Improve the capture of material for recycling (within current and then emerging waste disposal/treatment frameworks) to reduce contamination.	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Actions	Ongoing or Complete			
Action 26	Decarbonise Uttlesford's Housing Stock	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Stock Condition Survey Complete. Social Housing Decarbonisation Project taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 27	Decarbonisation of partner's fleets	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan: see procurement and contract management
Action 28	Lobby ECC for improvements to public transport in Uttlesford	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Taken forward in new action Uttlesford District Future Transport Strategy.
Action 29	Encouraging active travel: Highways infrastructure to support active travel	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	New actions in updated Action Plan re: District Future Transport Strategy
Action 30	Support ECC with their school travel plans by providing local contacts where possible	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Ongoing business as usual activity	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan
Action 31	Installing EV Charging Points in UDC building spaces	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Complete	New Actions in updated Action Plan. District EV Infrastructure Strategy Development and ECC LEVI Project Delivery
Action 32	Installing EV Charging points in public car park spaces	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Complete	New Actions in updated Action Plan. District EV Infrastructure Strategy Development and ECC LEVI Project Delivery
Action 33	Energy Company Obligation and Government Grants for low income households	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 34	Plant Trees around Uttlesford	<i>Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife</i>	Closed	Taken forward in updated Action as part of wider strategy and actions on biodiversity net gain and biodiversity duty.
Action 35	Respond to Consultations as they arise	<i>Not applicable</i>	Ongoing business as usual activity	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan
Action 36	UDC Policy on EV charging points at new properties	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	No further action
Action 37	Improve air quality monitoring and reporting through Air Quality being monitored in real time - installation of NO2 tubes	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	No further action.

Agenda Item 10

Committee:	Cabinet	Date:	
Title:	Blueprint Uttlesford Update and Internal Audit Outcomes		Thursday, 18th April 2024
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Petrina Lees, Leader of the Council		
Report Author:	Angela Knight, Director of Business Performance and People aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk	Key decision:	No

Summary

1. This report provides members with an update on the progress of the council's organisational change programme, Blueprint Uttlesford.
2. Year one completed 9 service reviews and provided a net budget saving of £1,214,000
3. An Internal Audit was carried out on Blueprint Uttlesford and received a 'Moderate' opinion.

Recommendations

- I. This report is for Cabinet to note only.

Financial Implications

4. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Background Papers

5. None

Impact

Communication/Consultation	CMT are the Project board for this programme. Staff updates provided at quarterly staff conferences
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

Programme of Reviews

6. Blueprint Uttlesford is the councils organisational change programme, with two key objectives
 - To deliver the savings target of £6.6m as identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - To support organisational and culture change across the Council
7. All service areas will be subject to review, and these are scheduled over a four year period. The schedule of reviews are not fixed and could change depending on other factors, for example, staff leaving may prompt the review to be brought forward or legislative changes to the way we are required to deliver a service may change the timing of the review.
8. The schedule of reviews for the four years are set out below.

2023/24 Reviews	Year 2 Reviews (2024/25)	Year 3 Reviews (2025/26)	Year 4 Reviews (2026/27)
Sale of assets (inc. major asset and Dunmow Depot)	Sale of assets (inc. major asset and Dunmow Depot)	Planning	Human Resources
Highways Rangers	London Road Rent (phase 1)	Mailroom	Finance
Local Highways Panel	Trade Waste	CMT (phase 2)	ICT
Car Park charges	Waste Services	Democratic Services	Customer Services Centre
Senior Management Team	Environmental Health & Licensing	Elections	Internal Audit
Revenues and Benefits (phase 1)	Revenues and Benefits (phase 2)	Legal	Executive Team
Environmental Health & Licensing	Communities	Climate Change	Contract, Performance and Risk
Economic Development	Facilities	London Road Rent (phase 2)	Comms and Website
Customer Information Centres	Museum (phase 2)		Economic Development
Museum (phase 1)	Housing Revenue Account		Homelessness/Housing Strategy
Grants (phase 1) this now includes phase 2 and Day Centres			

9. During the year some changes were made to the programme, with some areas being brought forward and some moving to year 2.
 - Sale of Asset and Dunmow Depot – a small saving was achieved on utilities, but the key activities were delayed due to external factors, and this will now be delivered during 2024/25
 - Environmental Health and Licensing – was planned to be a delivered over 2 financial years, due to staff resources this review will now be carried out in full during 2024/25
 - Grants and Day Centres – the review of grants was planned over two phases, when the review began it became clear that it would be beneficial to combine this as one review. As the day centres benefited grant funding it was appropriate to include this service within the grants review
 - Economic Development – this is a very small team, of only 2 FTE and the review identified it would be unable to deliver the council's priorities if it was reduced. One of the corporate plan key priorities is 'Encouraging Economic Growth', and to support this an additional £10,000 has been invested in the service budget.

- The Housing Revenue Account had previously been excluded from the Blueprint programme, as Blueprint is a council wide project it has been included in the 2024/25 schedule of reviews

10. The following table sets out the direct financial outcomes of the service reviews carried out during 2023/24.

	Outcomes
Sale of assets (inc. major asset and Dunmow Depot)	21,000
Highways Rangers	86,000
Local Highways Panel contribution	100,000
Car Park charges	534,000
Senior Management Team (phase 1)	115,000
Revenues and Benefits (phase 1)	66,000
Environmental Health & Licensing	0
Economic Development	(10,000)
Customer Information Centres	13,000
Museum (phase 1)	39,000
Grants (inc year 2 Grants and Day Centres from Year 2)	250,000
Total	1,214,000

11. The above net saving has been incorporated into the MTFS as approved by Council on the 26 February 2024 and should not be viewed in isolation. The following table sets out the updated financial deficit position at the end of the four years (2027/28).

Savings Target 2024 - 2028	£'000
Original Target	6,600
Year one savings achieved	-1,214
Early savings on future years as per MTFS	-883
Net saving requirement 2023/24	4,503
Additional cost pressures (inflation, demand growth, member priority)	2,456
Additional income and funding	-1,695
New savings target as per MTFS 2027/28	5,264

Cross Cutting Workstreams

12. To support the reviews and the overall Blueprint project objectives a number of workstreams were identified. Although these workstreams are not reviews some do have specific delivery actions, the workstreams are listed below.

- Benefit Realisation and Cost Control – Ensuring that identified savings are achieved and to monitor and report on the financial impacts via the Medium Term Financial Strategy, annual budget preparation and budget monitoring
- People – The Workforce Plan, supports the goals and objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and the Blueprint Uttlesford project

- How we work – Business Process Re-engineering and AI, reviewing the current systems and processes and identifying where and how we could work more efficiently
- Income – Rental of council owned offices and other income generating projects
- Climate Crisis – A Climate Crisis action plan has been developed and each review should consider the impacts of the service on the environment and where it can support the councils' green objectives
- Shared Services – Each review should consider the option of a shared service
- Customer Impact and Community Empowerment – Consideration of how each service review will impact our customers and ensuring engagement with the community where appropriate
- Stakeholder Mapping and Comms. Strategy – Ensuring that all stakeholders are engaged with at the correct times and where a review or change of service delivery is considered that this is communicated appropriately

Member Workshops

13. In September of last year, a member workshop was held, where officers presented the schedule of service reviews and cross cutting workstreams, all members of the council were encouraged to attend.

This event provided members with the opportunity to ask questions and provide their views on each review in an open forum. This was felt to be extremely successful, and it is planned to hold another of these sessions in the near future.

14. A specific, Member seminar is also being arranged for late April/early May to focus on the future operation of waste services (both domestic and commercial waste). This workshop will be built around a piece of analysis carried out for Uttlesford by the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) which is a government funded organisation that provides support to Councils.

This analysis will look at a range of different service models and will give us indicative cost and performance impacts, compared to our current service. As well as sharing this detail with Members so they can be actively involved in an evidence-led process, Cabinet members and officers will be in listening mode at the seminar to hear Councillors channel their residents' experiences and expectations on waste issues. This will ensure that when more detailed options are later developed as part of this Blueprint Uttlesford review, they are founded on clear Member input and steers right from the formative stages.

Internal Audit Outcomes

15. The Blueprint Uttlesford project was subject to an Internal Audit at the beginning of the year, looking at its Governance, Planning and Reporting. The Audit opinion received was 'Moderate', the audit process reviewed a total of 10 risks with four receiving a substantial opinion, five moderate and one limited.
16. The Audit identified five recommendations, with one being a high priority, three medium priority and one low priority. All recommendations were accepted and have been agreed to be implemented during April 2024. A summary of the recommendations are set out below and the full audit report is attached as Appendix A.

Priority	Recommendation
High	CMT's role as Programme Board should be documented formally in a terms of reference
Medium	<p>Records should be maintained of all Blueprint Uttlesford board meetings, alongside versions of documents upon which any decisions were made</p> <p>There should be a project plan, service review document or equivalent for each review that outlines the key milestones and timetable that can be used to monitor against.</p> <p>EqHIAs should be completed for all reviews. If the lead determines this is not appropriate, this should be documented on the service review template and service review document</p>
Low	Consideration should be given to separate documents for each phase of multiphase reviews in order to make it easier to see the progress on each stage.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
None this report is to note only			

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

Internal Audit Final Report 2023/24

Blueprint Uttlesford

1. Executive Summary

Directorate: Chief Executive
Audit Owner: Peter Holt
Distribution List: Corporate Management Team

Overall Opinion

MODERATE ASSURANCE



Number of issues relating to Control Design

- 0 Critical
- 1 High
- 0 Medium
- 1 Low

Number of issues relating to Controls Operating in Practice

- 0 Critical
- 0 High
- 3 Medium
- 0 Low

Scope of the Review/ Limitations:

This audit reviewed the governance and reporting arrangements for the Blueprint Uttlesford phase 1 service reviews that commenced in 2023/24.

Overview

The Council is facing challenging times and needs to reduce its budget by approximately 25% (approximately £6.6m) whilst ensuring delivery of its priorities as laid out in the Council Plan 2023-27. Blueprint Uttlesford is the Council's change programme focusing on the next five years. It has clear objectives to:

- Deliver the council's bold and wide-ranging ambitions for improving outcomes for residents.
- Deliver the best services possible as set out in the authority's annually reviewed 5 year Corporate Plan.

In June 2023, Cabinet approved a set of guiding principles for the change programme and a schedule of service reviews and eight cross-cutting workstreams.

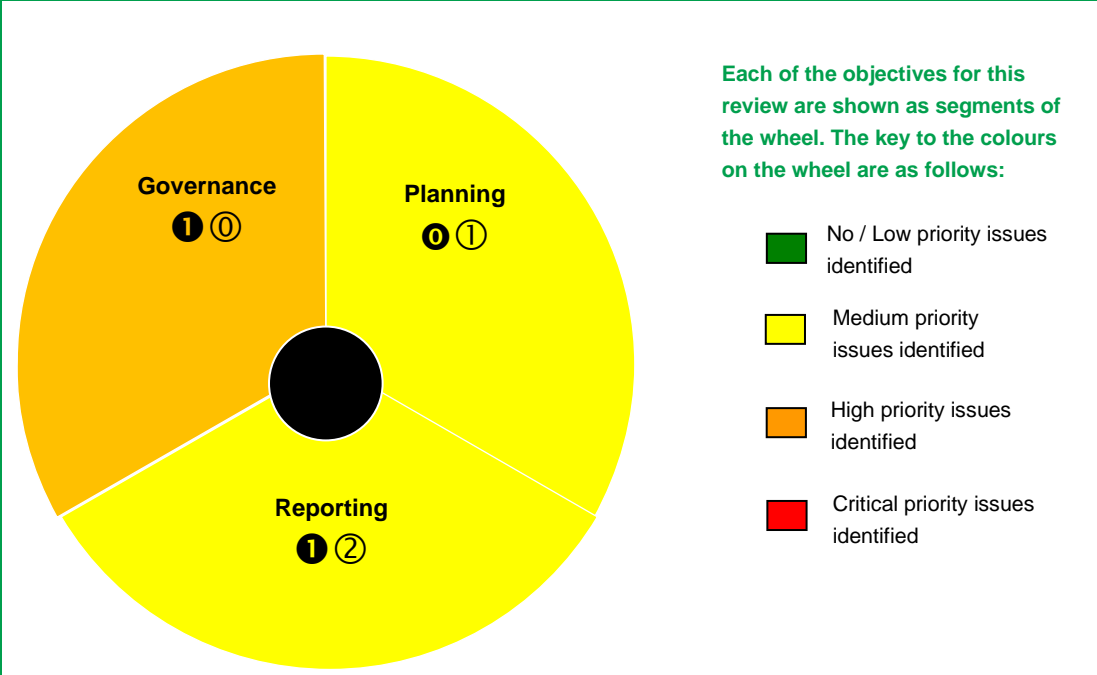
High Priority Finding

One high priority findings was identified:
 CMT agreed to take ownership of Blueprint Uttlesford as the Programme Board but the roles and responsibilities as Programme Board have not been defined formally. Expectations on reporting (frequency and content e.g. highlights, risks, variances from agreed timetables) have not been documented formally. As a result, records of Programme Board meetings have not been maintained systematically.

Areas of good practice identified

The Chief Executive's calendar indicates CMT has met as the Programme Board has meet once or twice a month since it took on the ownership of the programme in July 2023.

A service review template has been created for the programme and it has been used for the majority of the service reviews. Where it has been used it provides a reasonable document for planning and monitoring projects.



Auditor: Philip Honeybone Fieldwork commenced: 11 January 2024 Fieldwork completed: 21 February 2024 Draft report issued: 14 March 2024 Management comments: 20 March 2024 Final report issued: 21 March 2024 Signed: Philip Honeybone, Audit Services Manager	Risk Register Updates: It is recommended that management consider including the unregistered risks identified below in the programme's risk register.																														
	Issues raised and officers responsible for implementation																														
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name</th> <th>Critical</th> <th>High</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Low</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Agreed</th> <th>Latest Implementation Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Peter Holt</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> <td>30 April 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Angela Knight</td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>30 April 2024</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Critical	High	Medium	Low	Total	Agreed	Latest Implementation Date	Peter Holt			3	1	4	4	30 April 2024	Angela Knight		1			1	1	30 April 2024						
Name	Critical	High	Medium	Low	Total	Agreed	Latest Implementation Date																								
Peter Holt			3	1	4	4	30 April 2024																								
Angela Knight		1			1	1	30 April 2024																								

Risks Reviewed (as per agreed Terms of Reference)		
Risk Ref	Risk	Risk managed
1	Governance	
	There may not be effective oversight of the Blueprint Uttlesford reviews resulting in slippage, scope creep and non-delivery of anticipated outcomes.	Limited ●
	Programme and project roles and responsibilities may not be defined appropriately resulting in lack of accountability and non-delivery of anticipated outcomes	Substantial ●
2	Planning	
	Projects may not be defined clearly resulting in a lack of clarity over objectives and non-delivery of anticipated outcomes.	Moderate ●
	A project timetable may not be in place resulting in delays in delivery.	Substantial ●
	Milestones may not be identified fully resulting in non-delivery of anticipated outcomes.	Substantial ●
	Key stakeholders may not be identified leading to an incomplete understanding of the consequences of the project.	Substantial ●
	Equality Impact Assessments may not be completed resulting in non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and which may lead to discrimination in service provision or employment.	Moderate ●
	Risks and issues may not be identified resulting in slippage and non-delivery of anticipated outcomes.	Substantial ●

3	Reporting	
	Project updates may not be reported to the Blueprint Uttlesford board on a timely basis resulting in an incomplete understanding and/or an inability for the board to take corrective action where necessary.	Moderate ●
	Evolving risk and issues may not be reported to the Blueprint Uttlesford board on a timely basis resulting in an incomplete understanding and/or an inability for the board to make contingency arrangements where necessary.	Moderate ●






2. Detailed Findings, Recommendations and Action Plan

Ref	Matters Arising	Potential Risk Implications	Recommendations	Priority	Management Response provided by Peter Holt(CE) and agreed actions
Governance					
1	CMT agreed on 18 July 2023 that it would take ownership of Blueprint Uttlesford and become the Blueprint Uttlesford Board. However, the roles and responsibilities as Programme Board have not been documented formally.	Without a terms of reference defining its roles and responsibilities as Programme Board, there may be inconsistent oversight of the service reviews which may lead to slippage and non-delivery of programme objectives.	<p>CMT's role as Programme Board should be documented formally in a terms of reference. This should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> define roles and responsibilities for the Board, Chief Executive, Lead and Support for each review. *set out standard agendas approval for each phase of reviews expectations on reporting on highlights, exceptions, risks and variances from agreed timetables. 	High ●	<p>Recommendation agreed? [yes]</p> <p>Responsible Officer: Angela Knight</p> <p>Target Date: end April 2024</p>
Reporting					
2	There is at least one calendar entry per month since July 2023. The auditor only found records of two Board meetings (18/7/23 and 24/1/24). CMT minutes show evidence of discussion of the Blueprint Uttlesford reviews.	Without records of its meetings as Programme Board, CMT cannot demonstrate it has taken appropriate action in overseeing Blueprint Uttlesford.	Records should be maintained of all Blueprint Uttlesford board meetings, alongside versions of documents upon which any decisions were made.	Medium ●	<p>Recommendation agreed? [yes]</p> <p>Responsible Officer: Peter Holt</p> <p>Target Date: April 2024</p>

Ref	Matters Arising	Potential Risk Implications	Recommendations	Priority	Management Response provided by Peter Holt(CE) and agreed actions
Planning					
3	<p>The Chief Executive has designed a “service review template” that acts as a project plan template for the Blueprint Uttlesford Programme.</p> <p>The template has generally been used for service reviews, albeit with three instances of non-compliance. Environmental Health and Licensing - deferred. One of these was very early (Senior Staffing) and one very straightforward (Local Highways Panel).</p>	<p>Without appropriate project planning documentation that sets out how they will operate, cross-cutting elements may not be considered fully during the Blueprint Uttlesford reviews and some of the anticipated benefits may not be achieved.</p>	<p>There should be a project plan, service review document or equivalent for each review that outlines the key milestones and timetable that can be used to monitor against.</p>	<p>Medium ●</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed? [yes]</p> <p>Responsible Officer: Peter Holt</p> <p>Target Date: April 2024</p>
Page 48	<p>The service review document includes a prompt for the completion of Equality and Health Impact Assessments (EqHIA). There is an EqHIA template in place which covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Scope of activity *Potential impact on those with the 9 protected characteristics *Background / context *Assessment of impact on each protected characteristic with sections for evidence and sources *Health and wellbeing impact *Outcome of the assessment <p>The EqHIA template covers the requirement appropriately.</p> <p>EqHIAs only found for 5 of the reviews and (including one cross-cutting).</p>	<p>The Council may not comply with its duties under Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>EqHIAs should be completed for all reviews. If the lead determines this is not appropriate, this should be documented on the service review template and service review document.</p>	<p>Medium ●</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed? [yes]</p> <p>Responsible Officer: Peter Holt</p> <p>Target Date: April 2024</p>

Ref	Matters Arising	Potential Risk Implications	Recommendations	Priority	Management Response provided by Peter Holt(CE) and agreed actions
5	<p>Milestones are included where the service review template has been used.</p> <p>Noted that there are service reviews (e.g. Revenues and Benefits Review) have two phases. At the time of the audit, only one phase had entered the discovery phase. Phase 2 would be added by including additional text to the document.</p>	<p>Using one service review document for all phases of a multiphase document means this will be very long and may make it harder for the board to review progress effectively.</p>	<p>Consideration should be given to separate documents for each phase of multiphase reviews in order to make it easier to see the progress on each stage.</p>	<p>Low ●</p>	<p>Recommendation agreed? [yes]</p> <p>Responsible Officer: Peter Holt</p> <p>Target Date: April 2024</p>

3. Basis of our opinion and assurance statement

Key to Risk Ratings for Individual Findings in Reports	
Critical 	<p>Financial: Severe financial loss; Operational: Cessation of core activities</p> <p>People: Life threatening or multiple serious injuries to staff or service users or prolonged work place stress. Severe impact on morale & service performance. Mass strike actions etc</p> <p>Reputational: Critical impact on the reputation of the Council which could threaten its future viability. Intense political and media scrutiny i.e. front-page headlines, TV.</p> <p>Legal and Regulatory: Possible criminal, or high-profile civil action against the Council, members or officers. Statutory intervention triggered impacting the whole Council. Critical breach in laws and regulations that could result in material fines or consequences</p> <p>Projects: Failure of major Projects and/or politically unacceptable increase on project budget/cost. Elected Members required to intervene.</p>
High 	<p>Financial: Major financial loss. Service budgets exceeded; Operational: Major disruption of core activities. Some services compromised. Management Team action required to overcome medium-term difficulties.</p> <p>People: Serious injuries or stressful experience (for staff member or service user) requiring medical attention/ many workdays lost. Major impact on morale and performance of staff.</p> <p>Reputational: Major impact on the reputation of the Council. Unfavourable media coverage. Noticeable impact on public opinion.</p> <p>Legal and Regulatory: Major breach in laws and regulations resulting in significant fines and consequences. Scrutiny required by external agencies</p> <p>Projects: Key targets missed. Major increase on project budget/cost. Major reduction to project scope or quality.</p>
Medium 	<p>Financial: Moderate financial loss. Handled within the team; Operational: Significant short-term disruption of non-core activities. Standing Orders occasionally not complied with, or services do not fully meet needs. Service Manager action will be required.</p> <p>People: Injuries (to staff member or service user) or stress levels requiring some medical treatment, potentially some work days lost. Some impact on morale and performance or staff.</p> <p>Reputational: Moderate impact on the reputation or brand of the organisation. Limited unfavourable media coverage</p> <p>Legal and Regulatory: Moderate breach in laws and regulations resulting in fines and consequences. Scrutiny required by internal committees or internal audit to prevent escalation.</p> <p>Projects: Delays may impact project scope or quality (or overall project must be re-scheduled). Small increase on project budget/cost. Handled within the project team.</p>
Low 	<p>Financial: Minor financial loss; Operational: Minor errors in systems/operations or processes requiring Service Manager or Team Leader action. Little or no impact on service users.</p> <p>People: Minor injuries or stress with no workdays lost or minimal medical treatment. No impact on staff morale.</p> <p>Reputational: Minor impact on the reputation of the organisation.</p> <p>Legal and Regulatory: Minor breach in laws and regulations with limited consequences.</p> <p>Projects: Minor delay without impact on overall schedule. Minimal effect on project budget/cost or quality.</p>
Key to Assurance Levels	
No 	There are fundamental weaknesses in the control environment which jeopardise the achievement of key service objectives and could lead to significant risk of error, fraud, loss or reputational damage being suffered.
Limited 	There are a number of significant control weaknesses which could put the achievement of key service objectives at risk and result in error, fraud, loss or reputational damage. There are High recommendations indicating significant failings. Any Critical recommendations would need to be mitigated by significant strengths elsewhere.
Moderate 	An adequate control framework is in place but there are weaknesses which may put some service objectives at risk. There are Medium priority recommendations indicating weaknesses, but these do not undermine the system's overall integrity. Any Critical recommendation will prevent this assessment, and any High recommendations would need to be mitigated by significant strengths elsewhere.
Substantial 	There is a sound control environment with risks to key service objectives being reasonably managed. Any deficiencies identified are not cause for major concern. Recommendations will normally only be advice and best practice.

4. Limitations and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of management and internal auditors

It is management's responsibility to develop and maintain sound systems of risk management, internal control and governance and for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud. Internal audit work should not be seen as a substitute for management's responsibilities for the design and operation of these systems. Internal Audit shall endeavour to plan its work so that there is a reasonable expectation of detecting significant control weaknesses and, if detected, Internal Audit shall carry out additional work directed towards identification of consequent fraud or other irregularities. However, Internal Audit procedures alone, even when carried out with due professional care, do not guarantee that fraud will be detected. Accordingly, the examinations of Internal Audit should not be relied upon solely to disclose fraud, defalcations or other irregularities which may exist, unless Internal Audit is requested to carry out a special investigation for such activities in a particular area.

Limitations inherent to the internal auditor's work

Internal Audit work has been performed subject to the limitations outlined below:

- **Opinion**

The opinion is based solely on the work undertaken as part of the agreed internal audit plan. There might be weaknesses in the system of internal control that Internal Audit are not aware of because they did not form part of our programme of work, were excluded from the scope of individual internal audit assignments or were not brought to our attention. As a consequence, management and the GAP Committee should be aware that the opinion may have differed if the programme of work or scope for individual reviews was extended or other relevant matters were brought to Internal Audit's attention.

- **Internal control**

Internal control systems, no matter how well designed and operated, are affected by inherent limitations. These include the possibility of poor judgment in decision-making, human error, control processes being deliberately circumvented by employees and others, management overriding controls and the occurrence of unforeseeable circumstances.

- **Future periods**

Historic evaluation of effectiveness may not be relevant to future periods due to the risk that:

- The design of controls may become inadequate because of changes in operating environment, law, regulation or other; or
- The degree of compliance with policies and procedures may deteriorate

Agenda Item 11

Committee:	Cabinet	Date:	Thursday, 18th April 2024
Title:	Car Park Update		
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Neil Hargreaves, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economy		
Report Author:	Angela Knight, Director of Business Performance and People aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk	Key decision:	No

Summary

1. The Rose and Crown car park is owned by House Group Development Management Limited, and the council manage the running and maintenance of the car park under a management agreement.
2. The owners of the car park have requested to end the current management arrangement and manage the car park directly. As per the agreement they have provided the council with 6 months' notice, the maintenance and operation of the car park will transfer to them from 1st October 2024.
3. Following the approval of the new car park tariffs in February, Waitrose Head Office have contacted the council regarding the Sunday and Bank Holiday Parking charges.
4. The new tariffs state that all car parks in Saffron Walden will be charged at a flat rate of £1.50 for a whole day's parking (8am – 6pm). Waitrose has requested that Fairycroft is excluded from this tariff and remains a short stay car park with a maximum stay of three hours, as set out in the management agreement with a separate set of tariffs for Sundays and Bank Holidays.
5. It is proposed that the new tariffs for Fairycroft car park are.
 - 50p for 1 hour
 - £1 for 2 hours
 - £1.50 for 3 hours

Recommendations

6. Cabinet are requested to
 - I. Note the 6 months' notice period submitted by House Group Development Management Limited to end the management agreement for the Rose and Crown Car Park and that the Car Park will no longer be managed by the Council.
 - II. Approve the following amended tariffs for Sundays and Bank Holidays in Fairycroft Car Park only.
 - i. 50p for 1 hour
 - ii. £1 for 2 hours
 - iii. £1.50 for 3 hours

Financial Implications

7. The financial implications are set out in the body of this report.

Background Papers

8. None

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Consulted with Waitrose representatives. Notice of variation will be published for 21 days should Cabinet approve the new tariffs
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	Saffron Walden car parks only
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Background Information

Rose and Crown Car Park

9. The Rose and Crown car park has been managed and maintained by the council under a management agreement with the owners, currently House Group Development Management Limited.
10. The management agreement is based on a 50/50 profit share of the net income.
11. The council have been discussing the options with House Group Development Management Limited over several weeks and following this review House Group feel that from an investment perspective it makes better financial sense for them to run the car park in house.
12. They have stated that they will continue to operate this asset as a car park.
13. The net financial impact on the council for this change in car park management will be a loss of approximately £15,000 net direct income based on the 2024/25 budget estimates.

Fairycroft Car Park

14. Following the approval of the new tariffs for the council car parks at the February Cabinet and Council meetings, Waitrose head office property management department contacted the council regarding the Sunday and bank holiday flat fee charge of £1.50.
15. The Council has a management agreement with Waitrose as the leaseholder to manage the operational running of the car park and to maintain a majority of the areas (not all) within the car park.
16. The management agreement is on a profit share basis between Waitrose, the Council and the Pig Market Charity (for which the council are trustees).
 - Uttlesford District Council - 58.22%
 - Waitrose - 21.92%
 - Pig Market - 19.86%

17. During the formal car park consultation period a management company responded on behalf of Waitrose, their response related to both Fairycroft and Swan Meadow Car Park, stating they were opposed to the increase in charges and particularly to the Sunday and bank holiday charge. We received no representation relating to the length of stay in Fairycroft car park on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
18. A manager from the local Waitrose store also attended the Cabinet meeting, again referencing the generic response and level of tariffs submitted during the consultation period.
19. Prior to and during the consultation, Officers engaged informally with the manager/s of the local Waitrose store in Saffron Walden regarding the changes to the tariffs and getting feedback on the impact of changes and the updating of signage.
20. The management agreement states that

'The Council shall charge for parking at the Car Park for up to three hours, but such charges shall be in line with the charges for parking in other short stay car parks in the town centre of Saffron Walden which are owned or operated by the Council from time to time'

21. Prior to the new car park tariffs all car parks were free on Sundays and Banks Holidays and by default meant that there were no time restrictions on length of stay, so users could effectively park for the whole day on a Sunday and Bank Holidays. This included the designated short stay car parks, where on Mondays to Saturdays the maximum parking duration is two or three hours (The Common, The Rose and Crown and Fairycroft). The introduction of the new tariffs has retained the ability for users to park for a whole day on Sundays and Bank Holidays in the short stay car parks but with a flat fee of £1.50.
22. Officers met with representatives from Waitrose head office to discuss their concerns around the Sunday and bank holiday charging. Waitrose requested the council adheres to the management agreement and maintains Fairycroft as a short stay car park with a maximum stay of three hours on Sundays and Bank Holidays, whilst acknowledging that this will not be in line with the other short stay car parks in Saffron Walden.
23. The management agreement does not require the council to obtain agreement for the level of tariffs set at Fairycroft car park, only that they align with the other short stay car parks in the town. In the spirit of partnership working officers discussed at length with Waitrose representatives' options around setting a fair schedule of tariffs for Fairycroft on Sundays and Bank Holidays whilst retaining the maximum parking duration of three hours.
24. The proposed charges for Sundays and bank holiday are set out below.

Parking Duration	Tariff
Up to 1 hour	50p
Up to 2 hours	£1.00
Up to 3 hours	£1.50

25. It is difficult to fully estimate the impact of this new charging schedule, as previously the car park was free, and no data was available on usage and/or traffic churn. It is not expected to materially alter the current estimated income budgets.

26. These changes to tariffs at Fairycroft do not constitute the need for further consultation, but the council is required to publish a Notice of Variation in the local paper and to display the new charges in the car park for a period of 21 days prior to implementation.

27. Fairycroft car park will remain free to users on Sundays and Bank Holidays until the end of 21 day notification period.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Income estimates are incorrect	1 – the current income forecasts for Sunday and Bank Holidays are estimates due to no data being available for previous years	1 -. It is unlikely that this change will add any significant negative financial impact.	The income collected will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring cycle.

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

Agenda Item 12

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 18
April 2024

Title: Amendments to the Environmental Health
(Housing) Enforcement Policy

**Portfolio
Holder:** Authur Coote, Portfolio Holder for Housing and
Equalities

**Report
Author:** Marcus Watts, Environmental Health Manager
- Protection

Key decision:
No

mwatts@uttlesford.gov.uk

Tel: 01799 510595

Summary

1. The Environmental Health (Protection) Service is responsible for enforcing legislation to ensure property standards are maintained.
2. Enforcement powers that are available to the team are predominantly derived from the Housing Act 2004. However, the Housing & Planning Act 2016 introduced a range of measures to enhance the existing powers including the ability for the Council to issue Civil penalties of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution for certain specified offences.
3. Within the Statutory Guidance published in April 2018, the Government made it clear that local housing authorities must develop and document their own policy to determine when it is appropriate and how to determine the level of civil penalty.
 - a) The Cabinet approved the original Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy in November 2019. Since this time there have been several changes in legislation allowing civil penalties. These include offences under:
 - I. The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
 - II. The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015
 - III. The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015
 - IV. The Housing and Planning Act 2016
4. This report outlines these changes and requests consent for adoption within the Enforcement Policy.

Recommendations

5. That Cabinet:

- I. Enable officers to discharge its duty and exercise powers under:
 - i The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
 - ii The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 & The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
 - iii The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 as amended by The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2019
 - iv The Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Banning Order Offences) Regulations 2018

- II. Approve the revised Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy as set out in Appendix A.

Financial Implications

6. The penalty charges listed serve as a deterrent to ensure that the landlord complies with the advice, recommendations and formal notices issues by Environmental Health. The Government have made it clear that any revenue from civil penalties should not only be retained by the Council, but be ring-fenced for Private Sector Housing enforcement activity.

Background Papers

7. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
 - Uttlesford Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy – October 2018
 - Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 & Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
 - Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
 - The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 as amended by The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2019
 - Ministry of Housing communities and Local Government - Civil penalties under the Housing and Planning Act 2016. Guidance for Local Housing Authorities – April 2018
 - <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7328/>

Impact

8.

Communication/Consultation	The enforcement policy will be promoted on the Councils website and landlord forum events.
Community Safety	Effective enforcement policies aim to promote community safety in an effective and proportionate manner
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None ,
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The policies are designed to ensure that the Council carries out its enforcement role lawfully and proportionately having regard, amongst other things, to human rights
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

9. The private rented sector (PRS) is an important and growing part of the housing market representing 19% of all households in England. Within Uttlesford, private renting increased from 13.1% in 2011 to 14.5% in 2021 (census data)
10. The expansion of the PRS has focused attention on the need to improve conditions. The English Housing Survey (EHS) estimated that in 2021, 23% of PRS homes did not meet the Decent Home Standard – around 1 million homes. This compares with 13% of owner-occupied and 10% of social-rented homes. PRS homes were also more likely to have at least one Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
11. It is worth noting that the Government’s white paper, A fairer private rented sector, was published on 16 June 2022. It set out a 12-point action plan to deliver “a fairer, more secure, higher quality private rented sector” In delivering these reforms the Renters Reform Bill has now completed its readings within the house of commons and is due to progress through the House of Lords.
12. Councils Environmental Health Service is responsible for enforcing a wide range of statutory provisions relating to private sector housing and environmental conditions affecting health, wellbeing, and safety. These include:

- Reducing the number of properties with serious risks to health and safety.
 - Improving energy efficiency, warmth of homes and help reduce fuel poverty.
 - Improving standards in Houses of Multiple Occupation, enforcement, and licensing.
 - Immigration Housing Reports & Ukrainian host property inspections
 - Empty properties
 - Disabled Facilities Grants & Discretionary Home Repairs Assistance
 - Hording, security, and pest control
 - Defective sewers and drains.
13. The existing Environmental Health Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy was last formally agreed by Cabinet in November 2018. The policy outlines the principles of enforcement, the enforcement options available and the process in place to ensure effective enforcement is undertaken in a fair, consistent and transparent way.
14. The revised Policy continues to allow the Council to impose a civil penalty as an alternative to prosecution, but now includes offences relating to breaches of the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations, Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations, The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 as amended and also for breaches of Banning Orders. The following paragraphs provide further context on these changes:

15. The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020

16. Although existing legislation already requires landlords to keep their properties free from electrical hazards. It has previously been best practice for landlords to organise periodic inspection and testing and to provide an electrical safety report to the tenant. Under The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 best practice is placed on a statutory footing.

17. In summary, the regulations place the following duties on private landlords:

- To ensure that electrical safety standards are met during any period when the residential premises are occupied under a tenancy, and that every fixed electrical installation is inspected and tested at least every five years by a qualified person.
- To obtain a report from the person conducting the inspection and test which gives the results and sets a date for the next inspection and test

- To supply a copy of the report to the existing tenant within 28 days of the inspection and test, and on request supply a copy to the local housing authority.
 - To supply a copy of the last report to any new tenant before occupation, or any prospective tenant within 28 days of a request from the prospective tenant.
 - Where the report requires the private landlord to carry out further investigative or remedial work, the private landlord must undertake such further investigative or remedial work within 28 days or within such lesser time period as specified in the report; and
 - To obtain and supply written confirmation of completion of such further investigative or remedial work to the tenant and local housing authority.
18. Where the Council has reasonable grounds to believe a private Landlord is in breach of their duties, the Council has a statutory duty to serve either a remedial (Reg 4) specifying what action needs to be taken to achieve compliance and when this needs to be achieved by. Alternatively, the Council can carry out urgent remedial works and an urgent remedial notice (Reg 10). The regulations allow for a statutory appeal period against any statutory notice served under the regulations.
19. Private landlords are able to make written representations to the Council within 21 days in the first instance. Any written representation will be considered on case by case basis. Private landlords also have rights to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal. The Tribunal may confirm, quash, or vary notices served by the Council.
20. The Council also has the discretionary power to carry out necessary remedial action. The regulations state the local authority 'may' organise with consent of the tenant, urgent or non-urgent remedial action. Where this is exercised, regulation 8 allows the Council to recover costs reasonably incurred by them taking action.
21. If there has been no appeal of the notice requiring action, the costs become payable at the end of 21 days, beginning with the day on which the demand for payment was served. Where the Council is satisfied beyond all reasonable doubt that a private landlord is in breach of any of their duties under regulation 3, the Council can issue civil penalties up to £30,000 for a breach of any of duties.

22. The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (As Amended by the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022

23. Under the Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations there is a mandatory requirement to provide a carbon monoxide alarm in rooms used as living accommodation where there is a fixed combustion applicant, such as gas heaters and boilers. These rules amend the previous regulations where the requirement previously only applied to solid

fuel combustion appliances, such as wood burners. However, the rules do not extend to gas cookers.

24. The amended rules also include a new requirement to ensure that when a tenant reports to their landlord or letting agent that an alarm may not be working properly, the alarm must be repaired or replaced. Landlords or their agent must also ensure that the property's alarms are in proper working order on the day that a tenancy starts, and they must keep a record of this.

25. The Council is required under the Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 to prepare and publish a statement of principles which it proposes to follow when deciding on the penalty charge amount (up to a maximum penalty of £5000) for failing to comply with a remedial notice served under these regulations.

26. The statement of principles is provided within the revised Enforcement Policy. The Council will impose a penalty charge where it is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the landlord has not complied with the action specified in a remedial notice within the required timescale.

27. The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 as amended (MEES)

28. The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) Regulations came into force in April 2018 and have been amended twice since that time. The Regulation requires a domestic private rented property to have a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E. From the 1st April 2018 landlords were prohibited from granting new tenancies for a property with an EPC rating of below E, nor can they renew or extend any existing tenancies. From 1st April 2020 the legislation further restricts landlords letting out below E-rated properties to all existing tenancies.

29. In addition to the EPC rating requirements, the legislation also enables a tenant to request their landlord's consent for energy efficiency improvements to be made to the property and placed a duty on the landlord to not unreasonably refuse such works. This enables a tenant to serve a 'tenants request' on the landlord and if the landlord fails in their duty the tenant may apply to the First Tier Tribunal for its consent for the improvements to be made.

30. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Banning Order Offences) Regulations 2017

31. A banning order is an order by the First-tier Tribunal that bans a landlord from:

- Letting housing in England;

- Engaging in English letting agency work;
- Engaging in English property management work; or

- Doing two or more of those things.
32. Banning Orders are rare and tend to be used for the most serious offenders who flout their legal obligations, renting out accommodation that is sub standard.
 33. The obligation is for the Local Authority to apply for a banning order and is required to develop and document their own policy on it. However, the government expects the power to be used for the most serious offences.
 34. A breach of a banning order is a criminal offence can also result in a civil penalty and this has also been included within the Private Rented Sector Enforcement Policy
 35. The civil penalties given within the revised enforcement policy have been calculated taking into consideration government guidance and allow local authorities to impose a civil penalty of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution.
 36. The same criminal standard of proof is required for a civil penalty as for prosecution. This means that before taking formal action, a local housing authority should satisfy itself that if the case were to be prosecuted in the magistrates' court, there would be a realistic prospect of conviction.
 37. To actually achieve a conviction in the magistrates' court, the local housing authority would need to be able to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that the offence has been committed. Similarly, where a civil penalty is imposed and an appeal is subsequently made to the First-tier Tribunal, the local housing authority would need to be able to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that the offence had been committed.
 38. The Government has made it clear that local housing authorities must develop and document their own policy to determine when to prosecute and when to issue a civil penalty.
 39. On 18th October 2017, Cabinet adopted an overarching Corporate Enforcement Policy which details the approach to which all Council enforcement officers should have regard to when considering action. The amended Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy should be regarded as an extension of this Policy.

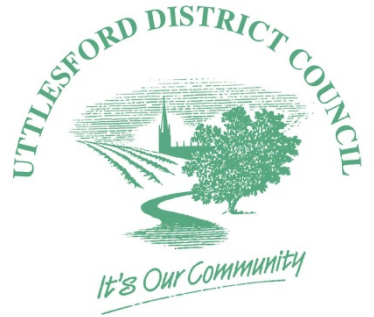
Risk Analysis

40.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
There are few risks identified for not adopting the	1 – Low	3 - Impact arises in the event of non –	Maintain service level & adoption of policy

<p>policy. Officers would look to sanctioning offenders through the courts. There are risks associated with the non delivery of enforcement services, both on resident health and safety and reputational risk to the Council</p>		<p>enforcement services</p>	
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- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



Uttlesford District Council
Public Services
Environmental Health

Private Sector Housing
Enforcement Policy

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Document History			
Date	Amendments Made	By Whom	Approval
4/3/24	Reviewed	CCG	MW
5/4/24	Minor recommendations following CMT	JM	MW
<i>Version Number</i>		March 24 v01	
<i>Reviewed By</i>		Marcus Watts	
<i>Approval Body</i>		Cabinet	
<i>Date Adopted</i>		TBC	
<i>Next Review Date</i>		March 2028	

Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is a general statement of the approaches to be taken regarding specific enforcement activities concerning Private Sector Housing. It has regards to Corporate Enforcement Policy & associated Service Standards.

Uttlesford Council will:

- Ensure that officers take a transparent, consistent, and fair approach when making enforcement decisions.
- Support good landlords and deal robustly with criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords.

AIMS OF POLICY

- To protect those in greatest need from harm associated with poor housing conditions.
- Ensures that enforcement action is proportionate to the seriousness of failure to comply with statutory requirements.
- To raise standards in private sector housing.
- To provide a transparent and consistent approach to enforcement.
- Ensures that the policy aligns with the Regulators Compliance Code.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Update Overview

This policy updates the previous Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy approved by Cabinet in November 2019.

Since this time there have been several changes in legislation and the policy has been updated to reflect these changes. It also includes a revised approach to issuing civil penalties.

Legislative Context

Environmental Health has delegated powers to enforce standards in the private sector by service of statutory notices using a variety of legislation instruments including:-

Housing Act 2004

- Sections 254 and 257 Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Licensing of HMOs Part 2 – Housing Act
- Interim and Final Management Orders - Part 4 Housing Act

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended)

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Banning Orders, database of rogue landlords, civil penalties, rent repayment orders.)

A range of enforcement options will be used in accordance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Enforcement Guidance, issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Policy Scope:

The private rented sector makes up an important part of the housing market in Uttlesford with 16% of all households privately renting. Due to the proximity to London and Cambridge the cost of buying or renting property is high.

In the past 10 years the percentage of privately rented housing has increased by 5% and due to the economic climate and challenges around housing demand and supply it is likely that the private rented sector is likely to continue to grow.

Poor housing has a direct link to poor health, comfort, and mental wellbeing. The council believes that the private rented sector should be well managed and that everyone has the right to live in decent, safe accommodation.

This policy details how the council will regulate standards in private rented housing. It also provides a background to the legislation and guidance on which it is based.

It is important for local authorities to have an enforcement policy to make sure the approach is consistent among officers. It also helps members of the public know what to expect from the service. An enforcement policy also provides clarity if the council takes legal proceedings or enforcement action is appealed against.

In developing this policy, we must remain impartial to both landlord and tenant. We will help and advise to achieve our aim but we must also be firm in taking enforcement action if considered appropriate.

Related Policies & Corporate Governance Matters

This policy aligns with the Councils Housing Strategy 2021 – 2016

KEY ELEMENTS OF POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Uttlesford District Council's (UDC) Environmental Health Service is responsible for the enforcement of a wide range of law (or statutory provisions) which is centred mostly on securing public health and safety, the regulation of the trading environment, housing and the protection of the environment.

This policy outlines the service's approach for dealing specifically with private sector housing offences and links with the Council's corporate vision to promote thriving, safe and healthy communities, specifically to improve private sector housing conditions for UDC's residents.

The majority of landlords in Uttlesford provide well maintained properties let responsibly. However, there are number of rogue or irresponsible landlords in the district who knowingly rent out accommodation that is unlicensed, substandard and/or unsafe.

The Council aims to support the government's policy to support good landlords who provide decent well-maintained homes and avoid unnecessary regulation which increases costs and red tape for landlords and also pushes up rents for tenants.

The Council is committed to making full use of the range of powers available to improve standards in Uttlesford's privately rented housing sector.

Since 6 April 2017, local housing authorities have had the power to impose civil penalties of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution for certain specified offences. Rent repayment orders have also been extended to cover a wider range of offences.

Guidance issued by the Secretary of State requires each local authority to have a policy to when civil penalties will be used, and to detail the level of penalties that will be imposed. It is expected that the maximum amount, of £30,000 will be reserved for the worst (repeat) offenders. The actual amount levied in any case should reflect the severity of the offence as well as the landlords previous record of offending.

This policy outlines how the Council will use these powers, how it will decide when to prosecute and when to impose a civil penalty, and how it will determine the size of each civil penalty.

The policy is designed to ensure transparency, consistency, and fairness in how and when civil penalties are imposed. The policy will help the Council to promote and support good landlords and deal robustly with criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

It is acknowledged that landlords may have a property portfolio spread across different administrative Council boundaries. In addition, when dealing with matters relating to housing enforcement, officers need to share information with other Local Authorities, Police, Fire Authority, and Immigration Enforcement. Where possible the service will take a multi- agency approach for dealing with housing related offences.

AUTHORISATION AND DELEGATION

In relation to the legislation, part 3 of the Council's constitution sets out the delegated authority to:

- commence a prosecution
- authorise named officers for enforcement

TRAINING

The Council will provide appropriate initial and updated training to all officers authorised to deal with private sector housing enforcement to enable officers to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively. This will include the following:

- (a) Minimum update training of 5 hours per year for continual professional training.
- (b) Minimum of 10 hours revision training for authorised officers returning to private sector housing enforcement.
- (c) Minimum of three months monitoring of newly qualified or appointed Officers or Officers returning to environmental enforcement duties after an absence of more than 3 years.

POWERS OF ENTRY

In certain circumstances, powers of entry into a property are provided to authorised officers. In general the powers will allow an officer at any reasonable time to;

- Enter a property to carry out an inspection and gather evidence
- Take someone with them
- Take equipment or materials with them
- Take measurements, photographs or make recordings
- Leave recording equipment for later collection
- Take samples of articles or substances; and in some cases to carry out works.

In most cases prior notice must be given to owners and to the occupiers. The notice given depends on the legislation being enforced, but is typically 24 hours. Notice that powers of entry need to be carried out will normally be in writing or by email but can in some circumstances be given verbally, depending on the relevant statutory provision.

Where formal inspection is required in accordance with Section 4(1) (to determine whether category 1 or 2 hazards exist) of the Housing Act 2004, a notice of entry will be issued in writing under S.239 of the Act.

Where the local housing authority consider that any premises need to be entered for the purpose of ascertaining whether an offence has been committed under sections 72, 95 or 234(3), HMO management or licensing requirements, the authorised officer may enter the premises at any reasonable time without giving any prior notice.

Powers of entry can be enforced with a warrant. The Police will accompany officers where that is appropriate. Officers exercising their power of entry will carry identification and details of their authorisation to carry out their action.

Officers will have regards to the Home Office Code of Practice, Powers of Entry (December 2014 or most recent version). The Code provides guidance and sets out considerations that apply before, during and after powers of entry and associated powers are exercised including those circumstances where entry is exercised with the consent of an occupier.

HOUSING ENFORCEMENT ACTION

HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM (HHSRS)

The HHSRS is a risk based assessment tool which is used by environmental health officers to assess the risk (the likelihood and severity) of a hazard in residential housing to the health and safety of occupants or visitors. The HHSRS is tenure neutral; it can be used to assess hazards in private and social rented housing and also in owner occupied housing.

The [Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\)](#) assesses 29 housing hazards and the effect that each may have on the health and safety of current or future occupants of the property. The HHSRS provides a way that hazards can be assessed and the best way of dealing with them identified.

If a hazard is a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety, this is known as a Category 1 hazard. If a hazard is less serious or less urgent, this is known as a Category 2 hazard.

The following 29 hazards are assessed during a formal HHSRS inspection:

Number	Hazard	Health Effects
1	Damp and mould growth Health threats due to dust mites, mould or fungal including mental and social wellbeing health threats associated with damp, humid and mouldy conditions	Allergies, asthma, effects of toxins from mould and fungal infections
2	Excess cold Threats to health from cold indoor temperatures. A healthy indoor temperature is 18°C to 21°C	Respiratory conditions: flu, pneumonia and bronchitis Cardiovascular conditions: heart attacks and strokes
3	Excess heat Threats due to high indoor temperatures	Dehydration, trauma, stroke, cardiovascular and respiratory
4	Asbestos and MMF Exposure to asbestos fibres and Manufactured Mineral Fibres (MMF)	Asbestos: Damage to lungs MMF: Damage to skin, eyes and lungs

Number	Hazard	Health Effects
5	Biocides Threats to health from chemicals used to treat timber and mould growth	Risk from breathing in, skin contact and swallowing of the chemical
6	Carbon Monoxide and fuel combustion products Excess levels of carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and smoke	Dizziness, nausea, headaches, disorientation, unconsciousness and breathing problems
7	Lead Threats to health from lead ingestion from paint, water pipes, soil and fumes from leaded petrol	Lead poisoning causing nervous disorders, mental health and blood production issues
8	Radiation Health threats from radon gas and its daughters, primarily airborne but also radon dissolved in water	Lung cancer caused by exposure, which increases amount and length of exposure
9	Uncombusted fuel gas Threat from fuel gas escaping into the atmosphere within a property	Suffocation
10	Volatile organic compounds Threat to health from a diverse group of organic chemicals including formaldehyde that are gaseous at room temperature and can be found in a wide variety of materials in the home	Allergies, irritation to the eyes, nose and skin, headaches, nausea, dizziness and drowsiness
11	Crowding and space Hazards associated with lack of space for living, sleeping and normal household or family life	Psychological distress and mental disorders, increased risk of hygiene issues, accidents and personal space and privacy compromised
12	Entry by intruders Problems keeping a property secure against unauthorised entry and maintaining defensible space	Fear of burglary occurring, stress and anguish caused by burglary and injuries caused by the intruder
13	Lighting Threats to physical and mental health associated with inadequate natural or artificial light, including the psychological effects associated with the view from the property through glazing	Depression and psychological effects due to lack of natural light. Eye strain from glare and inadequate light
14	Noise Threats to physical and mental health due to exposure to noise within the property or within its curtilage	Psychological and physiological changes resulting from lack of sleep, poor concentration, headaches and anxiety
15	Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse Health hazards due to poor design, layout and construction making it hard to keep clean and hygienic, attracting pests and inadequate and unhygienic provision for storing household waste	Stomach and intestinal disease, infection, asthma, allergies, disease from rats and physical hazards

Number	Hazard	Health Effects
16	Food safety Threats of infection from poor provision and facilities to store, prepare and cook food	Stomach and intestinal disease, diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach upset and dehydration
17	Personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage Threats of infections and threat to mental health associated with personal hygiene, including personal and clothes washing facilities, sanitation and drainage	Stomach and intestinal disease, skin infections and depression
18	Water supply Threats to health from contamination by bacteria, parasites, viruses and chemical pollutants due to the quality of water supply for drinking household use such as cooking, washing and sanitation	Dehydration, fatigue, headaches, dry skin, bladder infections and legionnaires disease
19	Falls associated with baths Falls associated with a bath, shower or similar facility	Physical injuries: cuts, lacerations, swellings and bruising.
20	Falls on the level surfaces Falls on any level surface such as floor, yards and paths, including falls associated with trip steps, thresholds or ramps where the change in level is less than 300mm	Physical injuries: bruising, fractures, head, brain and spinal injuries
21	Falls associated with stairs and steps Falls associated with stairs and ramps where the change in level is greater than 300mm. It includes internal stairs or ramps within a property, external steps or ramps associated with the property, access to the property and to shared facilities or means of escape from fire and falls over stairs, ramp or step guarding	Physical injuries: bruising, fractures, head, brain and spinal injuries
22	Falls between levels Falls from one level to another, inside or outside a dwelling where the difference is more than 300mm. Including falls from balconies, landings or out of windows	Physical injuries
23	Electrical hazards Hazards from electric shock and electricity burns	Electric shock and burns
24	Fire Threats to health from exposure to uncontrolled fire and associated smoke. It includes injuries from clothing catching fire, a common injuring when trying to put a fire out.	Burns, being overcome by smoke or death
25	Flames, hot surfaces and materials Burns or injuries caused by contact with a hot flame or fire, hot objects and non-water based liquids. Scalds caused by contact with hot liquids and vapours.	Burns, scalds, permanent scarring and death.

Number	Hazard	Health Effects
26	Collision and entrapment Risks of physical injuries from trapping body parts in architectural features such as trapping fingers in doors and windows and colliding with objects such as windows, doors and low ceilings	Physical injuries such as cuts and bruising to the body
27	Explosions Threats from the blast of an explosion, from debris generated by the blast and from partial or total collapse of a building as a result of the explosion	Physical injuries, crushing, bruising, puncture, fractures, head, brain and spinal injuries.
28	Ergonomics Threats of physical strain associated with functional space and other features at the dwelling	Strain and sprain injuries
29	Structural collapse and falling elements The threat of the dwelling collapsing or part of the fabric being displaced or falling due to inadequate fixing or disrepair or as a result of adverse weather conditions.	Physical injuries

In line with the Corporate Enforcement Policy, the Council in most cases will take a stepped approach to enforcement. This means where there is a lower risk of harm and minor breaches of responsibilities, the Council will in most circumstances notify the landlord, letting agent, or property manager of the breach through advisory or warning letters or notices and provide a reasonable time period to comply. The council may also sign post to other routes for resolution where appropriate. However, the type of enforcement taken will vary according to the legislation being applied - in some cases, taking enforcement action is a statutory duty, provided certain criteria are met.

Where these approaches fail, or if there is a persistent or deliberate failure to comply, act unreasonably or where breaches are likely to cause significant harm, officers will use the full range of enforcement options available to them under the relevant legislation to achieve compliance to protect those at risk. In the most serious contraventions possible action will include prosecution. The type of enforcement action pursued is always considered on a case-by-case basis, based on its own merits and having regard to specific government guidance where applicable. Following consideration of the specific circumstances of the particular case the most appropriate enforcement option will be applied accordingly. In every case enforcement seeks to:

- Promote and achieve sustained compliance with the law
- Ensure that landlords and letting agents take action to deal immediately with serious risks or harm or potential consumer harm
- Ensure that landlords and letting agents who breach legislative requirements are held to account and fair and effective penalties are imposed where appropriate

The Council will seek to secure compliance with regulatory legislation through the use of the following courses of action:

- Use of informal action, written guidance, advice and notices
- By refusal, revocation or the attachment of conditions to a licence

- By the use of various management orders
- By the use of statutory notices
- By issuing simple cautions
- By carrying out work in default
- By prosecution
- By the use of civil penalties
- By using anti-social behaviour powers

ENFORCEMENT DECISIONS

Enforcement action will be based on risk and we must also have full regard to any statutory duty. Assessment of risk will be based on current legislation and specific guidance. Enforcement Officers are required to make informed judgements and will be suitably trained for this responsibility. They will decide on appropriate action after considering the criteria within this Policy and any relevant written procedures. All formal action will be subject to case / peer review. A senior officer will give prior approval to all formal action falling outside the scope of this policy.

The following table contains some examples of situations where different types of action may be taken. Decisions are made, however, on a case-by-case basis.

Action	Circumstances
No action	Where formal action may not be appropriate. In such cases, customers may be directed to other sources of advice and support.
Informal action and advice includes verbal advice and advisory letters	Where it is recognised that an informal approach can remedy the problem early without the need for delay or escalation to enforcement action. This is often a pre-formal stage of the HHSRS assessment process, allowing officers to working collaboratively with responsible landlords to address and resolve any problems.
Service of formal Housing Act Notices and/or correspondence (HMO) requiring repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is a lack of confidence or there is positive intelligence that the responsible individual or company will not respond to a pre-formal approach, and/or • Where there is risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of a household or a member of the public (dangerous gas or electrical services; no heating in the winter; no hot water for personal hygiene or to wash and prepare food safely; etc), and/or • Where standards are extremely poor and the responsible individual or company shows little or no awareness of the management regulations or statutory requirements, and/or; • Where the person has a history of non-compliance with the Council and/or other relevant regulators, and/or; • Where the person has a record of criminal convictions for failure to comply with the housing requirements (which may include housing management).
Powers to require information and/or documents	Where it is necessary for documents and information to be provided to enable officers to carry out their powers and duties

Remedial Notice	A remedial notice must be served where the local housing authority is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that a landlord has not complied with one or more of their duties under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020, and/or The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm regulations 2015 (as amended)
Emergency Remedial Action / Emergency Prohibition Order	Where there is an imminent risk of serious harm to the health and safety of any occupiers and visitors of the premises or any other residential premises
Revocation of HMO Licenses and Approvals	Where the Manager is not a “fit and proper person”; and/or Where there are serious breaches of the licensing conditions and/or serious management offences.
Simple Caution	Where an offence is less serious and the person who has committed the offence has admitted their guilt. In such cases, a Simple Caution may be offered (as an alternative to Court or Civil Penalty action, and on the understanding that the Council’s costs will be paid by the offender) where it is likely that they will heed a warning about their behaviour and the legal consequences if they commit further offences.
Civil Penalties	Where the authority considers the offence is suitable to be dealt with by a civil penalty (see 8 below)
Prosecution	Where the authority consider the offence is not suitable to be dealt with by way of a Civil Penalty or a Civil Penalty is not available for the type of offence.
Rent Repayment Order (RRO)	RRO will be considered after every successful prosecution for failure to comply with an Improvement Notice (section 30); Prohibition Order, including Emergency Prohibition Orders (section 32); Offences in relation to licensing of HMOs (section 72 (1)). Breach of a banning order made under section 21 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. Where a landlord is convicted of a relevant offence and they received a significant amount of housing benefit, a RRO application may be made to the First Tier Tribunal. Tenants will be signposted to other agencies who may be able to assist them with an RRO application as appropriate.
Banning Order	The Council may decide to seek a Banning Order following the breach of ‘banning order offences’ as described in the schedule to The Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Banning Order Offences) Regulations 2018. We will follow the guidance issued by DCLG when considering when to take this action: DCLG Guidance Banning Orders .

CIVIL PENALTIES

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 enables Local authorities to impose Civil penalties as an alternative to prosecution for certain offences under the Housing act 2004. In particular the relevant offences are:

- Section 30 of the Housing Act 2004 – Failing to comply with an Improvement Notice
- Section 72 of the Housing Act 2004 – Offences in relation to the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Section 95 of the Housing Act 2004 – Offences in relation to the licensing of houses under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 (Selective Licensing of Residential Accommodation)
- Section 139 of the Housing Act 2004 – Offences in relation to the contravention of an overcrowding notice
- Section 234 of the Housing Act 2004 – Failure to comply with Management Regulations in respect of Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- Regulation 3 & 5 of the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.
- Regulation 4 & 6 of The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015
- Regulation 23, 27 & 37(4)(a) of The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015
- Section 21 Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Banning orders only)

In deciding how to proceed, the Council must be satisfied that they have sufficient evidence to prove that an offence has been committed. This needs to be based on the criminal burden of proof, i.e. beyond reasonable doubt. In determining that the issuing of a civil penalty as opposed to prosecution is the appropriate course of action the Council will consider each case individually and will take into consideration factors including the seriousness of the offence; the culpability of the offender; the harm, or potential harm to tenants; and the impact on the wider community.

In making a decision as to what, if any, enforcement action is appropriate the Council will refer to the Corporate Enforcement Policy, and must also have regard to the Code for Crown Prosecutors. Due regard must also be given to any potential defence and it may be appropriate to undertake an interview under caution in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) to explore this.

When the Council is satisfied that a relevant offence has been committed and that it is in the public interest to proceed formally it must decide whether to prosecute or issue a civil penalty.

The following, whilst not exhaustive, are situations where prosecution may be appropriate:

- The offence was serious, for example breach of a prohibition order or where there was imminent risk of injury or loss of life;
- The offender has been prosecuted or received multiple penalties for similar Housing Act offences.

The following factors, whilst not exhaustive, are situations where the issuing of a civil penalty may be appropriate:

- No history of previous non-compliance with relevant legislation
- No previous convictions of relevant offences

- The offence was committed because of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding, but this must be balanced against the seriousness of the offence.
- Prosecution is likely to have a serious adverse effect upon the offenders physical or mental wellbeing, but this must be balanced against the seriousness of the offence.

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 also specifies that the amount of penalty that can be imposed is to be determined by the Council but must not be more than £30,000. The Government's desire is that the penalty should be a punishment which has a real economic impact to the offender.

In determining the amount of penalty Officers will use a Financial Penalty Matrix (see Appendix 1) which takes into account relevant matters including, but not limited to:

- The penalty should act as a deterrent to repeating the offence, and to others from committing similar offences;
- The penalty should remove any financial benefit obtained as a result of the commission of the offence;
- The severity and seriousness of the offence;
- The culpability and past history of the offender;
- The harm, or potential harm, caused to the tenant;

The approach to determine the correct penalty is provided within Appendix 2. The Civil Penalty Charge scheme fines range from a starting assessment baseline of £750 for low culpability, low severity and first offence situations to £30,000 for the most serious repeat offenders. Further guidance on other penalties are listed within Appendix 3,4 &5 for breaches of smoke/ carbon monoxide, electrical safety and MEES regulations.

PROCESS FOR IMPOSING PENALTY CHARGES

Where it has been determined that a Civil Penalty Charge as opposed to prosecution is the appropriate course of action the Council will follow the following process:

- 1) A 'Notice of Intent' will be served on the person(s) responsible for the commission of the offence(s). The Notice will specify;
 - The amount of the proposed penalty
 - The reasons for the proposed penalty
 - Information relating to the right of the recipient to make representation to the Council.
- 2) The recipient of the Notice is given 28 days to make representation to the Council regarding the proposal to impose a Civil Penalty.
- 3) Following the 28 day period the Council will decide; Whether to impose the proposed financial penalty and the appropriate value. This could be varied taking into account any comments received from the recipients.
- 4) If the Council decides that a Civil Penalty is still appropriate It will issue a Final Notice which will specify;
 - The amount of the financial penalty
 - The reasons for imposing the penalty

- Information on how and when to pay the penalty
- Information regarding the right of appeal against the imposition of a Civil Penalty to the First Tier Property Tribunal
- The consequences of failure to comply with the Notice

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-PAYMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

If the penalty charge is not fully paid within the prescribed time, including after an appeal has been finally determined and the charge upheld, the Council will seek to recover the penalty by order from a County Court including the costs incurred in taking such action where deemed appropriate.

The Council may at any time withdraw any Notices it has served or amend the amount of penalty specified.

LINKS WITH THE NATIONAL DATABASE OF 'ROGUE LANDLORDS AND LETTING AGENTS'

Upon the commencement of the statutory provisions contained in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 relating to the national Landlord and Letting Agent Database, where two Final Civil Penalty Notices have been issued to the same recipient within a 12 month period the Council may make an entry on the database. When considering if this is an appropriate course of action the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Government.

METHOD FOR DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF CIVIL PENALTY

We will have regard to the guidance issued by MHCLG when considering the level of penalty to impose: [MHCLG Guidance Civil Penalties](#) . The guidance requires that the following factors should be considered to ensure the civil penalty is set at an appropriate level in each case:

1. **The severity of the offence.** The more serious the offence the higher the financial penalty should be.
2. **Culpability and track record of the offender.** A higher penalty will be appropriate where the offender has a history of failing to comply with their legal obligation and/or their actions were deliberate and/or they knew or ought to have known that they were in breach of their legal responsibilities. Landlords are running a business and should be expected to be aware of their legal obligations.
3. **The harm caused, or risk being caused, by the offence.** This is a very important factor when determining the level of penalty. The greater the harm, or the potential for harm, the higher the amount the financial penalty should be.
4. **Punishment of the offender.** A civil penalty should not be regarded as an easy or lesser option compared to prosecution, whilst the penalty should be proportionate and reflect both the severity of the offence and whether there is a pattern of previous offending, it is important that it is set at a high enough level to help ensure that it has a real economic impact on the offender and demonstrate the consequences of failing to comply with their legal obligations

5. **Deter the offender from repeating the offence.** The ultimate goal of enforcement action is to prevent any further offences being committed and to help ensure that the offender fully complies with their legal responsibilities in future. The level of the penalty therefore needs to be high enough to deter the offender from repeat offending.
6. **Deter others from committing similar offences.** It is important that landlords and others who may be flouting their legal obligations are aware that the Council will issue civil penalties and see that that this is an action the Council is prepared to take and that the level of penalty is set at a high enough level to deter offending.
7. **Remove any financial benefit the offender may have obtained as a result of committing the offence.** The principle here is that the offender should not benefit as a result of committing an offence. It should not be cheaper to offend than to ensure compliance with legal provisions.

KEY CONTACT FOR THIS POLICY

- Lead Officer: Marcus Watts
- Service Area/Directorate: Environmental Health / Public Services
- Lead Member: Arthur Coote

14. LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

Corporate Priorities	Yes/No
Putting residents first	Yes
Protecting and enhancing our environment	No
Encouraging economic growth	No
Build strong communities	Yes

POLICY MONITORING

This policy shall be reviewed every four years or earlier should there be relevant changes to legislation and statutory guidance.

To be reported to Cabinet

COMPLAINT, CHANGE & MODIFICATION

Complaint

Complaints made in relation to this policy or its application shall follow the Council's

corporate complaint policy

Modification

Consequential Technical changes shall be proposed by the Environmental Health Manager (Protection) and signed off by the appropriate service Director following CMT approval.

Substantial changes and changes in powers shall be put to Cabinet for approval.

The decision on what changes will constitute minor or substantial change will be determined by CMT

Change

The Environmental Health Manager shall be responsible for reviewing /updating the policy in accordance with changes to best practice, statutory guidance and legislation. Changes made shall be presented to Cabinet for formal approval

Reference Section.

UDC Housing Strategy 2021 – 2026

Environmental Health – Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2019

APPENDIX A

CIVIL PENALTY MATRIX

Officers setting civil penalties will have regard to the Uttlesford Civil Penalty Matrix. This has been developed having consideration to a system proposed by the DCLG. This will be used as a guide assessing the appropriate civil penalty to be levied. Fines must be set on a case-by-case basis, but officers must be clear of the factors informing each civil penalty.

Harm	Culpability	Starting assessment baseline
Moderate	Moderate	£750
Moderate	Substantial	£5,000
Moderate	Extreme	£10,000
Substantial	Moderate	£10,000
Substantial	Substantial	£15,000
Substantial	Extreme	£20,000
Extreme	Moderate	£15,000
Extreme	Substantial	£20,000
Extreme	Extreme	£25,000

A seven-step process will be used for setting civil penalty levels.

Step 1: Severity of the offence

Objective: to determine the level of harm that was or could have been caused by the offence

The offence to be assessed against the degree of potential or actual harm caused, both to individual tenant and more widely, for example:

- Nature/extent of hazards present.
- Vulnerability of tenants e.g. age, illness, disability, someone with language issues etc
- Evidence of discrimination/action against the tenants
- Effect on neighbouring premises
- Number of persons and/or households affected e.g. single family or HMO
- Level of risk to occupiers or third parties

Step 2: Culpability

Objective: to determine the offender's culpability as deliberate, reckless or negligent.

Renting out or managing residential property is a business and it is the responsibility of a landlord or letting agent to ensure that they are fully aware of

their legal responsibilities. Ignorance of the law is not an excuse and generally, therefore, the presumption should be that any offence was deliberately committed, or that the offender failed to inform themselves of the legal requirements, unless the landlord or letting agent can demonstrate otherwise.

The offender to be assessed against three levels of culpability:

- Deliberate: offender intended to cause harm or ignored legal responsibilities.
- Reckless: offender was reckless as to whether harm was caused or duties were not complied with.
- Negligent: failure to ensure awareness of legal responsibilities.

Step 3: Initial assessment of civil penalty

Objective: to reach an *initial assessment* of the civil penalty based on severity of the offence and culpability.

Step 4: Track record of landlord

Objective: to consider the offenders track record and issues that may influence the civil penalty.

- Has committed similar offences before
- Offence was planned
- Experienced landlord who should know responsibilities
- Owns a number of properties so should be aware of the legislation (i.e. not a single property landlord)
- Period of time over which offence(s) committed
- High level of profit from the offence/sought profit in committing
- Offender is a letting agent
- Attempt to cover up evidence of offence
- Landlord with a generally well managed portfolio

Step 5: Any mitigating factors

Objective: to consider any mitigating factors and whether they are relevant to the offence e.g. ill health of landlord, obstructive behaviour of third parties etc

Step 6: Revised assessment

Objective: to reach a *provisional* overall assessment of a civil penalty appropriate to the offence based on following the above steps. The civil penalty imposed should never be less than what it would have cost the landlord to comply in the first place, in order to incentivise compliance.

Step 7: Check

Check that the provisional civil penalty assessment meets the aims of the sentencing principles:

- Punishment of offender
- Reduction of/stopping crime
- Deterrent for other potential offenders
- Reform of offender
- Protection of public
- Reparation by offender to victim(s)
- Reparation by offender to community

Check that the provisional assessment is proportionate and will have an appropriate impact.

- This step should take account of the offender's income and assets, and make adjustments within band or change band accordingly. The general presumption should be that a civil penalty should not be revised downwards simply because an offender has (or claims to have) a low income. The Crown and Courts Act 2013 expressly permits the value of an offender's assets, e.g. their rental portfolio, to be taken into account when determining an appropriate penalty.
- For example, if a landlord with a large portfolio was assessed to warrant a low civil penalty, the civil penalty might require adjustment to have sufficient impact, and to conform to sentencing principles above.

Offence Categories (Subject to CPN matrix)

1. Offence - Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice.

Under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 an Improvement Notice can be served requiring improvement and or repairs to reduce Category 1 and or 2 hazards. Hazards are identified using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Category 1 hazards (band A-C) are the most serious hazards and have the highest risk of harm to the occupiers. The Council has statutory duty to take enforcement action in relation to Category 1 hazards.

Following the identification of a category 1 hazard or category 1 and 2 hazards, the Enforcement Officer would contact the relevant person to advise them that a category 1 hazard had been identified, what was causing the hazard and the proposed enforcement action to be taken by the Council. If the landlord carries out the work at this stage no formal action is taken.

Where the landlord does not commence works within an appropriate timescale, and the proposed course of action is an Improvement Notice, this will be served and a charge made to the relevant person to cover the cost of service of the notice. This is currently £284.00 (23/24).

Improvement notices do not become operative for twenty one days and six to eight weeks are usually allowed for notice compliance to allow time to obtain quotes and complete the works. Where the work is still not completed, the tenant(s) will have been living in unsafe/unhealthy conditions for weeks and sometimes months and the landlord will have had a significant amount of time to comply.

There is no limit to the maximum court fine that can be levied for failure to comply with an Improvement Notice.

2. Offence - Failure to license a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) under the Mandatory Scheme

Under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004, higher risk HMOs, occupied by 5 or more persons forming two or more households are required to hold a mandatory HMO licence. The aim of this legislation was for local authorities to improve standards and conditions in the higher risk HMOs through licence conditions.

There is no limit to the maximum court fine that can be levied for failure to licence an HMO.

3. Offence - Failure to comply with an Overcrowding Notice

Under section 139 of the Housing Act 2004, where an HMO is not required to be licensed, an Overcrowding Notice can be served. The notice specifies:

- the maximum number of persons allowed to occupy each room as sleeping accommodation.
- Rooms unsuitable to be used as sleeping accommodation

The standards for overcrowding are low and as such overcrowded accommodation exposes the occupying tenants to significant risk and has a detrimental effect on their health.

There is no limit to the maximum court fine that can be levied for failure to comply with an Overcrowding Notice.

4. Offence - Failure to Comply with the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations

The manager of an HMO is required to comply with the requirements of the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 or in the case of HMOs falling within Section 257 of the Housing Act 2004, the Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Additional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2007. Duties of a manager include:-

- that certain information is provided to occupiers and to be clearly displayed
- taking safety measures, including the maintenance of fire alarms and fire-fighting equipment
- maintaining water supply and drainage
- supplying and maintaining gas and electricity
- maintaining the common parts, fixtures and appliances (including windows)
- maintaining living accommodation
- providing waste disposal facilities

A person commits an offence if he/she fails to comply with any of the Regulations.

Contraventions of the Management Regulations can be fairly minor, for example failure to display a notice containing the contact details of the manager. They can also be extreme for example failure to maintain living accommodation leaving the tenants in imminent risk.

As such a failure to comply could for each regulation be considered against any banding depending on the severity of the offence, the risk to the occupiers and the culpability of the landlord.

Up to £5,000 fine can be levied for failure to comply with each individual management regulation.

Discounts

The following discounts will apply to any civil penalty imposed in the following circumstances:

- If the offender undertakes the necessary work of compliance within the representation period of the “Notice of Intent” stage the Council will reduce the penalty by 20%
- If the offender becomes a member of a recognised landlord association during the representation period of the “Notice of Intent” stage the Council will reduce the penalty by 10%.

Income from civil penalties

Any income from Civil Penalties is retained by the Local Housing Council which imposed the penalty. The Council must spend any income from Civil Penalties on its enforcement functions in relation to the private rented sector. Further details can be found in Statutory Instrument 367 (2017).

APPENDIX B

This example assessment table demonstrates how the civil penalty assessment will be completed under the Housing and Planning Act 2016. This may be revised and updated in line with the guidance contained in the committee report.

Details of offence	
Legal Contravention	
Condition of premises	
Number of tenants	
Number of households	
Any particular vulnerability of the tenants	
Had the landlord received any previous communication regarding the offence (add dates and detail of communication)	
Were any other properties affected by the offence?	
Is there evidence that	
the landlord has tried to avoid his legal responsibilities e.g. threatened the tenants or acted in a discriminatory way in relation to the tenants	

Severity of offence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature/extent of hazards present. • Vulnerability of tenants e.g. age, illness, disability, someone with language issues etc • Evidence of discrimination/action against the tenants • Effect on neighbouring premises • Number of persons and/or households affected e.g. single family or HMO • Level of risk to occupiers or third parties 				
---	--	--	--	--

Considerations				
-----------------------	--	--	--	--

Banding based on severity of offence considerations				
--	--	--	--	--

Extreme		Substantial		Moderate	
---------	--	-------------	--	----------	--

Culpability consideration The offender to be assessed against three levels of culpability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliberate: offender intended to cause harm or ignored legal responsibilities. ▪ Reckless: offender was reckless as to whether harm was caused or duties were not complied with. ▪ Negligent: failure to ensure awareness of legal responsibilities. 				
---	--	--	--	--

Considerations				
-----------------------	--	--	--	--

Banding based on culpability considerations				
--	--	--	--	--

Extreme		Substantial		Moderate	
---------	--	-------------	--	----------	--

Initial assessment of civil penalty	Severity of Offence			Moderate	
				Substantial	
				Extreme	
	Culpability			Moderate	

		Substantial	
		Extreme	
	Initial civil penalty assessment	£	

<p>Track record of landlord</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has committed similar offences before ▪ Experienced landlord who should know responsibilities ▪ Owns a number of properties (i.e. not a single property landlord) ▪ Period of time over which offence(s) committed ▪ High level of profit from the offence/sought profit in committing ▪ Offender is a letting agent ▪ Attempt to cover up evidence of offence <p>(Penalty to be increased by between 10% and 30% for aggravating factors)</p>	
Considerations	No considerations
Penalty increase	
Number of considerations	£
No considerations	£0
<p>Mitigating Factors</p> <p>Any mitigating factors and whether they are relevant to the offence e.g. ill health of landlord, obstructive behaviour of third parties etc</p> <p>Penalty to be decreased by between 10% and 30% for mitigating factors</p>	
Considerations	
Penalty decrease	
Number of considerations	£
No considerations	£0
Check	
<p>Check that the provisional civil penalty assessment meets the aims of the sentencing principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Punishment of offender ▪ Reduction of/stopping crime ▪ Deterrent for other potential offenders 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reform of offender ▪ Protection of public ▪ Reparation by offender to victim(s) ▪ Reparation by offender to community <p>Check that the provisional assessment is proportionate and will have an appropriate impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This step should take account of the offender's income and assets, and make final adjustments to the penalty calculation even where this results in a penalty point within another band. The general presumption should be that a civil penalty should not be revised downwards simply because an offender has (or claims to have) a low income. The Crown and Courts Act 2013
--

Considerations		
Civil penalty assessment before discounts		
Discounts:	Details	Total Amount of Discount (£)
(a) Works of compliance within the representation period? (discount of 20% to be applied)		
(b) Discount for becoming member of a recognized landlord association within the representation period? (discount of 10% to be applied)		
c) Total Discount		

Final assessment of civil penalty	£
--	----------

APPENDIX C

GUIDE TO APPLYING THE PENALTY MATRIX TO ELECTRICAL SAFETY REGULATIONS

- Failure to obtain current EICR: A similar penalty for Cat 1 offences would be imposed. Weight of harm & exposure would rate moderate to substantial.
- Failure to meet electrical safety standard, Report has code 1 observations: As Code 1 observations indicate that danger is present, weight of harm & exposure would rate substantial. Failure to meet electrical safety standard, Report has code 2 observations: As Code 2 observations indicate that the installation is potentially dangerous, weight of harm & exposure would rate moderate to substantial.
- Report not copied to tenants: Weight of harm & exposure would rate moderate.
- Report not copied to housing authority on request: Weight of harm would rate moderate.
- Failure to confirm execution of remedial work/further investigation to tenant or housing authority: Weight of harm would rate moderate, and if we were aware of Code 1 observations on the original EICR could be increased to substantial. Exposure to risk would be determined by the delay, category, and whether the works had been done & just not notified, or just not done at all.

Note: failure to undertake remedial work/further investigation within timescale considered as aggravating factor to original breach and would increase culpability score. Failure to comply with remedial notice considered as aggravating factor to original breach and would increase culpability score.

APPENDIX D

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FOR DETERMINING THE PENALTY CHARGE UNDER THE SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM REGULATIONS 2015 as amended.

Criteria for the imposition of a penalty charge

In deciding whether it would be appropriate to impose a penalty charge, we will take full account of the particular facts and circumstances of the regulation breach under consideration. Factors which we will take into consideration include, but are not limited to:

- The extent to which the circumstances giving rise to the contravention were within the control of the landlord.
- The presence or absence, of internal controls or procedures on the landlord's part which were intended to prevent the breach.
- The steps that the landlord has taken since being served with the remedial notice,
- Whether the landlord has been obstructed in his duty, or if tenant removal of alarms has occurred.
- Evidence provided that supports compliance with a Remedial Notice, (this may include a signed inventory at the start of a tenancy, or photographic evidence showing alarms installed, with a date & time stamp).

Determining the level of penalty

The Regulations set a maximum penalty charge of £5,000. A penalty charge will be set at a level which the Council considers is proportional to the breach and will consider all the other circumstances of the case, which may include (the list is not exclusive):

- The charge will include the costs incurred by the Council in taking remedial action following noncompliance, including officer time and the cost of contractor supervision.
- Whether or not the breach under consideration is a first-time breach.
- Where justified representations have been made to the Council to formally review the penalty charge imposed, under Regulation 10.

First-time breach £2,500. An early payment of the penalty charge, within 14 days from penalty charge notice service, will attract a discount of 50%. (To £1,250)
Subsequent breaches by the same landlord £5,000. No early payment discount will be available in this case.

We will exercise discretion, and may not make, or may reduce, any penalty charge where the Landlord is a housing charity providing housing services for vulnerable persons. We will enforce penalty charges, to include obtaining a Court Order for payment, where necessary.

APPENDIX E

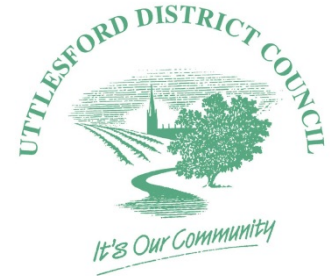
THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY (PRIVATE RENTED PROPERTY) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2015 AS AMENDED ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTY CHARGES

In all cases we will seek to apply the 'publication penalty' (entering details of the breach on the public Energy Performance Certificate [EPC] register), together with a financial penalty. The penalty applied will be the maximum available for the breach(es), that is:

- Where the landlord (L) has breached regulation 23 and, at the time the penalty notice is served has, or had, been in breach for less than three months, the penalty is a financial penalty of £2,000.
- Where L has breached regulation 23 and, at the time the penalty notice is served has, or had, been in breach for three months or more, the penalty is a financial penalty of £4,000.
- Where L has registered false or misleading information under regulation 36(2), the penalty is a financial penalty of £1,000.
- Where L has failed to comply with a compliance notice in breach of regulation 37(4)(a), the penalty is a financial penalty of £2,000.
- Where financial penalties are imposed for breaches of regulation 23 together with breaches of regulation 36(2) or regulation 37(4)(a) in relation to a property the aggregate financial penalty is capped at £5,000.

APPENDIX F

Equality Impact Assessment



Uttlesford District Council Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	<i>Environmental Health – Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy</i>
Lead officer:	<i>Marcus Watts, Environmental Health Manager (Protection) Public Services</i>
Approved by:	<i>Please insert the name, job title, service and directorate of your manager/Director as appropriate for the level of activity</i>
Date completed:	<i>01/03/2024</i>
Scheduled date for review:	<i>NA</i>

Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?	Yes
---	-----

Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the activity a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

When the EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address - EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact your Divisional Equality Lead. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form. **When EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk**

About your activity

1	Title of activity	<i>Private Sector Housing Enforcement</i>		
2	Type of activity	<i>Policy</i>		
3	Scope of activity	The private rented sector should be well managed and that everyone has the right to live in decent, safe accommodation. This policy details how the Council will regulate standards in private rented housing.		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	Yes	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	No		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes		
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	.		

Completed by:	<i>Marcus Watts, Environmental Health Manager (Protection), Public Services</i>
Date:	<i>01/03/2024</i>

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2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:

This Policy sets out the way in which the Council intends to secure effective compliance with the relevant Private Sector Housing legislation whilst minimising the burden to the Council, individuals, organisations and business, including:

- Housing conditions in the Private Rented Sector and Private Ownership
- Landlord’s obligations in the Private Rented Sector
- Houses in Multiple Occupation

**Expand box as required*

Who will be affected by the activity?

This Policy is designed to:

- Support Officers of the Council in appropriately applying the relevant enforcement legislation
- Inform Owner Occupiers, Private Sector Landlords and Registered Providers (RPs) as to the Council’s approach to housing enforcement.
- Inform landlords of the consequences of non compliance

The intended outcome is to ensure there is a provision of good quality, healthy housing and to prioritise action to those homes which present the greatest risks to Health and Safety.

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

✓

Overall impact:

Neutral		The improvement of Housing Standards in the Private Sector in line with the Enforcement Policy will impact positively on all age groups, in particular the elderly and the families with young children who may be more vulnerable to particular hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.
Negative		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Evidence:		
Evidence to support action in protecting vulnerable groups is contained within the Housing Health and Rating Safety System		
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hhsrs-operating-guidance-housing-act-2004-guidance-about-inspections-and-assessment-of-hazards-given-under-section-9		
<p>The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool to identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. The assessment of hazards is a two-stage process, addressing first the likelihood of an occurrence and then the range of probable harm outcomes taking into consideration the most vulnerable risk group. The impact is assessed rather the actual or potential occupier(s). This allows HHSRS can be used on an empty dwelling and still be relevant. These factors are combined using a standard method to give a score in respect of each hazard. This score indicates the enforcement action</p>		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used: Housing Health and Rating Safety System		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: Positive impact for residents who may be vulnerable as a result of mental illness or physical disability through the improvement of Housing Standards in line with the enforcement policy where required. See above - scored on vulnerable group rather than actual or potential occupiers.
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence: Housing impacts health: new WHO guidelines on housing and health		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Sources used:<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9414/CBP-9414.pdf>**Expand box as required***Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender:** Consider both men and women*Please tick (✓)
the relevant box:***Positive****Neutral****Negative****Overall impact:**

The predicted impact of the policy on sex/gender is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination

Expand box as required*Evidence:****Expand box as required***Sources used:****Expand box as required***Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race:** Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities*Please tick (✓)
the relevant box:***Positive****Neutral****Negative****Overall impact:**

Potential barrier for residents or landlords whose first language is not English. Written and verbal communication may need to be translated or interpreted, as an equalities consideration, in order to mitigate any adverse impact.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:	<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Sources used:	<i>*Expand box as required</i>

Protected Characteristic - Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: Neutral impact. However, it is acknowledged that some faiths or religions require worship on particular days and therefore may not be able to attend meetings or appointments. Consideration will be given to this and flexibility will be applied, if required, in order to mitigate any adverse impact.
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>

Evidence: NA	<i>*Expand box as required</i>
------------------------	--------------------------------

Sources used: NA	<i>*Expand box as required</i>
--------------------------------	--------------------------------

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
--	------------------------

Positive		The predicted impact of the policy on sexual orientation is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Evidence:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: The predicted impact of the policy on gender reassignment is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Evidence:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact:

The predicted impact of the policy on marriage/ civil partnership is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact:

The predicted impact of the policy on pregnancy, maternity and paternity is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: The predicted impact of the policy on socio-economic status is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>

Evidence:

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person’s physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity? Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 to help you answer this question.




<i>Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:</i>	Overall impact:
---	------------------------

Positive	✓	The improvement of Housing Standards in will impact positively on the occupiers health and wellbeing
Neutral		
Negative		<p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p> <p>Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box</p> <p style="text-align: right;"> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> </p>
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>There is considerable supporting evidence to show that poor housing has a negative impact on health and wellbeing</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>		
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>HHSRS Assessment</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>		

3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u>		Proceed with implementation of your activity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs <u>to be addressed</u>		COMPLETE SECTION 4: Complete action plan and finalise the EqHIA
	3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level		Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly . Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.

4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer

Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

5. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:

Scheduled date of review: 1/3/28

Lead Officer conducting the review: Environmental Health Manager

**Expand box as required*

Committee:	Cabinet	Date:	
Title:	Empty Homes Policy		Thursday, 18 April 2024
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Arthur Coote, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities		
Report Author:	Marcus Watts, Environmental Health Manager - Protection mwatts@uttlesford.gov.uk Tel: 01799 510595	Key decision:	No

Summary

1. Making best use of existing homes is a key action in the Council's Housing Strategy 2021 -2026. The Council has a strong commitment to bringing long-term empty homes back into use. Each empty home denies a household somewhere to live and returning empty homes to use has social, environmental, and financial benefits.
2. The proposed Empty Homes Policy reflects the local and national perspective and outlines all available options to bring empty homes back into use.
3. The Council recognises that there are different reasons why properties remain empty and likewise there needs to be a range of options available to owners of empty homes to bring them back into use. The Council will initially work informally with owners, however formal enforcement options are available when this approach fails.

Recommendations

- I. That Cabinet approves the attached Empty Homes Policy document.

Financial Implications

4. There remains a financial incentive for returning empty homes to use, as these continue to be rewarded via the New Homes Bonus grant system.
5. Funding to support empty homes work is supported by external funding managed by a consortium of local authorities.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

- **Corporate plan 2021 -2025**
- **Housing Strategy 2021 – 26**
- [Local government finance policy statement 2023-24 to 2024-25 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Impact

7.

Communication/Consultation	This is an internal policy and therefore has not been subject to consultation
Community Safety	There are community safety benefits of returning empty properties back into use
Equalities	Returning long-term empty homes to use will impact on a small number of owners. Owners of empty homes come from across all strands and do not make up a specific group. This policy will not disadvantage any specific group.
Health and Safety	There are no Health & Safety considerations, other than those encountered by inspecting officers
Human Rights/Legal Implications	There are human right and legal implications that need to be considered. Enforcement decisions will be made on a case by case basis taking into account representations made by the property owner
Sustainability	Bringing back into use empty properties has a positive sustainable impact when compared to new builds.
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	This is managed within existing resources. However, it is a non-statutory function so will be prioritised against statutory duties

Situation

8. Making best use of existing homes is a key objective in the Council's Housing Strategy. The Council has a strong commitment to bringing long-term empty homes back into use. There is a national shortage of residential accommodation available as housing demand outstrips housing supply. There is a shortage of accommodation available to buy or occupy at a reasonable rent.
9. Each empty home denies a household somewhere to live and returning an empty home to use has social, environmental and financial benefits.
10. In recent years the council's approach to empty homes has come under close scrutiny and a policy on this non statutory service is overdue. The proposed policy seeks to provide clarity on the councils formal and informal approach to successfully bring empty homes back into use. It is important to engage positively with owners of empty homes and neighbours who are also affected by them to raise general awareness of the Councils commitment.
11. Homes lying empty not only deny individuals and families somewhere to live they can also impact on the environment and cause neighbourhood problems including attracting antisocial behaviour and other nuisances.
12. Returning empty homes to use has a significant benefit for owners, neighbours and the local economy. Removing rundown eyesore properties can positively improve the neighbourhood and reverse a feeling of neglect.
13. Furthermore, there are financial benefits to the authority. The New Homes Bonus (NHB) includes a financial incentive to the Council for returning empty homes to use. Although the future of the NHB remains uncertain, the government has committed to continuing with it for 24/25.
14. The Council recognises that there many are different reasons why properties are left vacant and will explore these issues as part of the process to return empty homes into use. As a consequence, the Council has developed a number of options available to owners of empty homes to bring them back into use. Although there is no dedicated resource for this work, officers within the Environmental Health (Protection) Service will initially work informally with owners to re-use homes. However formal enforcement options are available when the informal approach fails.
15. As the reasons why a property remains empty can be complicated and difficult to resolve, a level of officer discretion will need to apply when judging action to be taken to bring a property back into use.
16. In all cases an informal route will be pursued in the first instance. This includes provision of advice and assistance to owners as well as financial assistance can also be offered in the form of loans to refurbish empty homes to bring them up to a habitable standard.
17. There is no current capital budget to offer financial assistance to owners in the form of loans to refurbish empty homes and bring them back into use. However, some financial assistance is offered through the PLACE scheme of

loans. This scheme is made up from a consortium of local authorities who historically won government funding for empty homes renovation. This funding can be used to support enforcement, but in the main is used to provide interest free loans of up to £25,000 to renovate a dwelling to the decent homes standard in order for it to be let or sold.

18. The availability of loans is dependent on UDC reserves within the PLACE budget. Currently the availability of loans has been suspended due to the costs incurred from the Compulsory Purchase of a Property in 2021. However, we expect these reserves to be part replenished on the sale of this property allowing UDC to once again offer these loans.

19. By offering a selection of informal options to the owners of empty homes the Council hopes to avoid using compulsorily purchase powers. The Council recognises that this power must be used only as a last resort, in exceptional circumstances where funding has been identified and when all other options have been exhausted.

20. Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO's) are a power that is available under the Housing Act 2004. This is an option that is less likely to be used as homes have to have been empty for at least two years before the order can be issued. Furthermore, and more importantly, the administration of these orders is very time consuming with on-going resource obligations requiring the council to act as management agents. Only a small number of these orders have been made nationally, and for the reasons given above it the service is unlikely to pursue this enforcement option.

21. Where Empty homes are in such a condition that they are detrimental to the local community the council can use its powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to clear the land. Other action can be taken to deal with pest infestations and unsecured dwellings.

22. Failure to comply with notices when pursuing enforcement action can result in works in default being undertaken by the Council, which in turn can lead to enforced sale of the home to repay the charge. This is an option that is available to the Council and has been used successfully to bring empty homes into use in other parts of the Country.

Risk Analysis

23.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
2. There are risks of financial and reputational damage should the council chose	2. The service is able to meet its obligations with existing resources.	1. There is little to no impact from the	None required

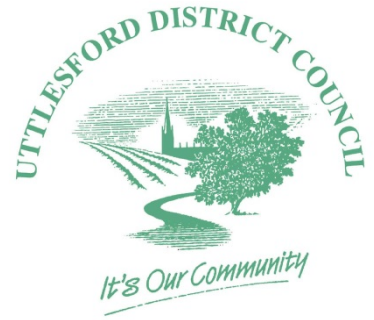
not tackle empty homes.	expertise be absent	approval of this policy	
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1 = Little or no risk or impact

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

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

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



Uttlesford District Council
Public Services

Private Sector Housing
Empty Homes Policy

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Document History

Date	Amendments Made	By Whom	Approval
<i>Version Number</i>		V1	
<i>Reviewed By</i>			
<i>Approval Body</i>		Cabinet	
<i>Date Adopted</i>		18 April 2024	
<i>Next Review Date</i>		April 2028	

Empty Homes Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Uttlesford Council will ...

- Follow this policy for the purposes of returning empty homes back into use. In doing so, it will have regards to the process outlined within the policy, including decisions to prioritise high impact assessed properties for enforcement action.

AIMS OF POLICY

- Reduce the amount of long-term (those empty for six months or more) empty homes in the district.
- Provide owners with advice and assistance to prevent properties becoming empty for a prolonged period.
- Outline the legislative tools available to bring long term empty properties back into use.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to outline the council's approach to bringing back into occupation private residential homes in the district which have become empty.
- 1.2 In defining its approach to dealing with empty homes in Uttlesford, the council seeks to:
 - a) Bring as many privately-owned empty homes as possible back into full and continuous residential occupation
 - b) Minimise the length of time a privately owned home stands empty
 - c) Reduce blight and nuisance caused by empty privately owned homes
 - d) Help meet local housing need in Uttlesford District Council

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Government has set out its commitment to bringing empty homes back into use in its 2011 "Housing Strategy for England, Laying the Foundations". Key actions contained within this strategy included:
 - a) awarding the New Homes Bonus (NHB) to empty homes brought back into use
 - b) investing £100 million funding to bring problematic empty homes back into use and
 - c) announcing £50 million of further funding to tackle some of the worst concentrations of empty homes.
 - d) empowering local authorities to implement a levy or 'empty homes premium' on the Council Tax payable for those properties which have been registered as being empty for 2-years or more.
 - e) Changes to Empty Dwelling Management Orders to target their use on the very worst long-term empty homes which have become dangerous or are causing a nuisance to neighbours and the wider community.
- 2.2 In response to further pressure, in 2018 the government introduced The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act, allowing councils to charge double the rate of Council Tax on homes left empty for two years or more.
- 2.3 Recently there have been calls for a new Nationally Funded Empty Homes Programme, with funding devolved to local councils so that can choose the right mix of 'stick and carrot' measures to deal with the problem locally. Scotland and Wales both have such national programmes in place.
- 2.4 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) publishes data on homes classed as empty for Council Tax purposes. In October 2022, there were 676,304 recorded empty homes in England. This is a 3.6% increase on the previous year's total. 248,149 were classed as 'long-term vacant' properties (vacant for more than six months with some exceptions).

3. LOCAL CONTEXT

- 3.2 The Councils Housing Strategy 2021 -2026 sets out the vision for delivering housing, particular for affordable housing in the district. It also acknowledges the work of the councils Environmental Health (Protection) service in improving private sector housing conditions and tackling empty homes.
- 3.3 The strategy confirms that the council will continue to intervene to ensure that empty properties in private ownership are returned to occupation. This commitment links in with the councils Corporate Plan priorities. The Corporate Plan 2021-2025 not only recognises the importance of delivering more affordable homes for the district but the need for the Council's actions and influence to contribute to the economic growth of the district and to protect the character of Uttlesford. Under the corporate plans key action to be an 'Active place-maker for our towns and villages, it commits to reducing the number of empty homes.
- 3.4 Statistics from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities show that UDC performs well in the number of empty homes within the district.

District	2021	2022	2023
Uttlesford	215	253	376
Castle Point	326	320	383
Maldon	238	248	303
Brentwood	355	483	610
Rochford	370	293	349
Harlow	432	424	292
Chelmsford	479	501	555
Basildon	486	596	642
Epping Forest	472	558	593
Braintree	614	785	846
Southend-on-Sea	643	658	633
Tendring	789	707	866

Table 1. Number of dwellings that are classed as empty in years 2021, 2022 and 2023 and have been for more than 6 months.

KEY ELEMENTS OF POLICY

4. Background

- 4.1 The following paragraphs set out the definition of empty privately owned home, reasons why these homes become empty and unused for long periods of time and the impact they have at a local level. It also covers the benefits of bringing privately owned empty homes back into use for owners, neighbours and neighbourhoods and the Council. It should be noted that the actions by the council to bring empty homes back in to use, applies to the private sector and does not apply to any property owned or managed by the Council Housing Services or any Registered Social Landlord.

4.2 Empty Homes Definition

4.2.1 There is no absolute legal or case law definition for how long a home in the private sector needs to be empty before a local authority can take action to bring it back into use. Uttlesford Council will follow Government guidance and will concentrate on properties which have been empty for 6 months or more.

4.3 Why homes become empty and may stay empty

4.3.1 Residential homes become empty for a number of reasons. In most cases, they become empty for relatively short periods of time because there are:

- changes of ownership following the sale of a home
- gaps in time between lettings of a home to different tenants

4.3.2 These changes are referred to as “transactional changes” and are a normal part of the housing market.

4.3.2 The range of reasons why homes become and stay empty over a long period of time can include where the owner:

- Is trying to sell the home but is unable to do so.
- Has died and their beneficiaries or executors are resolving their estate through probate.
- Is living or working abroad.
- Is using the property as an investment and does not want it occupied. This is commonly referred to as “buy to leave empty”.
- Is wary of selling as they may be liable to Capital Gains Tax.
- Cannot afford to carry out repairs before enabling the home to become habitable available for re-occupation or sale.
- Does not know how to let the empty home or perceives problems with this option.
- Has totally abandoned the home.
- Has inherited the property and does not know or hasn't decided what to do with it.
- Has gone into long term residential care.
- Has an emotional attachment to the home and finds it difficult to sell or rent.
- Wants to rent or sell it but the home may be inconveniently located and pose particular problems to bring it back into use. For example, the home can only be reached through ground floor commercial premises or via a dangerous rear access.

4.4 The impact of empty homes

4.4.1 Some empty homes will show no signs of being unoccupied whilst others will be severely dilapidated. The latter can cause distress to neighbours and blight a neighbourhood. They can pose a number of problems including:

- Attracting vermin
- Being squatted in or being vulnerable to squatting
- Being subject to or vulnerable to vandalism, graffiti, and arson
- Accumulating dumped litter and rubbish, overgrown gardens and attracting fly tipping
- Providing a focal point for anti-social behaviour

4.4.2 The Council will prioritise dealing with empty homes deemed to be detrimental to the neighbourhood and those, which according to its knowledge, have been empty the longest.

4.5 Benefits of bringing empty homes back into occupation

4.5.1 The benefits for owners of bringing back into use empty homes they own include:

- Realising a stable income from letting an empty home
- Release from the obligations of maintenance and repairs if the home is sold
- Release from the increased insurance and Council Tax premiums which are attached to empty homes
- Increasing financial security from the sale of their empty home
- Satisfaction with helping to improve the local neighbourhood and helping local households who need the empty home

4.5.2 The benefits of bringing empty homes back into use for neighbours and neighbourhoods include:

- Reducing blight for surrounding homes.
- Reducing the potential for anti-social behaviour through squatting and criminal damage of empty homes.
- Reduces the potential loss of market value of surrounding homes.
- Increases the desirability of a neighbourhood.
- Increases a community spirit and social cohesion.

4.5.3 The Council's proactive approach in tackling empty homes also makes an important contribution towards delivering its Housing Strategy. In particular, it supports its aims of:

- Increasing housing supply to meet the needs of local people.
- Improving the quality of homes and neighbourhoods.

- Discourages anti-social behaviour related to empty homes.
- Reduces complaints to the Council about empty homes.
- Can help to create stronger communities.

5. Uttlesford's approach to empty homes

5.1 In taking action to bring empty homes back into use, the council adheres to the following key principles:

- To be compliant legally and with government guidance and other accepted protocols.
- To act in accordance with the principles of the Councils Corporate Enforcement Policy
- To be fair and consistent
- To be transparent, easy to understand and straightforward
- To manage expectations of resource

5.2 In delivering on the empty homes agenda, the service will pursue three main strands of activity:

- Source information on empty homes from Council tax data, and contact home owners
- Provide advice, support and where necessary, escalated warnings.
- Formal enforcement action to be considered a last resort when all voluntary processes have been exhausted (subject to in house resource capabilities)

5.3 The following section provides information on these activities in more detail.

6. Finding empty homes

6.1 This Council will always seek new and innovative ways of locating empty properties on rare occasions this can include the use of a tracing agent. New methods will be assessed and may be adopted if they are found to improve the effectiveness of the current procedure.

6.2 In targeting resources for tackling empty homes effectively, the possible sources of information for finding empty homes and establishing ownership include the following:

- Council Tax records
- Other Council records
- Land Registry
- Utility companies

- Contacting neighbours
- Contacting other external partners
- Use of a tracing agency
- Investigating who has an interest in an empty home

6.3 In fulfilling its function the service will maintain a “database” (spreadsheet and E files) of empty homes in the district. The “database” is primarily sourced from Council Tax data.

6.4 Some properties, such as second homes are excluded from targeted action. Second homes are by nature a second, furnished (in relation to the size of the property) home, but not the liable party(s) designated “main residence”. This poses a problem of classification/inclusion. Frequency of occupation, being used as a variable to classify the property as an empty dwelling is unreliable and a variable in nature. A second home could be utilised (occupied) several times a year, whilst another may not be visited for some years, whilst still being a legitimate second home. It is not possible to apply a distinction that would be universally applicable, and it would therefore unfairly penalise some residents.

6.5 Other properties may be excluded from action, such as commercial buildings not suitable for conversion into habitable dwellings.

7. Empty Homes and Council Tax

7.1 Not all empty homes qualify for an exemption from paying Council Tax. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 and associated regulations sets out the mechanism for levying council tax on domestic properties. Section 11A of the regulations give Councils some discretion in setting the level of council tax charged in respect of unoccupied properties and second homes.

7.2 The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allows Councils to levy a higher amount of Council Tax for long-term empty dwellings that are unoccupied and unfurnished. This is known as an empty property premium.

7.3 With effect from the 1st April 2020 the Council has resolved to charge Council Tax for empty (unoccupied and unfurnished properties) and second homes as follows;

Properties empty (unoccupied and unfurnished) for up to 6 months	50% Discount
Properties empty (unoccupied and unfurnished) for 6 months and up to 2 years	0% Discount (full charge)

Properties empty requiring structural or major repair work (unoccupied and unfurnished) for up to 12 months	50% Discount
Properties empty requiring structural and major repair work (unoccupied and unfurnished) for over 1 year and up to 2 years	0% Discount (full charge)
Furnished properties and second homes	0% Discount (full charge) (This does not apply to dwellings regarded as Job-Related where the 50% discount will still apply.)
Properties empty (unoccupied and unfurnished) for 2 years or more	200% charge (includes 100% empty property premium)

- 7.4 From 1st April 2025 the Council is able to apply a 100% (200% charge) premium will be introduced on second homes in the district. A decision on whether or not to apply this premium will be put to full Council as part of the budget setting process in 2025/26.
- 7.5 Any periods of occupation of six weeks or less will be disregarded when considering how long a property has been empty.
- 7.6 When considering the above, there are a number of exemptions the need to be considered. No empty property premium can be applied to properties under the following circumstances;
- Properties which would be the sole or main residence of an individual who is residing in armed forces accommodation that is job-related.
 - Properties which form part of a single property including at least one other dwelling and is being used by a resident of the other dwelling as their sole or main residence.
- 7.7 Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 also gives the Council the discretionary power to reduce liability for council tax in relation to particular cases.

8. Procedure for identifying empty homes.

- 8.1 Each quarter, the Environmental Health (Protection) service is to source details of properties homes on the Council Tax Register known to be empty, but which are not attracting an exemption from paying Council Tax. These are targeted for further investigation.
- 8.2 It should be noted that Section 85 of the Local Government Act 2003 inserted a new clause (18A) into Schedule 2 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 which specifically allows local authorities to disclose personal Council Tax data for use in

undertaking work around bringing empty homes back into use. This is limited to an individual's name or an address or telephone number for communicating with them and provides the first step in identifying who the Team can begin working with about a long-term empty home.

- 8.2 Internal Council teams such as Planning and Building Control may come into contact with empty properties and their owners. Close ties are established with these departments to allow for information to be shared.
- 8.3 Although there is no mechanism for empty properties to be identified directly via data from the Land Registry, their records do present an important starting point in enabling an empty property owner to be identified in respect of registered land. Over 80% of land in England & Wales is registered but when dealing with unregistered land, tracing the owner can be a lot harder and additional checks are required.
- 8.4 Neighbours living next door or within the vicinity of an empty property are the people most likely to suffer from the negative impact which are often associated with such properties. They are also the most likely people to hold information about the owner's whereabouts and details which may enable the Environmental Health service to contact a missing owner.
- 8.5 Where identifying owners is proving to be difficult contact will also be made with utility services (gas, electricity, water) subject to following data protection protocols.
- 8.6 The various types of primary and secondary data outlined above, are in most cases enough to enable an empty property owner to be traced and contacted. However, where all attempts to find an owner have failed then the use of a tracing agency will be considered. It is usual practice that a tracing agency will not charge the Council for its services and will welcome the opportunity to be able to negotiate directly with an owner if they are able to locate them.

9. Investigating Interests

- 9.1 There are Legal powers available to the Council which can be utilised to obtain the details of owners or those who may have an interest in a particular property. Such legislation includes:
 - Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
 - Section 235 of the Housing Act 2004

10. Advice and support

- 10.1 We will always try and establish the particular circumstances which have led to a property becoming empty. This will enable appropriate solutions to be offered to owners. The following list of measures are to be offered to assist owners bring empty homes they own back into use:

10.2 PLACE Scheme loans

10.2.1 UDC is part of a consortium of authorities across Hertfordshire & Essex that has developed a scheme that offers funding and support to owners to bring properties back into use. There are two types of loan assistance available.

1. Interest free (as long as terms and condition are adhered to) loans up to £25,000 (per unit of accommodation). The owner can choose their own contractor and to allow the property to be;
 - a) sold (repayable up to two years)
 - b) or let (repayable up to five years) upon completion of the works.

10.2.2 Where empty properties are provided with assistance, it is expected that the property will conform to the Decent Homes Standard before it is re-occupied. The Decent Homes Assessment Criteria stipulates that a dwelling should be free from unnecessary and avoidable hazards, in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonably modern facilities and services and provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

10.3 VAT reduction

10.3.1 A further mechanism to support a voluntary pathway is a “VAT reduction”. If a property is two years or more empty, the team can send the liable party a letter, reducing VAT to 5% for building contractor(s) working on the property. This can aid/empower liable parties financially in addressing empty properties.

10.4 Sale of the property

10.4.1 Should the above measures not be deemed sufficient and where owners have not previously considered selling, advice will be offered about the various options available. In certain cases, e.g., where a property is in a derelict condition, it may be beneficial to consider sale by auction. Owners will be advised to seek independent financial advice where it is likely they may be subject to a Capital Gains Tax liability.

10.5 Letting Properties Privately

10.5.1 There is a significant demand for housing and letting an empty property can provide owners with an income stream. Officers are able to offer advice and support to owners who are considering letting their empty properties on what is involved. However, it should clearly be understood that becoming a landlord is a business opportunity and must be considered in this context. If an empty property owner has

no business experience and limited time, then serious consideration should be made as to whether becoming a landlord is a suitable option.

11 Engagement & Enforcement

- 11.1 A voluntary process is initially followed to return empty property to an occupied status. Information is presented to the Environmental Health service from Council Tax on a quarterly basis. Following filtering to remove exempt property, initial letters are sent to the owners of potentially empty homes informing them of the importance of returning their property to occupation and the responsibilities of the Council. The letter informs the owner of the PLACE scheme offers and eligibility of the VAT reduction and requests that they get in touch and/or complete an online survey.
- 11.2 If no reply is received within a reasonable timeframe, a second letter is sent reiterating the PLACE scheme offers. The letter requests that the owner completes the online form and warns the owner that failure to make contact will result in the property escalating to stage 3 and it will be prioritised for further assessment.
- 11.3 If no reply is received and after checking with Council Tax that the property has not been reoccupied, a third 'Do not ignore letter' is sent. This letter warns the owner to contact complete the online form or contact the Council. It also advises that failure to respond will lead to an assessment of the property that could lead to formal action.
- 11.4 In order to deal effectively with the significant number of properties on the empty homes list it is necessary to prioritise enforcement work. This is done by risk assessing, or 'categorising' each property against a set of criteria for example the length of time empty, whether or not it is causing nuisance. The score is then banded into three categories, namely, low, medium and high-level impact.
- 11.5 Due to the limited resources available to the Council, a targeted approach will be taken to those properties rated highest on the impact assessment. Properties with a low impact rating shall not be prioritised for enforcement.
- 11.6 In addition to the above pressure applied properties which have been unoccupied for over two years are required to pay 200% of the normal Council Tax (Empty Homes Premium).
- 11.7 It is recognised that sustained pressure, additional council tax charges and later threats of enforcement action often have the desired effect in returning properties to occupation.

12. Formal Enforcement Measures

- 12.1 Enforcement is an important part of the empty property procedure and will only be used for properties where voluntary approaches have been exhausted. The aim of

enforcement action will always be to ensure that the outcome is for an empty property to be re-occupied and/or renovated as quickly as possible.

12.2 Powers to enter and inspect

12.2.1 The Environmental Health Team will always try to negotiate with an owner for access to a property. In instances where negotiation has not been successful legal powers can be used to gain entry. If necessary, the Council can obtain a warrant from the courts to enter.

12.3 Powers to take immediate action

12.3.1 Should there be immediate concerns that pose a risk to the public and/or cause a nuisance, general enforcement powers are available to officers to board up a property or treat a vermin infestation.

12.3.2 In addition the Environmental Health uses the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) tool which assesses the potential risks and hazards to human health and safety which might be found in homes occupied or not. Serious hazards and risks are called Category 1 hazards and less serious ones are called Category 2 hazards. Category 1 and 2 hazards cannot be defined as such as they are based upon an assessment of the risks posed by a combination of factors. The factors include what kind of hazards are observed, how severe they are and what effect they are having or could have on the health and safety of current or future occupants or visitors to the property being examined. The available options for dealing with identified hazards include:

- Serving an improvement notice
- Serving a suspended improvement notice
- Making a prohibition order
- Taking emergency remedial action
- Making an emergency prohibition
- Serving a hazard awareness Notice

12.3.3 Following the inspection of an empty property each case will be individually assessed to ensure the most appropriate course of action is taken.

12.3.4 Should officers reach an impasse and have exhausted all voluntary means, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Guidance on Compulsory purchase process and The Crichton Down Rules states that Local Authorities, before embarking on compulsory purchase and throughout the preparation and procedural stages should seek to acquire a property by negotiation wherever practicable. It is the intention of this Council to avoid unnecessary costs and to achieve value for money. Therefore, it will always try to acquire a property by agreement.

12.3.5 Should all measures fail to address the empty property status, more robust enforcement measures will be considered; namely

- Obtaining a Compulsory Purchase Order
- Enforcing the sale of the property
- Obtaining an Empty Dwelling Management Order

13. Compulsory Purchase Order (CPOs)

13.1 Power to compulsory purchase a property exists under two pieces of legislation contained in both housing and planning law. Under housing law, CPOs are carried out pursuant to section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended). This power can only be used where a qualitative and/or quantitative housing gain is demonstrated.

13.2 Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), grants the Council with power (subject to Secretary of State Authority) to compulsory purchase any land (which includes property) for the purpose of improving the social environmental or economic well-being of their area. CPOs will be used as an action of last resort after all other options have been exhausted. The main drawback with carrying out a CPO is that the actual procedure can take a long time, in fact the Governments own guidance states that CPO procedure may take up to two years to complete.

13.3 It has been found that the threat of a CPO can act as an effective means to encourage owners of empty properties to take action to bring the property back into residential use.

13.4 The Council will consider taking CPO action on a property when:-

- All reasonable efforts to encourage an owner to voluntarily bring their property back into use have failed; and/or
- Following extensive enquiries, it has not been possible to identify the owner of the property; and/or
- The property has been impact rated as high
- Purchasing a property by voluntary agreement is not a viable option.

13.5 The final decision to carry out a CPO on an empty property is taken by the Cabinet Committee, who consider and authorise making and proceeding with a CPO together with the acquisition and onward disposal where they are satisfied there is a compelling case in the public interest to make the order, as justified by the supporting statement of reasons and assessed on a case by case basis.

13.6 The Environmental Health service has a well-established procedure for processing CPOs on privately owned empty properties. This has proved to be an effective enforcement tool. The authority has completed on three CPO's since 2011 and uses funding from the PLACE scheme consortium for this purpose. However, the process is

resource intensive and can be complex. As part of the decision making process a review of in house resource will be made, both within the Environmental Health and Legal Services. The use of specialist external legal practices to undertake this work on the Councils behalf will be considered and may be chosen as a more effective and efficient way of proceeding.

- 13.7 Once a CPO has been made and sealed by the Council, notice is published, served and site notices affixed, with time allowed for objection, in accordance with statutory requirements. Thereafter, it is sent for confirmation to the Secretary of State. If a valid objection is received, the objection may be dealt with by written representations or a Public Local Inquiry (PLI). The financial implications of this eventuality will be taken into consideration when the decision to make the CPO is undertaken.
- 13.8 If the Order is unopposed or where no valid objections are received and the Secretary of State is satisfied that the proper procedures have been observed, the CPO will be confirmed. (This is also the case where the Inspector's report from an Inquiry recommends confirmation). Following confirmation, notice is published, served and site notices affixed, with time allowed for challenge. Provided there is no challenge, the Council can make arrangements to vest the legal title to the property by serving notice of intent to proceed and then making a general vesting declaration (GVD).
- 13.9 Officers will continue to seek dialogue with an owner throughout the CPO process. Where an owner agrees, it is the policy of the council to enter into a 'cross-undertaking' with the owner. This is a legally binding agreement by which the Council undertakes not to implement a confirmed Order while the owner undertakes to complete any necessary repairs to meet the Decent Homes Standard and also arranges to bring the property back to full continuous residential occupation within a mutually agreed period of time. If the property is sold, then the terms of the cross undertaking will be re-negotiated with the new owner. If the new owner does not carry out these actions or delays in carrying them out, the Council can then seek to implement the Order under the terms of the agreement.
- 13.10 Owners are entitled to compensation on a property once the property has vested in the Council. This will be based on the market value of the house minus any outstanding charges which are registered on the property. Owners are also entitled to receive reasonable costs for any surveyors and legal fees.
- 13.11 It is the policy of this Council to only pay one set of legal and/or surveyor fees per property. This will be applied even if there are multiple or joint owners of the property. The Council will only pay reasonable fees which have been agreed prior to the owner submitting their claim and parties are recommended to liaise with the Environmental Health (Protection) service to discuss this.
- 13.12 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced an entitlement for former owners to claim basic loss payments. The amount is 7.5% of the value of the person's interest in the land, subject to a maximum of £75,000. There are a number of exemptions to having to make this payment, such as where a statutory Notice or Order has been served on the property and not been complied with by the time the CPO is confirmed.

- 13.13 Once the Council takes possession of a compulsory purchased property it will endeavour to dispose of it as quickly as possible. This is to keep any financial and other risks to the Council to a minimum. The primary option available to the Council would be to place the property for sale on the open market to achieve best price. Before disposal, a valuation of the property is obtained. If going to auction a reserve price will be placed on the property.
- 13.14 The Council has responsibility for the property for the period of time between taking possession and its disposal. Each property will be assessed for the potential risks it may pose during this period.

14. Enforced Sale Procedure

- 14.1 The Law of Property Act 1925 enables a local authority to enforce the sale of a property. There are two situations where these powers can be used: -
- Where there is a registered charge on the property
 - Where Council tax is owed on the property
- 14.2 The Law of Property Act 1925 – section 103 allows the Council to bring about the sale of a privately owned house which has a local land charge registered on it because the owner owes money to the Council e.g., Council Tax. This debt is usually as a result of the owner's failure to comply with a statutory notice for example where the Council has then been forced to carry out works.
- 14.3 All costs incurred by the Council can be recovered from the proceeds of a sale. Any other charges on the property are then paid before the balance is paid to the owner. This method has the advantage that not only is a debt recovered but the property is also usually returned into occupation. This procedure can be used to achieve a similar result as a Compulsory Purchase Order.
- 14.4 An enforced sale can also be carried out for outstanding Council Tax debt where the Council may apply to the courts to obtain a charging order. This has the effect of registering the debt onto the property, similar to a land debt above. The process of sale follows the same procedure.
- 14.5 The Council may consider pursuing an enforced sale in parallel with or instead of a CPO. The approach used is dependent upon what is considered to be the best course of action.

15. Empty dwelling management orders

- 15.1 This action tends to be reserved for the most problematic empty properties. EDMOs are a discretionary local authority power, introduced under section 132 of the Housing Act 2004. An EDMO gives the power to a Council to carry out any necessary repairs and then facilitate the management of the property as rental accommodation.

15.2 The Council can only take such action where the following conditions apply in that the property:

- has been empty for over two years
- has been shown to be a focal point for anti-social behaviour

15.3 The objective of an EDMO is to provide more rented accommodation. However, the major disadvantage to the Council is that it takes all the financial risk for the period of the order and then hands the property back to the owner. Therefore, to prevent a possible financial risk to the Council, EDMOs will not be considered on properties that need substantive repairs carried out before they can be occupied. Furthermore, the process takes a long time to complete and is complex in nature to follow. There have been few incidents of LAs taking this approach due to the complex procedure and ability to finance the repairs and manage the property. Therefore, the Council will only use this power under exceptional circumstances.

16. Performance Monitoring

16.1 Annual reporting on the state of Empty Homes will be taken to the Housing Board.

16.2 Due to the transient nature of properties being coming on and off the empty homes property list, the percentage of eligible empty homes identified by council tax and contacted by officers shall be monitored

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role:	Responsibilities:
Environmental Health Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oversight and monitoring of policy
Environmental Health Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead & overview of enforcement action
Enforcement/ Environmental Protection Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial enforcement contact & investigations
Grants Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead officer for collecting information on quarterly CT reports and issuing PLACE 1,2 & 3 letters.
Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administrator assistance

KEY CONTACT

- Lead Officer: Marcus Watts
- Service Area/Directorate: Public Services
- Lead Member: Arthur Coote

LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

Corporate Priorities	Yes/No
Putting residents first	Yes
Active place-maker for our towns and villages	Yes
Progressive custodian of our rural environment	No
Champion for our district	No

POLICY MONITORING

This policy shall be reviewed in light of new legislative context, additional funding and good practice guidance.

The policy shall be reviewed every four years or sooner, should significant changes come to light before the policy review date.

Minor changes will be reported to CMT. Significant changes shall be reported to Cabinet

COMPLAINT, CHANGE & MODIFICATION

Complaint

Informal or formal complaints in relation to the policy; and application of policy should be referred to the Council' corporate complaints policy found here: [Compliments, suggestions and complaints policy - Uttlesford District Council](#)

Modification

Consequential Technical changes shall be proposed by the Environmental Health Manager (Protection) and signed off by the appropriate service Director following CMT approval.

Substantial changes and changes in powers shall be put to Cabinet for approval.

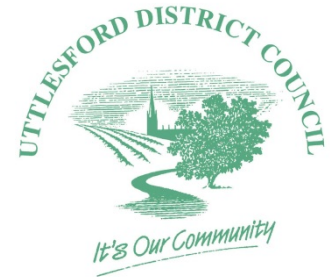
The decision on what changes will constitute minor or substantial change will be determined by CMT

Change

The Environmental Health Manager shall be responsible for reviewing /updating the policy in accordance with changes to best practice, statutory guidance and legislation. Substantial changes made shall be presented to Cabinet for formal approval.

APPENDIX A

Equality Impact Assessment



Uttlesford District Council Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	<i>Environmental Health Empty Homes Engagement and Enforcement</i>
Lead officer:	<i>Marcus Watts, Environmental Health Manager (Protection) Public Services</i>
Approved by:	<i>TBC</i>
Date completed:	<i>21/03/2024</i>
Scheduled date for review:	<i>April 2028</i>

Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?

No

Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the activity a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

When the EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address - EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact your Divisional Equality Lead. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form. **When EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk**

About your activity

1	Title of activity	<i>Empty Homes</i>		
2	Type of activity	<i>Policy</i>		
3	Scope of activity	To reduce the number of long term empty properties in the district. We proposed that we will do this be providing owners with advice and assistance to prevent properties becoming empty for a prolonged period. Should it be necessary, we can consider enforcement action to bring long term empty properties back into use.		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	Yes		
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	No	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	No		
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	.		

Completed by:	<i>Marcus Watts, Environmental Health Manager (Protection), Public Services</i>
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Date:	21/03/2024
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2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:
<p>This policy sets out the way in which the Council intends to deal with empty homes within the district. Empty homes are a waste of resource, can cause distress and blight a neighbourhood. This policy links in with the Councils Housing Strategy and Corporate Plan priorities.</p> <p>Largely an administration procedure, information action is pursued until these measures have been exhausted. A decision to take formal action is dependent on a number of factors, including sufficient resource in place to pursue the owner of the property</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>

Who will be affected by the activity?
<p>This Policy is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Officers of the Council in appropriately applying the relevant process and enforcement of legislation • To provide support to owners to encourage them to return the property into occupation <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: <i>It will impact positively on adults as more homes will be available for purchase or rent and communities will be improved, There will also be less ASB.</i> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:

<https://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=a5ea72d6-b24a-4f8e-8dc0-451a6da170e6>
**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn03012/>
**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive**Neutral****Negative****Overall impact:**

Returning properties into use, such as bungalows will increase the availability of accommodation suitable for those with mobility issues.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence: Housing impacts health: WHO guidelines on housing and health

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/housing-and-disabled-people-britains-hidden-crisis-main-report_0.pdf

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender: Consider both men and women

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive**Overall impact:**

Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The predicted impact of the policy on sex/gender is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race: Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: Potential barrier for owners whose first language is not English. Written and verbal communication may need to be translated or interpreted, as an equalities consideration, in order to mitigate any adverse impact.
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Evidence:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Religion/fait: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: Neutral impact. However, it is acknowledged that some faiths or religions require worship on particular days and therefore may not be able to attend meetings or appointments. Consideration will be given to this and flexibility will be applied, if required, in order to mitigate any adverse impact.
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Evidence: NA		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used: NA		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: The predicted impact of the policy on sexual orientation is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Evidence:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

*Please tick (✓)
the relevant box:*

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact:

The predicted impact of the policy on gender reassignment is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

*Please tick (✓)
the relevant box:*

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact:

The predicted impact of the policy on marriage/ civil partnership is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.

		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: The predicted impact of the policy on pregnancy, maternity and paternity is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds		
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Sources used:




Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool

**Expand box as required*

3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u>		Proceed with implementation of your activity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs to be <u>addressed</u>		COMPLETE SECTION 4: Complete action plan and finalise the EqHIA
	3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level		Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly . Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.

4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer

Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from

the lead officer).

5. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:

Scheduled date of review: 21/3/28

Lead Officer conducting the review: Environmental Health Manager

**Expand box as required*

APPENDIX A – Equality Impact Assessment

Agenda Item 14

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday,
18th April 2024

Title: Strategic Grants for Ukrainians and Asylum Seekers

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Local Partnerships

Report Author: Simone Russell, Interim Strategic Director, Housing, Health and Communities
srussell@uttlesford.gov.uk

Key decision: No

Summary

1. This paper sets out a case to move to strategic grants to support the integration of refugees into Uttlesford's community.

Recommendations

2. To launch a strategic grants process for both Ukrainian and Asylum- Seeking cohorts across 3 domains of need.
3. To extend the individual grants fund to asylum seeking communities from the Asylum Dispersal Grant to support with adhoc funding requests and support to move into and furnish accommodation for a maximum of £1,500 per family.

Financial Implications

4. The proposed cost of the combined schemes is £215,000 per annum of which £115,000 will be funded through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme (administered via Essex County Council) and £75,000 will be funded through the Asylum Dispersal Grant provided directly to Uttlesford District Council.

Background Papers

5. None

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	A full communications plan will be developed to launch the grant process and then to implement schemes once the grants are awarded.
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Community Safety	This proposal is not thought to have an impact on community safety.
Equalities	A full equalities impact assessment has been developed to support this work. The needs of the Ukrainian community were collected through direct engagement and indirect engagement via a local community group with a Ukrainian speaker.
Health and Safety	This proposal is not expected to have any health and safety implications.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	This proposal is not expected to have negative impact on human rights nor legal implications.
Sustainability	These proposals are not sustainable long term but will support the Ukrainian nationals eligible under the homes for Ukraine scheme and the current visa arrangements.
Ward-specific impacts	These proposals will impact all wards.
Workforce/Workplace	These proposals wont impact the workforce or workplace.

Situation

1) **Context**

- 2) Local Authorities play a key role in delivering programmes for refugees and asylum seekers and support with community integration. Currently councils are supporting Ukrainians who are residing in the UK following the War in Ukraine that started in 2022. As part of a wider, national policy district councils are working alongside county councils and other statutory and not-for-profit organisations to support asylum seekers pending an asylum decision and to support those with leave to remain with a homeless duty. However, in March 2023 the government announced these asylum hotels would close although to date only one is ear marked for closure in Uttlesford leaving one hotel (the Ibis) which currently houses families.

3) **What is Uttlesford District Council doing now?**

- 4) **Existing grants;** In November 2023 Uttlesford District Council launched an individual support grant (up to £500 for support with a range of activities including

transport and education and up to £1500 to help to move into new accommodation) and a community grants fund (for up to £300) for community activities.

- 5) **A move on offer – housing**; Housing was the main need identified by the Ukrainian's living in host accommodation in Uttlesford, mainly longer-term private rental or council stock. A project group have worked through viable options and considered what other Local Authorities offer. A move on offer has been proposed including incentives for landlords (deposit paid and rent guarantee) alongside dedicated funds for Ukrainians available with the same criteria as the discretionary housing payment.
- 6) **Small community grants** – As part of the Uttlesford Ukrainian support, a small, community grants pot was launched in November 2023. There has been one application so far to this fund for a Christmas meal for Ukrainians.
- 7) For the Afghan cohort Touchpoint have been working to deliver a community hub and wellbeing centre near Stanstead and a specific asylum seekers project with a cooking project, play and activities for children and also access to ESOL (English as a second language).
- 8) **What is the funding for Local Authorities?**
- 9) **Asylum Dispersal Grant** - In recognition of 'concerns raised in relation to pressure on local services associated with supporting asylum seekers', the government have made provision for an Asylum Dispersal Grant to be paid to Local Authorities along with additional funding to 'recognise the existing contribution and longstanding support' of local authorities accommodating asylum seekers. All Local Authorities in receipt of the funding have discretion regarding spend, providing the money is 'used to implement and/or bolster services' for this cohort. For Uttlesford for 2022/23 and 2023/24 the total grant allocated was £130k (£30k 22/23 and £100k 23/24).
- 10) The Homes for Ukraine Grant and the tariff provided to Local Authorities is not ringfenced and up the local authorities to spend the money according to demand and need. There are four areas outlined;
 - a) Welcoming, safeguarding and settling in
 - b) Integration and work
 - c) Long-term sustainable housing
 - d) Reporting and data management
- 11) From January 2023 local authorities received £5,900 per arrival and prior to that £10,500 for arrivals before this date. Uttlesford District Council submits a monthly return to Essex County Council who collate on behalf of the District Councils in Essex and submit to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Uttlesford has spent £160,000 so far on activities to support this cohort.

- 12) **What are the remaining needs amongst this cohort?**
- 13) Within the Ukrainian cohort, there are 45 hosts and 99 refugees still residing in Uttlesford and many more who have moved into the private rental sector (noting there is an exercise underway to refresh the host list.)
- 14) An exercise completed over the summer 2023 highlighted continued need for support in the following areas;
- Support with bills (including council tax)
 - Childcare including wrap around summer activities (one off requests now included as part of the small individual grants launched in November 2023)
 - Transport (now included as part of the small individual grants launched in November 2023)
 - Access to dentist services (emergency requests now included as part of the small individual grants launched in November 2023)
 - Access to Adult Education
 - Support to move into the private rental sector (captured as part of Uttlesford's move on offer due to be launched in January 2024)
- 15) A dedicated Ukrainian speaker has been employed 2 days a week to support this cohort via Uttlesford Community Action Network (UCAN). Her feedback highlights a continued lack of understanding of how to access benefits and existing schemes including English language training and housing. This resource is in place until April 2024.
- 16) In Uttlesford there are currently 2 contingency hotels used to house asylum seekers awaiting decisions (predominantly Afghan nationals). Touchpoint, a local agency funded by Uttlesford District Council report the following needs for this cohort;
- Mental Health Services – trauma informed services for these individuals of all ages (children and young people and adults) through both peer support and one to one.
 - Information advice and guidance about local services and how to access support and benefits after their asylum decisions have been granted.
 - Access to language classes (ESOL) alongside wider employment and training support
 - Organised wellbeing activities including play activities for children and young people.
- 17) Some of these needs are being addressed through the services touchpoint are providing (currently funded by Uttlesford District Council) and others through volunteers and support agencies.

18) The launch of the individual and community grants have relieved pressure on the Ukrainian cohort and allowed individuals registered on the foundry system access to funds to support integration including £933 for transport, £4,888 for childcare and holiday activities, £175 for dentistry and £5,121 to furnish new accommodation.¹

19) Additionally, the support from UCAN's Ukrainian support worker has enabled Uttlesford to have documents translated and in reach support for this cohort (understanding how to access housing, benefits, food banks, employment and training and transport).

20) Options

21) Uttlesford Council now has an understanding of need of the Ukrainian communities and of asylum communities. The options are:

Option	Description	Risks	Benefits
Provide services in house	Provide in-house services to meet the needs identified for these cohorts. These are; emotional wellbeing and mental health, childcare/holiday activities, information advice, guidance including inreach into communities.	The council has no direct clinical expertise to deliver emotional/wellbeing and mental health services to complement the existing Essex MIND and EPUT offers. This is the same for the other services too. There is a lack of trust from these communities for council staff and no existing relationships.	Greater control of services delivered and the ability to pivot/change services if needs change or new communities arrive.
Grant fund organisations through a competitive and open process	Grant fund organisations to deliver services across both cohorts to meet need through a competitive process which is outcomes based and delineated into specific 'lots'. These lots would be separated by cohort but with the same type of activities to ease	The closure of Great Hallingbury hotel presents a risk to continuity of funding for the Asylum Dispersal Grant. To mitigate changes or reduced funding, this approach will have annual break clauses built in to allow UDC (or the recipient organisations) to cease activities if the need changes or if the funding ceases. There are limited risks through this approach as the fund and application	There are a number of benefits to this approach including; Supporting the wider not-for – profit sector locally by allowing more, diverse organisations to apply for funding. Reduced impact on council resource as the role of the Local Authority would be to oversee activity and performance rather than directly deliver. Compliance with the council's contract

	reporting. Funding would be across numerous years to align with the council's approach to grant funding but with break clauses to protect against withdrawal of funding.	process would be launched in an open and transparent way and evaluated through a panel based on criteria outlined to organisations applying for funds.	procedure rules and with robust grant agreements including information sharing, data protection and GDPR, safeguarding and any case management requirements.
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25. Recommendation: It is recommended that Uttlesford District Council move to a competitive grants process funding organisations to deliver services to meet the following needs across the Ukrainian and asylum-seeking communities in Uttlesford. Additionally, it is proposed to launch an asylum seeker's individual grant fund aligned to that available for the Ukrainian cohorts.

26. The grant service lots and maximum per annum values proposed include:

- **Emotional wellbeing and mental health – grants up to £70,000 per annum (£50,000 Homes for Ukraine and £20,000 Asylum Dispersal Grant)**– following engagement with GP's, other organisations supporting these cohorts and the individuals themselves there is a need for emotional wellbeing and mental health support locally to supplement the statutory services delivered by EPUT and the services delivered by MIND. For children and young people access to virtual support, one to one services and groups in their primary language is an ongoing need. For adults and those over 18 years old, group support and one to one support delivered in their primary language is an ongoing need. It is envisaged that the services offered work alongside statutory mental health services and other support services to ensure effective triage and referral for those with more complex ongoing mental health needs. This service is envisaged to be accessible in a variety of languages but delivered through a combination of virtual and face to face sessions using trauma informed methodology to support this cohort with integration. Activities could include gardening and cooking or more structured group talking sessions.
- **Information, advice and guidance about a range of topics including access to housing, welfare benefits, employment, education and training with proactive in reach into communities and ongoing support – up to £70,000 per annum (£50,000 Homes for Ukraine and £20,000 Asylum Dispersal Grant)** there is a clear need for 'in reach' into these communities and information, advice and guidance to access services including but not exclusive to housing, welfare benefits, language training and GP services. It is envisioned that this service would act as a 'front door' for these communities to access council and local services and would provide the Local Authority with information about these cohorts including upcoming homeless applications or host placement breakdowns to allow Uttlesford to formulate a prevention offer.

- **Organised activities for children and young people and families (weekends, evenings and holiday periods) -up to £25,000 per annum (£15,000 Homes for Ukraine and £10,000 Asylum Dispersal Grant)** dedicated activities for a range of ages and at a range of locations for children and young people with peers delivered in their primary language. It is envisaged that these activities will supplement existing holiday activities and wrap around childcare available locally and for those in hotel awaiting asylum decisions (or indeed preparing to move out of the hotel into private or council accommodation) with structured activities for their children and young people to play.
- **Extend the individual grants fund to asylum seeking communities £25,000 – Asylum Dispersal Grant** to support with adhoc funding requests and support to move into and furnish accommodation for a maximum of £1,500 per family.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Reputational risk in not commissioning or providing dedicated support for these cohorts with the grants provided.	Low	1	There is support for the Ukrainian cohort through individual grants, community grants and also the move on offer that Uttlesford has in place. For the asylum seekers eligible for services under the asylum dispersal grant Touchpoint and others have been providing support to this cohort.
Cessation of funding by central government.	Low	3	It is proposed to have annual no fault break clauses built into the agreements to allow UDC or the provider to withdraw should circumstances change.

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 Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	<i>Strategic Grants to support Ukrainian and refugee communities</i>
Lead officer:	Simone Russell, Strategic Director Health, Housing and Communities
Approved by:	
Date completed:	28/03/2024
Scheduled date for review:	

Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?	No
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Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the activity a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact your Divisional Equality Lead. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form.

About your activity

1	Title of activity	A new grant fund to support Ukrainian and refugee communities		
2	Type of activity	<p>The proposal contains assumptions about the budget and services required. The paper also sets out a competitive process that will be launched should the proposal be approved by cabinet.</p> <p>Whilst there is no opportunity to coproduce the specifications there is an opportunity for user feedback to form part of the service monitoring.</p>		
3	Scope of activity	A competitive grants fund for services to support Ukrainian refugees and other asylum seekers in Uttlesford. The process to bid for grants will be open to voluntary and community agencies.		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	Yes	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	Yes		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes		
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:			

Completed by:	
Date:	

2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:
<p>Local Authorities play a key role in developing and delivering services for refugees and asylum seekers and supporting them to integrate into the local community.</p> <p>The Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in March 2022 in response to the war in Ukraine and offers a route to the UK for Ukrainian nationals and their immediate family members who have named people in the UK willing to sponsor them by becoming a host. Under this scheme Essex County Council receives funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to support this cohort. Uttlesford District Council have a local agreement with Essex to support the Ukrainian refugees with integration into the district.</p> <p>As part of a wider, national policy district councils are working alongside county councils and other statutory and not-for-profit organisations to support asylum seekers pending an asylum decision and to support those with leave to remain with a homeless duty. This support provides Asylum dispersal funding to help alleviate the pressure on local services.</p> <p>In order to meet the needs of the refugee and asylum communities within the district, Uttlesford District Council aims to will work with and grant fund a range of Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations that have specialist skills while also building in new local skills, capacity and cultural know-how within organisations in relation to supporting Ukrainians and Asylum.</p>

Who will be affected by the activity?
<p>This affects Ukrainian refugees that arrived under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Asylum seeking refugees currently residing in the IBIS hotel eligible under the Asylum Dispersal Scheme.</p>

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact: The services have been designed following a needs assessment and direct engagement with these cohorts. The services are additional to that currently available and are funded through money ringfenced for support to this cohort.</p>	
<p>Evidence: As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. For those eligible under the asylum dispersal fund the project group met with several agencies already providing support alongside the strategic migration group run by the East of England Local Government Association to identify need. Concurrently the project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the proposed service areas that will be launched as part of this grant fund.</p>	
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Primary sources (direct feedback) alongside secondary sources (examples from other areas and feedback from other agencies.)</p>	

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact: The proposed grants programme has no specific impact on those with disabilities in the wider population. Access to services is specific to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the Asylum Dispersal Grant regardless of any disability.</p>	

Evidence:
 The proposed strategic grants are open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine and the Asylum Dispersal Grant regardless of disability. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Asylum Dispersal Grant.

Sources used:
 Homes for Ukraine guidance
 Asylum Dispersal guidance

Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender: Consider both men and women

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: The proposed grants programme has no specific impact on those with disabilities in the wider population. Access to services is specific to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the Asylum Dispersal Grant regardless of sex or gender.
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:
 The proposed strategic grants are open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine and the Asylum Dispersal Grant regardless of sex/gender. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Asylum Dispersal Grant.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
 Homes for Ukraine guidance
 Asylum Dispersal guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race: Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
--	------------------------

Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Access to services is specific to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the Asylum Dispersal Grant and will have a positive impact on nationalities eligible under these grant schemes.
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The proposed strategic grants are open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine and the Asylum Dispersal Grant. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Asylum Dispersal Grant.

As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. For those eligible under the asylum dispersal fund the project group met with several agencies already providing support alongside the strategic migration group run by the East of England Local Government Association to identify need. Concurrently the project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the proposed service areas that will be launched as part of this grant fund.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Primary sources (direct feedback) alongside secondary sources (examples from other areas and feedback from other agencies.)

Homes for Ukraine guidance

Asylum Dispersal guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Overall impact: While most Ukrainian arrivals tend to be of Orthodox Christianity background, the services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds regardless of their religion or belief.
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The proposed strategic grants are open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine and the Asylum Dispersal Grant regardless of religion or faith. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Asylum Dispersal Grant.

As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. For those eligible under the asylum dispersal fund the project group met with several agencies already providing support alongside the strategic migration group run by the East of England Local Government Association to identify need. Concurrently the

project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the proposed service areas that will be launched as part of this grant fund.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Homes for Ukraine guidance
Asylum Seeker Dispersal guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact:

The services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds regardless of their sexual orientation.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The proposed strategic grants are open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine and the Asylum Dispersal Grant regardless of sexual orientation. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Asylum Dispersal Grant.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Homes for Ukraine guidance
Asylum Seeker Dispersal guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Overall impact:

The services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds including any who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery as

Negative		well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth.
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**Expand box as required*

Evidence:
 The services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds including any who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
 Homes for Ukraine guidance
 Asylum Seeker Dispersal guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive	✓	The services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds including those in a marriage or a civil partnership. <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:
 The services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds including those in a marriage or a civil partnership.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:
 Homes for Ukraine guidance
 Asylum Seeker Dispersal guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
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Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds including those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave. <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence: The services commissioned as part of the proposed grants will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families and those eligible under the asylum dispersal grant from all backgrounds including those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave. <i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used: Homes for Ukraine guidance Asylum Seeker Dispersal guidance <i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: Some of these individuals will be from low income or financially excluded backgrounds as some will have applied for asylum and others will be seeking sanctuary with no family ties to the UK. By nature of their arrival in the UK these individuals will likely require addition support to access statutory services and to integrate into Uttlesford society. <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence: <i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used: <i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk

groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity? Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 to help you answer this question.

<i>Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:</i>		Overall impact: The services proposed to be commissioned as part of these grant funds will have a positive outcome on the health and wellbeing of the eligible cohorts. <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Evidence:

As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. For those eligible under the asylum dispersal fund the project group met with several agencies already providing support alongside the strategic migration group run by the East of England Local Government Association to identify need to support wider health, wellbeing and integration into Uttlesford’s community. Concurrently the project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the proposed service areas that will be launched as part of this grant fund.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Primary sources (direct feedback) alongside secondary sources (examples from other areas and feedback from other agencies.)

Homes for Ukraine guidance




Asylum Dispersal guidance

**Expand box as required*

3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	<p>1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u></p>		<p>Proceed with implementation of your activity</p>
	<p>2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs to be <u>addressed</u></p>		<p>COMPLETE SECTION 4: Complete action plan and finalise the EqHIA</p>
	<p>3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level</p>		<p>Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly. Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.</p>

4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
Enhanced support to access services to support community integration	Positive	Clear communications and mapped pathways between services	These will be developed as part of the grants process but in line with Uttlesford's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and with terms and conditions of the grant.	Grants will be launched in May 2024 for services to start in July 2024. Grants will be monitored monthly.	Dave Toombs

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Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

5. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:

The EQIA will be reviewed annually in line with the services grant funded to ascertain if they will continue or if they need to be changed should need, cohorts or grant conditions change.

Scheduled date of review: April 2025

Lead Officer conducting the review: Dave Toombs

**Expand box as required*

Appendix 1. Guidance on Undertaking an EqHIA

This Guidance can be deleted prior to publication.

What is it?

The Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) is a tool to ensure that your activity meets the needs of individuals and groups that use your service, whilst at the same time ensuring a person's chance of leading a healthy life is the same wherever they live and whoever they are. We want to ensure that the activities of the Council are 'fit for purpose' and meet the needs of Uttlesford's increasingly diverse communities and employees. This robust and systematic EqHIA process ensures that any potential detrimental effects or discrimination is identified, removed, or mitigated and positive impacts are enhanced.

When to Assess:

An EqHIA should be carried out when you are changing, removing or introducing a new service, policy, strategy or function; for simplicity, these are referred to as an "activity" throughout this document. It is best to conduct the assessment as early as possible in the decision-making process.

Guidance: Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

The Checklist in Section 1 asks the key questions,

4a) Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?

4b) Does this activity (policy/strategy/service/decision) have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?

4c) Does this activity (policy/strategy/service/decision) have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?

- If the answer to ANY of the questions 4a, 4b or 4c of the Checklist is 'YES' then you must carry out an assessment. e.g. Proposed changes to Contact Centre Opening Hours
'YES' = you need to carry out an EqHIA
- If the answer to ALL of the questions, 4a or 4b of the Checklist is NO, then you do not need to carry out an EqHIA assessment. e.g. Quarterly Performance Report
'NO' = you DO NOT need to carry out an EqHIA. Please provide a clear explanation as to why you consider an EqHIA is not required for your activity.

Using the Checklist

The assessment should take into account all the potential impacts of the proposed activity, be it a major financial decision, or a seemingly simple policy change. Considering and completing this EqHIA will ensure that all Council plans, strategies, policies, procedures, services or other activity comply with relevant statutory obligations and responsibilities. In particular it helps the Council to meet its legal obligation under the [Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and its public health duties under the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#).

Having Due Regard

To have due regard means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities, the Council must consciously consider the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups
- Reduce inequalities in health outcomes

Combining Equality and Health Impact Assessment:

[Equality Impact Assessments \(EIAs\)](#) provide a systematic way of ensuring that legal obligations are met. They assess whether a proposed policy, procedure, service change or plan will affect people different on the basis of their 'protected characteristics' and if it will affect their human rights. Currently there are **nine protected characteristics** (previously known as 'equality groups' or 'equality strands'): age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, and pregnancy/ maternity/paternity.

An activity does not need to impact on all 9 protected characteristics – impacting on just one is sufficient justification to complete an EqHIA.

This [Equality and Health Impact Assessment \(EqHIA\)](#) brings together a single tool which will result in a set of recommendations to eliminate discrimination and inequality; enhance potential positive impacts and mitigate where possible for negative impacts.

In conducting this EqHIA you will need to assess the impact (positive, neutral or negative) of your activity on individuals and groups with **protected characteristics** (this includes staff delivering your activity), **socio-economic status** and **health & wellbeing**. Guidance on what to include in each section is given on the next pages.

Guidance: What to include in background/context

In this section you will need to add the background/context of your activity, i.e. what is the activity intending to do, and why?

Make sure you include the scope and intended outcomes of the activity being assessed; and highlight any proposed changes. Please include a brief rationale for your activity and any supporting evidence for the proposal. Some questions to consider:

- What is the aim, objectives and intended outcomes?
- How does this activity meet the needs of the local population?
- Has this activity been implemented in another area? What were the outcomes?
- Is this activity being implemented as per best practice guidelines?
- Who were the key stakeholders in this activity?

required

*Note that the boxes will expand as

Guidance: Who will be affected by the activity?

The people who will be affected may be

Residents: pay particular attention to vulnerable groups in the population who may be affected by this activity

Businesses/ manufacturing / developers / small, medium or large enterprises

Employees: e.g. Council staff for an internal activity, other statutory or voluntary sector employees, local businesses and services

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: What to include in assessing a Protected Characteristic e.g. AGE

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact: In this section you will need to consider and note what impact your activity will have on individuals and groups (including staff) with protected characteristics based on the data and information you have. You should note whether this is a positive, neutral or negative impact.

It is essential that you note all negative impacts. This will demonstrate that you have paid ‘due regard’ to the Public Sector Equality Duty (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty>) if your activity is challenged under the Equality Act.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Evidence: In this section you will need to document the evidence that you have used to assess the impact of your activity.

When assessing the impact, please consider and note how your activity contributes to the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as stated in the section above.

It is essential that you note the full impact of your activity, so you can demonstrate that you have fully considered the equality implications and have paid ‘due regard’ to the PSED should the Council be challenged.

- If you have identified a **positive impact**, please note this.
- If you think there is a **neutral impact** or the impact is not known, please provide a full reason why this is the case.
- If you have identified a **negative impact**, please note what steps you will take to mitigate this impact. If you are unable to take any mitigating steps, please provide a full reason why. All negative impacts that have mitigating actions must be recorded in the **Action Plan**.
- **Please ensure that appropriate consultation with affected parties has been undertaken and evidenced**

Sources used: In this section you should list all sources of the evidence you used to assess the impact of your activity. This can include:

- Service specific data, benchmarking with other organisations, national best practice
- Population, demographic and socio-economic data. Suggested sources include:
 - o Service user monitoring data that your service collects
 - o www.essexinsight.org.uk
 - o [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

If you do not have any relevant data, please provide the reason why.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: What to include in assessing Health & Wellbeing Impact:

Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact: In this section you will need to consider and note whether the proposal could have an overall impact on, or implications for, people’s health and wellbeing or any factors which determine people’s health.

How will the activity help address inequalities in health?

Include here a brief outline of what could be done to enhance the positive impacts and, where possible, mitigate for the negative impacts.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box

Yes **No**

Evidence: In this section you will need to outline in more detail how you came to your conclusions above:

- What is the nature of the impact?
- Is the impact **positive** or **negative**? It is possible for an activity to have **both positive and negative impacts**. Consider here whether people will be able to access the service being offered; improve or maintain healthy lifestyles; improve their opportunities for employment/income; whether and how it will affect the environment in which they live (housing, access to parks & green space); what the impact on the family, social support and community networks might be
- What can be done to mitigate the negative impacts and/or enhance the positive impacts?
- If you think there is a **neutral impact**, or the impact is not known, please provide a brief reason why this is the case.
- What is the likelihood of the impact? Will the impact(s) be in weeks, months or years? In some cases the short-term risks to health may be worth the longer term benefits.
- Will the proposal affect different groups of people in different ways? A proposal that is likely to benefit one section of the community may not benefit others and could lead to inequalities in health.

Please use the Health & Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 as a guide/checklist to assess the potential wider determinants of health impacts.

This tool will help guide your thinking as to what factors affect people's health and wellbeing, such as social support, their housing conditions, access to transport, employment, education, crime and disorder and environmental factors. It is not an exhaustive list, merely a tool to guide your assessment; there may be other factors specific to your activity.

Some questions you may wish to ask include:

- Will the activity impact on people's ability to socialise, potentially leading to social isolation?
- Will the activity affect a person's income and/or have an effect on their housing status?
- Is the activity likely to cause the recipient of a service more or less stress?
- Will any change in the service take into account different needs, such as those with learning difficulties?
- Will the activity affect the health and wellbeing of persons not directly related to the service/activity, such as carers, family members, other residents living nearby?
- If there is a short-term negative effect, what will be done to minimise the impact as much as possible?
- Are the longer-term impacts positive or negative? What will be done to either promote the positive effects or minimise the negative effects?
- Do the longer term positive outcomes outweigh the short term impacts?

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Sources used: In this section you should list all sources of the evidence you used to assess the impact of your activity. This could include, e.g.:

Information on the population affected

- Routinely collected local statistics (e.g. quality of life, health status, unemployment, crime, air quality, educational attainment, transport etc.)
- Local research/ Surveys of local conditions
- Community profiles i.e. Uttlesford JSNA

Wider Evidence

- Published Research, including evidence about similar proposals implemented elsewhere (e.g. Case Studies).
- Predictions from local or national models
- Locally commissioned research by statutory/voluntary/private organisations

Expert Opinion

- Views of residents and professionals with local knowledge and insight

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: Outcome of the Assessment

On reflection, what is your overall assessment of the activity?

The purpose of conducting this assessment is to offer an opportunity to think, reflect and **improve** the proposed activity. It will make sure that the Council can evidence that it has considered its due regard to equality and health & wellbeing to its best ability.

It is not expected that all proposals will be immediately without negative impacts! However, where these arise, what actions can be taken to mitigate against potential negative effects, or further promote the positive impacts?

Please tick one of the 3 boxes in this section to indicate whether you think:

1. all equality and health impacts are adequately addressed in the activity – proceed with your activity pending all other relevant approval processes
2. The assessment identified some negative impacts which could be addressed – please complete the Action Plan in Section 4.
3. If the assessment reveals some significant concerns, this is the time to stop and re-think, making sure that we spend our Council resources wisely and fairly. There is no shame in stopping a proposal.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: Action Plan

For each protected characteristic/health & wellbeing impact where an impact on people or their lives has been identified, complete one row of the action plan. You can add as many further rows as required.

State whether the impact is Positive or Negative

Briefly outline the actions that can be taken to mitigate against the negative impact or further enhance a positive impact. These actions could be to make changes to the activity itself (service, proposal, strategy etc.) or to make contingencies/alterations in the setting/environment where the activity will take place.

For example, might staff need additional training in communicating effectively with people with learning difficulties, if a new service is opened specifically targeting those people? Is access to the service fair and equitable? What will the impact on other service users be? How can we ensure equity of access to the service by all users? Will any signage need changing? Does the building where the service being delivered comply with disability regulations?

Guidance: Review

Changes happen all the time. A service/strategy/policy/activity that is appropriate at one time, may no longer be appropriate as the environment around us changes. This may be changes in our population, growth and makeup, legislative changes, environmental changes or socio-political changes.

Although we can't predict what's going to happen in the future, a review is recommended to ensure that what we are delivering as a Council is still the best use of our limited resources. The timescale for review will be dependent on the scale of the activity.

A major financial investment may require a review every 2-3 years for a large scale regeneration project over 10-15 years.

A small policy change may require a review in 6 months to assess whether there are any unintended outcomes of such a change.

Please indicate here how frequently it is expected to review your activity and a brief justification as to why this timescale is recommended.

Guidance: Key Contacts

For further advice or information contact your Divisional Equality Lead Officer

Division/Services	Head of Division/Services	Tel.No.

Appendix 2. Health & Wellbeing Impact Tool

Will the activity/service/policy/procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below

The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.

Lifestyle YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Personal circumstances YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Access to services/facilities/amenities YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Diet</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Exercise and physical activity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Smoking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to passive smoking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol intake</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dependency on prescription drugs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Illicit drug and substance use</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Risky Sexual behaviour</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Structure and cohesion of family unit</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parenting</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Childhood development</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Life skills</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment status</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Working conditions</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level of income, including benefits</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level of disposable income</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing tenure</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing conditions</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational attainment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Skills levels including literacy and numeracy</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Employment opportunities</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Workplaces</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Housing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> to Shops (to supply basic needs)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Community facilities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> to Public transport</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Education</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Training and skills development</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> to Healthcare</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Social services</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Childcare</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> to Respite care</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Leisure and recreation services and facilities</p>
Social Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Economic Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Factors YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social contact</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social support</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourliness</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Participation in the community</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Membership of community groups</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation of community/area</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Participation in public affairs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level of crime and disorder</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fear of crime and disorder</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level of antisocial behaviour</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fear of antisocial behaviour</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fear of discrimination</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public safety measures</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Road safety measures</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Creation of wealth</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of wealth</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retention of wealth in local area/economy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of income</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business activity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Job creation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Availability of employment opportunities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of employment opportunities</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Availability of education opportunities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of education opportunities</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Availability of training and skills development opportunities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of training and skills development opportunities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Technological development</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Amount of traffic congestion</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Air quality</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Water quality</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Noise levels</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Vibration</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hazards</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Land use</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Natural habitats</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Landscape, including green and open spaces</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Townscape, including civic areas and public realm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Use/consumption of natural resources</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Solid waste management</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public transport infrastructure</p>

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Committee: Cabinet

Date: 18th April 24

Title: Housing Support Offer to Ukrainians leaving their host arrangements.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sutton

Report Author: Simone Russell, Interim Strategic Director, Housing, Health and Communities

Key decision: N

Summary

1. To provide options and a recommendation for the move on offer for Ukrainian refugees living in Uttlesford.

Recommendations

2. To launch a rent assist offer (deposit, 6 week's rent in advance and a council guarantee to fund the rent for the duration of the tenancy should the tenant default) to support Ukrainian guests to move into private rental properties.
3. To use some of the Homes for Ukraine funds to act as a dedicated fund to bridge the gap between local housing allowance and market value rent.

Financial Implications

4. A maximum cost of £1,045,527 per annum funded through the Homes for Ukraine grant provided to Essex County Council and passported to Uttlesford District Council.

Background Papers

5. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	This paper has been developed by a working group which includes a communications officer. A full communications plan will be developed to launch this offer and communicate it to partners and to the Ukrainian individuals residing in Uttlesford.
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Community Safety	This proposal is not thought to have an impact on community safety.
Equalities	A full equalities impact assessment has been developed to support this work. The needs of the Ukrainian community were collected through direct engagement and indirect engagement via a local community group with a Ukrainian speaker.
Health and Safety	This proposal is not expected to have any health and safety implications.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	This proposal is not expected to have negative impact on human rights nor legal implications.
Sustainability	These proposals are not sustainable long term but will support the Ukrainian nationals eligible under the homes for Ukraine scheme.
Ward-specific impacts	These proposals will impact all wards.
Workforce/Workplace	These proposals wont impact the workforce or workplace.

Situation

1) **Background**

- 2) The War in Ukraine started on 24 February 2022 and the UK Government developed a refugee support package for those entering the UK including visa support and support for housing through grants and a call for UK families to offer up rooms to host refugees. A matching process was undertaken by Local Authorities and a Homes for Ukraine Grant administered to support both hosts and refugee families. Within Essex, this process and fund was administered by Essex County Council with the support of the District Councils.
- 3) Earlier this year a decision was made to delegate funds of £1.3m down to Uttlesford District Council to facilitate the ongoing engagement and support for hosts and refugees.
- 4) To date there has been no Uttlesford District Council offer but there have been several examples that have been offered to landlords due to emergency placement breakdowns. For example, a landlord incentive of £3000, 1 month rent in advance, a damage deposit has been offered and has successfully secured move on accommodation within the private sector.

5) Who is eligible?

- 6) The “Homes for Ukraine Scheme” is open to people from Ukraine who were residents there before 1 January 2022, and to their immediate family members (for example spouse or partner and children under 18). They do not have to be Ukrainian citizens to be eligible.
- 7) Eligible people may be sponsored by a UK resident to come to the UK. They can apply from Ukraine or from any other country outside the UK. Children who are currently outside of the UK can use the scheme to reunite with their parent or legal guardian who is currently living in the UK.
- 8) There are 45 hosts and a high number of refugees still residing in Uttlesford both living with hosts and within the private rental sector (noting there is an exercise underway to refresh the host list.) In addition, the Housing Options Team have supported 9 households into private rented accommodation with a further 2 securing private rental independently. The Team have rematched 5 individuals to different hosts and prevented a host/guest arrangement breaking down through the provision of mediation.
- 9) What is the need and what has been raised as an issue so far by Ukrainian refugees residing in Uttlesford?**
- 10) Engagement undertaken in April 2023 highlighted concerns from this cohort moving out of host accommodation;
- a) Rent in advance – guests reported landlords requesting 12 month’s rent in advance to negate the risk of no guarantor and no credit history.
 - b) Access to social housing - guests queries why Uttlesford required a local connection and for guests to reside in the District for three years.
 - c) Access to social housing – guests queried if they could access the housing register without becoming homeless first.
 - d) Discretionary Housing Payment – guests queried if it was possible for Ukrainian guests to access discretionary housing payments to bridge the gap between the Local Housing Allowance and rents within the private rental sector.

11) What is the view of letting agents?

- 12) The Housing Options team undertook telephone research with local letting agents to see if there were any particular points of feedback the council could resolve to access more private rental properties for the Ukrainian guests to move into.

13)Of the 37 lettings companies surveyed, 15 confirmed that they would consider taking housing payments through universal credit on a case-by-case basis. However, 9 letting agents would not consider housing anyone without a guarantor and 4 confirmed that they would waive a need for a guarantor either on a case-by-case basis, through rent in advance or a credit check. When prompted 7 letting agents confirmed that a rent guarantee, rent in advance and a landlord incentive would negate the need for a guarantor (although 2 still required a credit check).

14)A lack of guarantor and credit history will impact the ability of the Ukrainian guests to move into private sector tenancies although there is evidence that incentives such as rent in advance, a rent guarantee and an incentive payment would help secure properties for this cohort to move into.

15)What is the Council duty towards this cohort?

16)*The Homes for Ukraine guidance¹ states that in cases where a sponsorship arrangement has broken down or is not being continued after the initial six-month arrangement, and the household or individual does not have any other alternative suitable accommodation available to them, then council statutory homelessness duties will apply.*

17)*Councils must take reasonable steps to try to prevent and relieve homelessness for households who are threatened with becoming, or are already, homeless when they apply for assistance.*

18)*Councils may be able to end a homelessness prevention or relief duty owed to a guest by facilitating a rematch, providing the placement and accommodation are suitable and the authority is satisfied it will continue to be available for at least 6 months.*

19)*Local connection can be established in several ways, including through residence in an area. Through a Local Government Association protocol, councils have agreed that somebody who has lived in an area for 6 out of the last 12 months has a local connection to that area. See the [Homelessness Code of Guidance Chapter 10](#) for further information on local connection.*

20)*Councils must continue to make decisions about duties owed on a case-by-case basis.*

21)The guidance states that eligible individuals can seek assistance to move to another local authority area.

22)The guidance goes on to clearly outline responsibilities for Local Authorities to support move into the private rental sector and explicitly outline that the Homes for Ukraine funding can be used to support through;

- a) **The council acting as a guarantor** - As sponsorships come to an end, we expect the majority of guests will look to find independent accommodation in the PRS. We expect councils to use year one tariff and additional funding for the financial year 2023/24 to support guests to enter the PRS where

necessary. This can be done through support for one-off costs, guarantor schemes or similar.

- b) **A rent guarantee scheme** - councils may offer a scheme to provide landlords with a written guarantee that the scheme will cover unpaid rent or damage up to a certain amount. Similarly, there are a range of rent guarantee agreements provided by insurance companies. A council, charity, prospective landlord or family may engage in such a scheme to guarantee the rent over the course of the tenancy. Councils may draw on the Homes for Ukraine tariff funding to fund such agreements.

23)What do other Local Authorities offer?

24)Other Local Authorities have developed their own move on offers for this cohort. For example;

- a) **South Cambridgeshire District Council** have an extensive move on offer including rematching and support to move to another area to a host family. A rent deposit scheme of 5 weeks rent in advance with no expectation to return the deposit. Rent in advance - paid directly to the landlord and not expected to be paid back. A Discretionary Housing Payment – to top up the difference between the local housing allowance and market rates. A Furniture Pack Scheme to provide furniture to the value of £2000.
- b) **Hertfordshire County Council** provide a rent deposit scheme and up to one month rent in advance (available for those wishing to move from Hertfordshire and support for hosts to move from being a ‘host’ to a lodging arrangement.
- c) **East Sussex District Council** has a move on grant scheme administered by a local community organisation to provide;
 - i) Rent in advance, a deposit and holding fees
 - ii) A guarantee of 6 months rent for those without a guarantor
 - iii) Up to £1500 to support with furniture and moving costs
- d) **Birmingham City Council** offers a grant of between £3,000-£4,500 for rent in advance, deposit and guarantee.

25)What are the options available to Uttlesford District Council?

26)Considering our local context, the needs of our Ukrainian refugees, hosts and private sector landlord we have a range of options available to us to form a local move on offer. This offer will be supplemented by regular communication with the Ukrainian refugees to ensure that the offer is understood and to account for changing needs. Each of these options have been costed and assessed to determine feasibility which is outlined in the table below:

▪

Option	Description	Feasibility and risks	Estimated cost and recommendation
Continue to support the hosts to prevent placement breakdown	We have recently re-established engagement with the host families. Other local authorities are offering financial support over and above the existing allowances for example a one off £650 payment towards fuel this winter.	<p>Essex County Council does already pay £200 more than neighboring authorities for host families and no other District in Essex offers additional payments which would create disparity across the county.</p> <p>There is a reputational risk that this cohort is being treated differently than others although this will be mitigated as the funding is dedicated to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.</p>	<p>There are 55 hosts currently (noting that this number does fluctuate as new hosts join and others have families move on.)</p> <p>£35,750</p>
Direct Ukrainian refugees to apply to join the housing register	There are examples of other Local Authorities opening up their housing register to refugees by removing the need for this cohort to have a local connection. Applicants are assessed and banded as per the existing process.	<p>There are already 1209 individuals on the housing register waiting for a property. This isn't a guarantee for this cohort as their applications will be assessed according to the current banding scheme.</p> <p>There is already the option within the current Allocations Policy for Senior Council Officers to override criteria in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>There is a reputational risk that this cohort is being treated differently than others although this will be mitigated as the</p>	No direct additional cost other than an additional pressure on existing stock.

		<p>funding is dedicated to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.</p>	
<p>To pay rent in advance and deposit for the Ukrainian refugees</p>	<p>There are examples of other Local Authorities paying rent in advance and the deposit in full for the Ukrainian refugees.</p>	<p>There is a shortage of private rental properties in Uttlesford.</p> <p>Landlord research showed that this alone wouldn't unlock priority access to this market but this would assist the Ukrainian refugees in securing the funds to move on.</p> <p>There is a reputational risk that this cohort is being treated differently than others although this will be mitigated as the funding is dedicated to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.</p>	<p>The average rent for a 2 bed property is £1158 pcm² and the average deposit is 6 weeks rent £1603.38 based on the average rent.</p> <p>If 27 (half) of the families moved out of host accommodation into the private rental sector the total cost would be £74,557.26</p>
<p>For the council to offer a rent guarantee to those moving into new private rentals and to consider for those in existing where the host is acting as guarantor currently (when requested).</p>	<p>Other Local Authorities have provided a 6 or 12 month rental guarantee for those without a guarantor. This means Uttlesford District Council could be liable for rent should the tenant default.</p> <p>For parity, where requested Uttlesford District Council will also offer this to existing private tenants where the previous hosts have acted as guarantors and will review retrospective applications on a case by case basis. There are other existing rent guarantor support schemes such as Nadiya that operate across Essex to support</p>	<p>Landlord researched showed that this alone wouldn't unlock priority access to this market as whilst many require a guarantor they also require a credit check which will prove an issue for some of this cohort without a credit history in the UK. However, there are other schemes that may also support including Nadiya which is already operational within Essex.</p> <p>There is a reputational risk that this cohort is being treated differently than others although this will be mitigated as the funding is dedicated to those eligible under the</p>	<p>Using the average monthly rent the cost would be £13,896 per family assuming a maximum of 55 families £764,280 (noting that not every family will move into private sector rentals and not every family will default.)</p>

	Ukrainians moving into the private rented sector.	Homes for Ukraine Scheme.	
To top up the difference between rent and the local housing allowance (LHA) in line with the Discretionary Housing Payment but through the Homes for Ukraine Grant.	Some Local Authorities are offering to bridge the gap between the LHA and market rent using the Homes for Ukraine grant but with the same terms and conditions (ie. For a time limited period).	<p>There is a shortage of private rental properties in Uttlesford.</p> <p>There are insufficient funds in the Discretionary Housing Payment to fund this cohort alongside the existing however, the Homes for Ukraine grant could be used in a similar for this eligible cohort.</p> <p>This isn't sustainable long term for this cohort but this could be offered as an initiative for a period of time aligned to the same terms and conditions for Discretionary Housing Payment (up to a maximum duration of 3 or 6 months).</p>	<p>The LHA for the South of Uttlesford is £899 a month³ which is £259 a month less than the average rent for a 2 bed property. This equates to £3,108 per family per year up to a maximum of 55 families £170,940 per year (noting that not every family will move into private sector rentals.)</p>

27) Given the funding that Uttlesford are able to draw upon, it is recommended that a rent assist offer is available for Ukrainian guests to move into the private rental sector to comprise of a deposit, 6 week's rent in advance and a council guarantee to fund the rent for the duration of the tenancy should the tenant default, to support Ukrainian guests to move into private rental properties.

28) Additionally, it is recommended that Uttlesford District Council use some of the Homes for Ukraine funds to act as a dedicated fund to bridge the gap between local housing allowance and market value rent.

29) Following a review of feasibility of other options, it is not recommended that Uttlesford District Council offer additional payments to hosts. A support package is already in existence across Essex, Essex County Council rates are higher than other areas and this would create disparity across the county.

30) Additionally, it is not recommended that Uttlesford change its allocation policy. There is already the option within the current Allocations Policy for Senior Council Officers to override criteria in exceptional circumstances to prevent homelessness which given the uncertainty concerning longer term visa arrangements will allow Uttlesford District Council to meet its statutory duties.

Risk Analysis

7.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Essex County Council don't support the proposals.	Low	2	The Homes for Ukraine scheme coordinator for Essex County Council is part of UDC's working group and has endorsed the proposals.
More Ukrainian nationals move out of their host arrangements due to this scheme and there are insufficient funds.	Medium	2	Uptake and expenditure will be overseen by the Community Partnerships Team to mitigate this risk,

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

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	<i>Housing Support offer for Ukrainians in Uttlesford</i>
Lead officer:	Simone Russell, Strategic Director Health, Housing and Communities
Approved by:	
Date completed:	28/03/2024
Scheduled date for review:	

Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?	No
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Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the activity a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact your Divisional Equality Lead. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form.

About your activity

1	Title of activity	A housing support offer for Ukrainians eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme		
2	Type of activity	The proposal sets out a housing offer to support individuals eligible under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.		
3	Scope of activity	<p>To launch a rent assist offer (deposit, 6 week's rent in advance and a council guarantee to fund the rent for the duration of the tenancy should the tenant defect) to support Ukrainian guests to move into private rental properties.</p> <p>To use some of the Homes for Ukraine funds to act as a dedicated fund to bridge the gap between local housing allowance and market value rent.</p>		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	Yes	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	Yes		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes		
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:			

Completed by:	David Toombs
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Date:	08/04/2024

2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:
<p>Local Authorities play a key role in developing and delivering services for refugees and asylum seekers and supporting them to integrate into the local community. The War in Ukraine started on 24 February 2022 and the UK Government developed a refugee support package for those entering the UK including visa support and support for housing through grants and a call for UK families to offer up rooms to host refugees. A matching process was undertaken by Local Authorities and a Homes for Ukraine Grant administered to support both hosts and refugee families. Within Essex, this process and fund was administered by Essex County Council with the support of the District Councils. In 2023 a decision was made to delegate funds of £1.3m down to Uttlesford District Council to facilitate the ongoing engagement and support for hosts and refugees. This funding is ringfenced to support the Local Authority to help individuals integrate into local communities. To date there has been no Uttlesford District Council offer but there have been several examples that have been offered to landlords due to emergency placement breakdowns. For example, a landlord incentive of £3000, 1 month rent in advance, a damage deposit has been offered and has successfully secured move on accommodation within the private sector</p>

Who will be affected by the activity?
All Ukrainians living in Uttlesford eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact: The services have been designed following a needs assessment and direct engagement with these cohorts. The services are additional to that currently available and are funded through money ringfenced for support to this cohort.</p>	
<p>Evidence: As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. Concurrently the project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the housing support offer.</p>	
<p>Sources used: Primary sources (direct feedback) alongside secondary sources (examples from other areas and feedback from other agencies.)</p>	

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact: The proposed housing support offer has no specific impact on those with disabilities in the wider population. Access to services is specific to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme regardless of any disability.</p>	
<p>Evidence: The proposed housing support offer is open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine regardless of disability. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme national grant conditions.</p>	
<p>Sources used: Homes for Ukraine guidance</p>	

Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender: Consider both men and women	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact:</p> <p>Access to services is specific to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme regardless of sex or gender.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The housing support offer is open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine regardless of sex/gender. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme national grant conditions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Homes for Ukraine guidance</p> <p><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	

Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race: Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact:</p> <p>Access to services is specific to those eligible under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and will have a positive impact on nationalities eligible under this grant scheme.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The proposed strategic grants are open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme national guidance.</p> <p>As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. Concurrently the project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the housing support offer.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	

Sources used:

Primary sources (direct feedback) alongside secondary sources (examples from other areas and feedback from other agencies.)

Homes for Ukraine guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: While most Ukrainian arrivals tend to be of Orthodox Christianity background, the housing support offer will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families from all backgrounds regardless of their religion or belief.
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The proposed strategic grants are open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine regardless of religion or faith. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme national grant conditions.

As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. Concurrently the project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the housing support offer.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Homes for Ukraine guidance

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: The housing support offer will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families regardless of their sexual orientation.
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

**Expand box as required*

<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The housing support offer is open to all eligible under Homes for Ukraine regardless of sexual orientation. This is in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme national guidance.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Homes for Ukraine guidance</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>

<p>Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth</p>							
<p><i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i></p>	<p>Overall impact:</p>						
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Positive</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Negative</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Positive	✓	Neutral		Negative		<p>The housing support offer will be open to Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families including any who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
Positive	✓						
Neutral							
Negative							
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The housing support offer will be open to Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families including any who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>							
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Homes for Ukraine guidance</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>							

<p>Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership</p>					
<p><i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i></p>	<p>Overall impact:</p>				
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Positive</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Positive	✓	Neutral		<p>The housing support offer will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families from all backgrounds including those in a marriage or a civil partnership.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
Positive	✓				
Neutral					

Negative		
Evidence:		
The housing support offer will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families from all backgrounds including those in a marriage or a civil partnership.		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
Homes for Ukraine guidance		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The housing support offer will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families including those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave. <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence:		
The housing support offer will support Ukrainian refugees, their immediate families including those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave.		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
Homes for Ukraine guidance		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Some of these individuals will be from low income or financially excluded backgrounds as some will be seeking sanctuary with no family ties to the UK. By nature of their arrival in the UK these
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	




Negative		individuals will likely require addition support to access statutory services and to integrate into Uttlesford society.	<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:			<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Sources used:			<i>*Expand box as required</i>

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person’s physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity? Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 to help you answer this question.			
<i>Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:</i>		Overall impact: The housing support offer proposed will have a positive outcome on the health and wellbeing of the eligible cohorts.	
Positive	✓		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Neutral		Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box	
Negative			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evidence:		As part of work ongoing since early 2023 a project group has held several listening events with Ukrainian refugees and hosts in Uttlesford to identify services that would support this cohort. Concurrently the project group has reviewed what other comparable local authorities have offered these cohorts. This has been used to develop the proposed service areas that will be launched as part of this grant fund.	<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Sources used:		Primary sources (direct feedback) alongside secondary sources (examples from other areas and feedback from other agencies.) Homes for Ukraine guidance	<i>*Expand box as required</i>

3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u>		Proceed with implementation of your activity
	2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs to be <u>addressed</u>		COMPLETE SECTION 4: Complete action plan and finalise the EqHIA
	3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level		Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly . Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.

4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
Enhanced support to access services to support community integration	Positive	Clear communications and mapped pathways between services	These will be developed as part of the grants process but in line with Uttlesford's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and with terms and conditions of the grant.	Grants will be launched in May 2024 for services to start in July 2024. Grants will be monitored monthly.	Dave Toombs

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Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

5. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:

The EQIA will be reviewed annually in line with the services grant funded to ascertain if they will continue or if they need to be changed should cohort need, cohort composition or grant conditions change.

Scheduled date of review: April 2025

Lead Officer conducting the review: Dave Toombs

**Expand box as required*

Appendix 1. Guidance on Undertaking an EqHIA

This Guidance can be deleted prior to publication.

What is it?

The Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) is a tool to ensure that your activity meets the needs of individuals and groups that use your service, whilst at the same time ensuring a person's chance of leading a healthy life is the same wherever they live and whoever they are. We want to ensure that the activities of the Council are 'fit for purpose' and meet the needs of Uttlesford's increasingly diverse communities and employees. This robust and systematic EqHIA process ensures that any potential detrimental effects or discrimination is identified, removed, or mitigated and positive impacts are enhanced.

When to Assess:

An EqHIA should be carried out when you are changing, removing or introducing a new service, policy, strategy or function; for simplicity, these are referred to as an "activity" throughout this document. It is best to conduct the assessment as early as possible in the decision-making process.

Guidance: Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

The Checklist in Section 1 asks the key questions,

4a) Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?

4b) Does this activity (policy/strategy/service/decision) have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?

4c) Does this activity (policy/strategy/service/decision) have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?

- If the answer to ANY of the questions 4a, 4b or 4c of the Checklist is 'YES' then you must carry out an assessment. e.g. Proposed changes to Contact Centre Opening Hours
'YES' = you need to carry out an EqHIA
- If the answer to ALL of the questions, 4a or 4b of the Checklist is NO, then you do not need to carry out an EqHIA assessment. e.g. Quarterly Performance Report
'NO' = you DO NOT need to carry out an EqHIA. Please provide a clear explanation as to why you consider an EqHIA is not required for your activity.

Using the Checklist

The assessment should take into account all the potential impacts of the proposed activity, be it a major financial decision, or a seemingly simple policy change. Considering and completing this EqHIA will ensure that all Council plans, strategies, policies, procedures, services or other activity comply with relevant statutory obligations and responsibilities. In particular it helps the Council to meet its legal obligation under the [Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and its public health duties under the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#).

Having Due Regard

To have due regard means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities, the Council must consciously consider the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups
- Reduce inequalities in health outcomes

Combining Equality and Health Impact Assessment:

[Equality Impact Assessments \(EIAs\)](#) provide a systematic way of ensuring that legal obligations are met. They assess whether a proposed policy, procedure, service change or plan will affect people different on the basis of their 'protected characteristics' and if it will affect their human rights. Currently there are **nine protected characteristics** (previously known as 'equality groups' or 'equality strands'): age, disability, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, and pregnancy/ maternity/paternity.

An activity does not need to impact on all 9 protected characteristics – impacting on just one is sufficient justification to complete an EqHIA.

This [Equality and Health Impact Assessment \(EqHIA\)](#) brings together a single tool which will result in a set of recommendations to eliminate discrimination and inequality; enhance potential positive impacts and mitigate where possible for negative impacts.

In conducting this EqHIA you will need to assess the impact (positive, neutral or negative) of your activity on individuals and groups with **protected characteristics** (this includes staff delivering your activity), **socio-economic status** and **health & wellbeing**. Guidance on what to include in each section is given on the next pages.

Guidance: What to include in background/context

In this section you will need to add the background/context of your activity, i.e. what is the activity intending to do, and why?

Make sure you include the scope and intended outcomes of the activity being assessed; and highlight any proposed changes. Please include a brief rationale for your activity and any supporting evidence for the proposal. Some questions to consider:

- What is the aim, objectives and intended outcomes?
- How does this activity meet the needs of the local population?
- Has this activity been implemented in another area? What were the outcomes?
- Is this activity being implemented as per best practice guidelines?
- Who were the key stakeholders in this activity?

required

*Note that the boxes will expand as

Guidance: Who will be affected by the activity?

The people who will be affected may be

Residents: pay particular attention to vulnerable groups in the population who may be affected by this activity

Businesses/ manufacturing / developers / small, medium or large enterprises

Employees: e.g. Council staff for an internal activity, other statutory or voluntary sector employees, local businesses and services

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: What to include in assessing a Protected Characteristic e.g. AGE

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact: In this section you will need to consider and note what impact your activity will have on individuals and groups (including staff) with protected characteristics based on the data and information you have. You should note whether this is a positive, neutral or negative impact.

It is essential that you note all negative impacts. This will demonstrate that you have paid ‘due regard’ to the Public Sector Equality Duty (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty>) if your activity is challenged under the Equality Act.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Evidence: In this section you will need to document the evidence that you have used to assess the impact of your activity.

When assessing the impact, please consider and note how your activity contributes to the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as stated in the section above.

It is essential that you note the full impact of your activity, so you can demonstrate that you have fully considered the equality implications and have paid ‘due regard’ to the PSED should the Council be challenged.

- If you have identified a **positive impact**, please note this.
- If you think there is a **neutral impact** or the impact is not known, please provide a full reason why this is the case.
- If you have identified a **negative impact**, please note what steps you will take to mitigate this impact. If you are unable to take any mitigating steps, please provide a full reason why. All negative impacts that have mitigating actions must be recorded in the **Action Plan**.
- **Please ensure that appropriate consultation with affected parties has been undertaken and evidenced**

Sources used: In this section you should list all sources of the evidence you used to assess the impact of your activity. This can include:

- Service specific data, benchmarking with other organisations, national best practice
- Population, demographic and socio-economic data. Suggested sources include:
 - o Service user monitoring data that your service collects
 - o www.essexinsight.org.uk
 - o [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

If you do not have any relevant data, please provide the reason why.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: What to include in assessing Health & Wellbeing Impact:

Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact: In this section you will need to consider and note whether the proposal could have an overall impact on, or implications for, people’s health and wellbeing or any factors which determine people’s health.

How will the activity help address inequalities in health?

Include here a brief outline of what could be done to enhance the positive impacts and, where possible, mitigate for the negative impacts.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box

Yes **No**

Evidence: In this section you will need to outline in more detail how you came to your conclusions above:

- What is the nature of the impact?
- Is the impact **positive** or **negative**? It is possible for an activity to have **both positive and negative impacts**. Consider here whether people will be able to access the service being offered; improve or maintain healthy lifestyles; improve their opportunities for employment/income; whether and how it will affect the environment in which they live (housing, access to parks & green space); what the impact on the family, social support and community networks might be
- What can be done to mitigate the negative impacts and/or enhance the positive impacts?
- If you think there is a **neutral impact**, or the impact is not known, please provide a brief reason why this is the case.
- What is the likelihood of the impact? Will the impact(s) be in weeks, months or years? In some cases the short-term risks to health may be worth the longer term benefits.
- Will the proposal affect different groups of people in different ways? A proposal that is likely to benefit one section of the community may not benefit others and could lead to inequalities in health.

Please use the Health & Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 as a guide/checklist to assess the potential wider determinants of health impacts.

This tool will help guide your thinking as to what factors affect people's health and wellbeing, such as social support, their housing conditions, access to transport, employment, education, crime and disorder and environmental factors. It is not an exhaustive list, merely a tool to guide your assessment; there may be other factors specific to your activity.

Some questions you may wish to ask include:

- Will the activity impact on people's ability to socialise, potentially leading to social isolation?
- Will the activity affect a person's income and/or have an effect on their housing status?
- Is the activity likely to cause the recipient of a service more or less stress?
- Will any change in the service take into account different needs, such as those with learning difficulties?
- Will the activity affect the health and wellbeing of persons not directly related to the service/activity, such as carers, family members, other residents living nearby?
- If there is a short-term negative effect, what will be done to minimise the impact as much as possible?
- Are the longer-term impacts positive or negative? What will be done to either promote the positive effects or minimise the negative effects?
- Do the longer term positive outcomes outweigh the short term impacts?

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Sources used: In this section you should list all sources of the evidence you used to assess the impact of your activity. This could include, e.g.:

Information on the population affected

- Routinely collected local statistics (e.g. quality of life, health status, unemployment, crime, air quality, educational attainment, transport etc.)
- Local research/ Surveys of local conditions
- Community profiles i.e. Uttlesford JSNA

Wider Evidence

- Published Research, including evidence about similar proposals implemented elsewhere (e.g. Case Studies).
- Predictions from local or national models
- Locally commissioned research by statutory/voluntary/private organisations

Expert Opinion

- Views of residents and professionals with local knowledge and insight

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: Outcome of the Assessment

On reflection, what is your overall assessment of the activity?

The purpose of conducting this assessment is to offer an opportunity to think, reflect and **improve** the proposed activity. It will make sure that the Council can evidence that it has considered its due regard to equality and health & wellbeing to its best ability.

It is not expected that all proposals will be immediately without negative impacts! However, where these arise, what actions can be taken to mitigate against potential negative effects, or further promote the positive impacts?

Please tick one of the 3 boxes in this section to indicate whether you think:

1. all equality and health impacts are adequately addressed in the activity – proceed with your activity pending all other relevant approval processes
2. The assessment identified some negative impacts which could be addressed – please complete the Action Plan in Section 4.
3. If the assessment reveals some significant concerns, this is the time to stop and re-think, making sure that we spend our Council resources wisely and fairly. There is no shame in stopping a proposal.

*Note that the boxes will expand as required

Guidance: Action Plan

For each protected characteristic/health & wellbeing impact where an impact on people or their lives has been identified, complete one row of the action plan. You can add as many further rows as required.

State whether the impact is Positive or Negative

Briefly outline the actions that can be taken to mitigate against the negative impact or further enhance a positive impact. These actions could be to make changes to the activity itself (service, proposal, strategy etc.) or to make contingencies/alterations in the setting/environment where the activity will take place.

For example, might staff need additional training in communicating effectively with people with learning difficulties, if a new service is opened specifically targeting those people? Is access to the service fair and equitable? What will the impact on other service users be? How can we ensure equity of access to the service by all users? Will any signage need changing? Does the building where the service being delivered comply with disability regulations?

Guidance: Review

Changes happen all the time. A service/strategy/policy/activity that is appropriate at one time, may no longer be appropriate as the environment around us changes. This may be changes in our population, growth and makeup, legislative changes, environmental changes or socio-political changes.

Although we can't predict what's going to happen in the future, a review is recommended to ensure that what we are delivering as a Council is still the best use of our limited resources. The timescale for review will be dependent on the scale of the activity.

A major financial investment may require a review every 2-3 years for a large scale regeneration project over 10-15 years.

A small policy change may require a review in 6 months to assess whether there are any unintended outcomes of such a change.

Please indicate here how frequently it is expected to review your activity and a brief justification as to why this timescale is recommended.

Guidance: Key Contacts

For further advice or information contact your Divisional Equality Lead Officer

Division/Services	Head of Division/Services	Tel.No.

Appendix 2. Health & Wellbeing Impact Tool

Will the activity/service/policy/procedure affect any of the following characteristics? Please tick/check the boxes below
The following are a range of considerations that might help you to complete the assessment.

Lifestyle YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Personal circumstances YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Access to services/facilities/amenities YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Diet <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise and physical activity <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to passive smoking <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol intake <input type="checkbox"/> Dependency on prescription drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Illicit drug and substance use <input type="checkbox"/> Risky Sexual behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Other health-related behaviours, such as tooth-brushing, bathing, and wound care	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure and cohesion of family unit <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting <input type="checkbox"/> Childhood development <input type="checkbox"/> Life skills <input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment status <input type="checkbox"/> Working conditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level of income, including benefits <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level of disposable income <input type="checkbox"/> Housing tenure <input type="checkbox"/> Housing conditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational attainment <input type="checkbox"/> Skills levels including literacy and numeracy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Employment opportunities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Workplaces <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Housing <input type="checkbox"/> to Shops (to supply basic needs) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Community facilities <input type="checkbox"/> to Public transport <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Training and skills development <input type="checkbox"/> to Healthcare <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Social services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> to Respite care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to Leisure and recreation services and facilities
Social Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Economic Factors YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Factors YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Social contact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social support <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourliness <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in the community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Membership of community groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation of community/area <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in public affairs <input type="checkbox"/> Level of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of crime and disorder <input type="checkbox"/> Level of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of antisocial behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Public safety measures <input type="checkbox"/> Road safety measures	<input type="checkbox"/> Creation of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of wealth <input type="checkbox"/> Retention of wealth in local area/economy <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of income <input type="checkbox"/> Business activity <input type="checkbox"/> Job creation <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of employment opportunities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Availability of education opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of education opportunities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Availability of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of training and skills development opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Technological development <input type="checkbox"/> Amount of traffic congestion	<input type="checkbox"/> Air quality <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality <input type="checkbox"/> Soil quality/Level of contamination/Odour <input type="checkbox"/> Noise levels <input type="checkbox"/> Vibration <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards <input type="checkbox"/> Land use <input type="checkbox"/> Natural habitats <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape, including green and open spaces <input type="checkbox"/> Townscape, including civic areas and public realm <input type="checkbox"/> Use/consumption of natural resources <input type="checkbox"/> Energy use: CO2/other greenhouse gas emissions <input type="checkbox"/> Solid waste management <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport infrastructure

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