

AGENDA ITEM 7

HRA BUSINESS PLAN – PRIORITIES FOR ACTION 2016 – 2021

Action	Timescale	Resources	Outcome	Update September 2017
1. Operate a sound and viable housing business in a professional and cost effective manner				
Continue to develop business plan financial model to inform investment and service planning	Ongoing	Within existing resources	HRA that continues to be managed on sound business principles	<p>Government housing policy changes have affected the HRA Business Plan, both in the short term and in future years. The imposition of a 1% annual rent cut for four years from 1st April 2016 has had a significant effect on available resources over the life of the plan</p> <p>The HRA Business plan and financial model has been updated and shows that there will be pressures on the HRA from 2020 if the current level of expenditure on stock and new build continues as modelled.</p> <p>The HRA Business Plan allows the Council to have flexibility as to when loans are repaid and consideration will need to be given to refinancing the loans in order to both meet investment opportunities, and to balance the gap in the financial plan that is a result of the effect of these changes in housing policy</p>
Prepare for supporting people funding	Mar-17	Within existing resources	Options identified to enable key services to continue to be delivered	New delivery model for sheltered housing in place. Tenants have been

AGENDA ITEM 7

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reductions				<p>written to and new charges explained. All costs are now fully recoverable from tenants since the ending of support grant funding from county</p> <p>Introduced new Intensive Housing Management (IHM) charge – this can be included in Housing Benefit claim to reduce impact on residents receiving this service</p>
Improve performance management systems in housing services	Mar-17	Within existing resources	PI targets based on a combination of performance of peer LA's in HouseMark benchmarking group and historic UDC performance data	All PIs and targets reviewed. PI's continually monitored through new Housing Performance Management process
Maximise income to the HRA by achieving high collection rates for rents, service charges, sewage charges, garage rents and miscellaneous invoices	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rent arrears action taken at an earlier stage to prevent arrears from escalating. Providing debt support and signposting to tenants/leaseholders who are struggling. Corporate approach to rent collection to ensure join-up with individual cases	Income collection has been separated from the debt support work resulting in a significant reduction in rent arrears
Implement re-chargeable repairs policy	Apr-16	Within existing resources	Improve recovery of costs of repairs which are tenants' responsibility	Complete. New re-charge policy in place and working well
Evaluate the alternative options available for the delivery of housing	Apr-17	Within existing resources	Options identified for step change improvement in value for money	Evaluating options for expanding the repairs service currently provided to UDC tenants to other housing providers

AGENDA ITEM 7

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services through strategic and /or operational partnerships				through Aspire Property Services
Review the arrangements for the management of non-housing assets	Oct-16	Within existing resources	Rationalisation of management responsibilities and clarification of development potential	Complete. New structure in place
Ensure the void turnaround figures do not exceed targets to minimise rent losses	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rent loss through voids minimalised	Further review of the void processes carried out in August 2017 following recommendations from the Tenant Regulatory Panel (TRP). Review shows that new processes that have been implemented are working well
2. Ensure that all the council's tenants live in a decent home in settled communities for as long as needed, consistent with the council's Tenant Strategy				
Review tenant strategy to ensure that local housing need is met and assets are used effectively, utilising all available flexibilities	Apr-17	Within existing resources	Updated strategy	Complete. Strategy has been reviewed. No change to policy recommended at this time
Create a tenancy sustainment team	Aug-16	Within existing resources	Increased support for vulnerable tenants. A failed tenancy costs the Council several thousands of pounds so the success of this team will	Complete. Team in place. Successful Tenancy Sustainment Programme implemented. We have been able to prevent evictions, organise sustainable

AGENDA ITEM 7

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			ultimately save money for re-investment in the housing stock	repayment programmes and tenancies, and help individuals who have been previously unable to engage with us and many other support organisations. The service has been nominated for a Partnership Working Award in this year's You Make the Difference in Essex Awards
Improve the information on the housing stock	Apr-17	Within existing resources	Accessible up to date stock data	Complete. New stock data management system (SAM) has been implemented. Work is progressing on collecting stock data - it is anticipated that a 100% stock condition survey will be achieved on a rolling 5 year basis
Continue to manage and maintain the housing stock effectively and efficiently ensuring that properties meet, as a minimum, the decent homes standard	Ongoing	Within identified resources - approximately £5.3m pa	Well maintained homes and assets to minimum decent homes standard	Planned works programmes are progressing well. The authority is continuing to deliver a significant programme of investment in the stock. A robust monthly budget monitoring process has been implemented to ensure that projects are delivered on budget
Deliver an improved repairs and maintenance service through: 1. Enhancement of	Aug-16	£120k	Homes well maintained Improved tenant satisfaction More efficient and responsive deployment of personnel	Complete. Project plan to deliver IT improvements implemented 1. Mobile technology has been rolled out to all Surveyors and Operatives who can now raise and receive

AGENDA ITEM 7

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mobile technology for repairs and voids teams; 2. Electronic van stocking of operatives' vehicles 3. Online reporting of repairs				works orders/job tickets electronically 2. Decision made not to implement new electronic stock system following unsuccessful trials 3. Schedule Board being used by Repairs Planners to enable on-line scheduling of repairs jobs
Improve average energy efficiency for council properties	Apr-17	£530k	Reduced fuel costs for residents	Complete. All works identified in Phase I, II and III now complete and included: air source heat pumps/external wall cladding/solar panels Further properties identified for improvement works and budgets being prepared for works to be carried out in 2018/19. Potential project identified to install solar panels on all remaining council houses and flats
Continue to fund disabled adaptations for tenants and improve the delivery process	Ongoing	£260k pa	Reduction in the time people have to wait for adaptations	Disabled adaptations continue at a high demand – currently able to meet all requests within a reasonable timescale
Undertake fundamental review of policies and procedures to ensure service is 'Fit for Purpose'	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Policies in place that reflect best practice/current legislation	All policies and procedures regularly reviewed. Changes identified are brought to the tenant forum and housing board for approval

AGENDA ITEM 7

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3. Help tenants and leaseholders get involved with decisions about their housing				
Continue to develop Housing Regulatory Panel to scrutinise the performance of the Housing Service and to undertake service reviews	Ongoing	5k pa - training for members	A Housing Regulatory Panel that deliver in-depth challenging inspections - achieving improvements that really matter to tenants	The TRP have carried out a review of the sheltered housing service following their successful review of the Void process. Report has been presented to officers and progress with implementing the recommendations will be reported to the TRP and Housing Board
Review the approach to gathering tenant feedback and satisfaction	Mar-17	Within existing resources	Refreshed approach to assessing tenant satisfaction to inform service improvement planning	Complete. Online satisfaction survey has been designed so that tenants can feed back immediately after repair is carried out New STAR tenant satisfaction/feedback survey sent to all tenants in March 2017. Results have been analysed and show an overall improvement in satisfaction with housing services
Link tenant participation with opportunities for skill development	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Skilled Tenant Forum and Tenant Regulatory Panel members	Training programme in place
Publish annual tenants report	Ongoing	£3k pa	Annual report published	Annual report last published in November 2016. Currently in process of collecting data to be included in this year's report to be published in November 2017

AGENDA ITEM 7

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Benchmark service with other landlords through HouseMark	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Core benchmarking data uploaded to HouseMark for full organisational review	Latest core benchmarking data has been submitted – performance data and comparison with other authorities reviewed by officers at section heads meeting
4. Regenerate the stock/estates and build new affordable rented council housing in an efficient and effective manner				
Deliver the new homes programme	Mar-21	£6.898m	New homes to replace those lost though RTB sales - approximately 6 -10 per year	<p>Development programme on track:</p> <p>Holloway Crescent Phase I & II - 13 properties Mead Court Phase I & II – 29 properties Catons Lane – 6 properties 48 properties completed to date</p> <p>Planning permission obtained for development of garage sites in Sheds Lane – 3 properties (due to complete July 2018) 3 properties</p> <p>Also investigating possibility of UDC becoming delivery partner on some S106 sites - subject to RTB receipts</p>
Deliver Sheltered scheme re-development programme	Mar-18	£11.5m	Fit for purpose accommodation for the elderly	<p>Development programme on track:</p> <p>Reynolds Court Phase I – 14 properties 14 properties completed to date</p>

AGENDA ITEM 7

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				<p>Reynolds Court Phase II – 27 properties (due to complete August 2018) 27 properties</p> <p>Hatherley Court – remodelling (26 properties) and new build (1 property) – (due to complete August 2018)</p>
Review housing asset management strategy	Apr-18	Within existing resources	Established a clear policy on the use of HRA assets, regeneration and development	Strategy is being reviewed and will be presented to the Housing Board for comment at Housing Board meeting in December 2017
Develop and implement initiatives for improving estates	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Delivery of new estate improvement/ regeneration initiatives as part of the housing asset management strategy. Delivery of resident led improvements	Regular trailer events being held with more agencies offering to attend / estate inspection; projects identified for estate regeneration
Carry out development appraisals of identified sites and review business plan capacity to develop	Apr-17	Revenue cost of £50k pa for surveyor to co-ordinate works	Established housing development programme	<p>Proposals/plans being drawn up for sites at The Moors, Little Dunmow (16 properties); Newton Grove, Great Dunmow (4 properties – planning permission gained September 2017); Frambury Lane, Newport (5 properties) Total: 25 properties</p> <p>A number of garage and infill sites and excess garden land are being assessed for development viability, or for the</p>

AGENDA ITEM 7

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				opportunity to sell in order to cross-subsidise the development programme Total: 20 properties