

2007/08

SERVICE PLAN FOR HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICE

This plan sets out the details of the actions that the Council has agreed must be taken to improve the services provided by the Housing & Community Services Department. It combines the targets that are relevant to this Committee that have been agreed within the –

• Runnymede Strategic Plan 2005 - 2010	-	SP
• Best Value Improvement Plans (following service reviews)	-	BV
• Best Value Performance Indicators	-	BVPI
• Comprehensive Performance Assessment Improvement Plan	-	CPA
• 5 year Financial Forecast and Capital Programme	-	FFCP
• Published Service Standards	-	PSS
• Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement	-	IEG
• Community Strategy Targets	-	CST
• Risk Management Plan	-	RMP
• Equality Strategy	-	ES
• Corporate Governance Requirement	-	CGR
• Annual Efficiency Targets (ODPM)	-	AET
• Homelessness Strategy	-	HMS
• Private Sector Renewal Strategy	-	PSRS
• Housing Inspection Report	-	HI
• Housing Strategy	-	HS
• HRA Business Plan	-	BP

The last column of the attached tables indicates the origin of the action point. Officers' titles have been abbreviated as follows –

Director of Housing & Community Services	DHCS	Head of Housing Needs & Private Sector	HHN&PS
Head of Tenant Services	HOTS	Enabling Officer	EO
Partnership Officer	PO	Housing Needs Manager	HNM
Private Sector Housing Manager	PSHM	Head of Community Services	HCS
Tenancy Manager	TM	Housing Maintenance Manager	HMM
Independent Living Officer	ILO	Energy Co-ordinator	EC

HOMES FIRST

Strategy & Enabling

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
1. A target to provide 500 units over the 5 year period from December 2006 to December 2011 was set when the Housing Strategy was adopted in December 2006.	DHCS	Dec 2011	Lack of funding and restrictions on land supply	Additional funding will be required from the Housing Corporation to achieve the target. RSL's will be encouraged to make bids.	The number of affordable homes that the Council facilitates	18 new homes have been built and 15 acquired under the Homebuy initiative making a total of 33. 167 units are under construction.	HS SP
2. To facilitate provision of 20 units of supported housing (over 5 years).	DHCS	Dec 2011	Lack of both capital and revenue funding.	Additional funding will be required from the Housing Corporation to achieve the target RSL's will be encouraged to make bids.	The number of supported housing units provided.	The 18 units mentioned above were supported housing units and therefore target partially met.	SP
3. To examine ways to increase the number of affordable housing units obtained through the Planning system by reviewing the affordable housing policy within the Local Development Framework.	DTS	Dec 2007	Impact on economics of development.	Policy and implementation team	Policy review completed.	An Interim Housing Policy has now been adopted that requires provision at 40% on all sites of 15 units or more. Target achieved.	CST

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
4. To compile a Housing Strategy document every 5 years following research and consultation and undertake an annual review to consider need for additional information.	DHCS	New Strategy by 2011	Access to information to complete the Strategy.	Existing resources to be used to formulate Strategy.	Strategy produced and implemented.	New Strategy adopted in December 2006 and will be reviewed when results of the Housing Needs Survey are known.	HS
5. To develop a mechanism for assessing the deliverability of schemes and monitoring progress, ensuring that grant obtained is not lost.	DHCS	April 2007	None identified.	Existing resources.	System produced and implemented.	Still outstanding. Other work pressures have prevented completion.	RMP
6. To investigate the possibility of raising funds for affordable housing from Open Market Homebuy schemes for tenants.	DHCS	Dec 2007	None	Within existing resources	Review complete	As above	HS

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Public Sector Housing Conditions and Stock Management

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
1. To complete the plans to address the problem of PRC housing at Wapshott Road.	HOTS	Final completion date not given in BP but homes need to meet Decent Homes Standard by 2010.		Resources obtained.	Redevelopment of PRC homes to provide new decent homes for existing and future tenants.	Completion of Phase 1 scheduled for September 2008. Phase 2 due for completion in February 2010.	BP
2. To ensure that all properties meet the Decent Homes Standard.	HOTS/ HMM	Government deadline = 2010	Some properties may suddenly fail the standard if they are occupied by vulnerable people.	See details within the Business Plan.	All homes meet the Standard.	Less than 5% of stock now fails the standard and programmes of work are in place to address these.	SP/PB BV/PI
3. To increase the SAP ratings in traditionally built Council properties to a minimum of 73.	HMM	July 2010	Some system-built and solid wall properties may prove difficult to achieve higher SAP ratings	£400,000 p.a. identified for central heating programme. Additional sums will be required if we are to achieve target for the PRC/BISF/solid wall properties.	All homes achieve a SAP rating of 73 or more and tenants benefit from improved housing conditions and low fuel bills.	Average SAP rating now stands at 76.11. Scope for further improvement limited.	BP BV/PI
4. To deliver the bathroom and kitchen improvement programme.	HMM	Programme commenced October 2007.	None identified.	Business Plan contains provision of £18m for programmes for next 30 years.	Programmes complete and properties improved.	Phase 2 programme currently progressing.	BP

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
5. To collect 98.8% of the rent due for the HRA.	TM	April 2007	No significant obstacles.	Within existing resources.	98.8% or more is collected.	Target achieved. 99.8% collected 2007/08.	BVPI
6. To have no more than 6.8% of tenants with more than 7 weeks arrears.	TM	April 2007	No significant obstacles.	Within existing resources.	Less than 6.8% of tenants have 7 weeks arrears.	Target achieved. 3.25% for 2007/08. If this target to be kept – suggest lowering to 4%.	BVPI
7. To have no more than 15% of tenants in arrears served with a Notice of Seeking Possession.	TM	April 2007	No significant obstacles.	Within existing resources.	No more than 15% of tenants are served with Notice of Seeking Possession.	45% for 2007/08. When target set (15%) we did not realise that the BVPI required the denominator to be tenants in arrears and not all tenants. 15% is unachievable.	BVPI
8. To keep evictions for rent arrears to below 3 per year.	TM	April 2007	Whilst staff will continue to only consider eviction as a last resort, they will not shy away from taking possession proceedings, where appropriate, simply to achieve this target as it would impact on target 6.	Within existing resources.	Evictions kept to below 3 p.a.	Target achieved. Only 1 tenant evicted for rent arrears during 2007/08.	BVPI
9. To achieve the Commission for Racial Equality Standards for Social Landlords on tackling harassment included in "Tackling Racial Harassment: Code of Practice for Social Landlords".	HOTS	April 2007	No significant obstacles.	Within existing resources.	Standards achieved.	Standard achieved.	

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
10. Establish and publish Service Standards for all parts of the service, in consultation with users. Specifically for 2006/07, establish standards for the Leasehold Service, Anti-social Behaviour and Rent Arrears recovery.	HOTS/ TM/ HMM	April 2007	No significant obstacles.	Within existing resources.	Publication of Standards.	Service Standards produced following consultation. Target achieved.	KLOES
11. Improve Leasehold Service. A number of measurable targets established, including undertaking a satisfaction survey, setting targets for improving income collection, providing additional information with invoices and establishing Service Standards.	HOTS/ TM	April 2007	No significant obstacles, but improvements may require additional time spent on Leasehold service, which will impact on service charges.	Within existing resources.	Improved income collection. Survey completed. Standards set. Information provided with invoices.	- Survey undertaken. - Service Standards established. - Additional information provided with invoices. - Handbook produced. Target achieved.	KLOES
12. Introduce improvements to the allocation and sign-up process for new tenants.	TM	April 2007	No significant obstacles	Within existing resources	Improved void times. New Council tenants made more aware of their responsibilities. Follow up visits undertaken after tenancies start.	Sign up process improved following consultation with residents. New information pack produced for new tenants. Follow up visits undertaken after 1 and 6 month periods. Target achieved	KLOES

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
13. Increase post-inspection of repairs to 15%	HMM	April 2007	No significant obstacles	Within existing resources	15% of response repairs are inspected	15% of repairs inspected. Target achieved.	KLOEs
14. Publish programmes of improvements/major works up to 5 years in advance	HMM	April 2007	Unforeseen issues may either delay or advance specific programmes	Within existing resources	Programmes are published.	Programme published in "Streets Ahead". Target achieved.	KLOEs
15. Increase the number of repairs and inspections undertaken by appointment,	HMM	April 2007	No significant obstacles	Within existing resources	More appointments made for repairs and inspections.	Target achieved. All requests for repairs offered appointment or given opportunity to make appointment directly with contractor.	KLOEs
16. To undertake a review of RSL stock to establish progress towards meeting the Decent Homes Standard.	EO	April 2007	No significant obstacles, although work will need to be scheduled to ensure it does not clash with other projects.	Within existing resources	Information on RSL stock is improved.	Review complete and progress being made by all RSLs.	HS

RUNNYMEDE RENEWAL

Private Sector Housing

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
1. To reduce the number of empty homes by 15 during 2007/08.	EO	March 2008	Willingness of home owners to deal with their properties.	None identified.	The number of empty homes brought back into use.	24 empty homes brought back into use. Target exceeded.	BVPI
2. To provide advice and assistance on home repairs by putting information on Council's website	PSHM (Ass)	Dec 2007	None identified.	None identified.	Number of unfit properties and properties in disrepair declines.	Some information on the website but have been waiting for a DFG announcement.	PSRS
3. To undertake a proactive HMO inspection programme ensuring identification of unknown licensable HMO's.	PSHM (Enf)	Ongoing	Lack of resources and co-operation of HMO owners.	Resources are in place to deal with some inspections but not the subsequent management of HMOs?	The number of HMO's that do not comply with standards is reduced.	Ongoing. 53 licences to date.	PSRS
4. To promote energy efficiency schemes.	EC	Ongoing.	None identified.	Within existing budgets.	SAP ratings for private sector stock are improved.	The Council's Energy Manager continues to promote availability of grants.	PSRS
5. Undertake research to establish the Private Sector stock condition	HHN& PS	July 2008	Resources need to be identified for management of project.	Financial resources need to be identified for this project.	Stock information improved.	Survey in process combined with Housing Needs. Target completion July 2008.	HS
6. To update Private Sector Renewal Strategy.	HHN& PS	2009	Completion of Stock Condition Survey.	Within existing resources.	Strategy in place for Private Sector Housing.	This will take place when surveys are completed.	GOVT Guidance

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
7. Adopt best practice from Surrey DFG guidance manual	PSHM	April 2007	None identified	Within existing resources	Best practice adopted DFG applications processed efficiently and in accordance with legislation and best practice	DFG review results only just published. Existing process to be reviewed as part of Private Sector Renewal Strategy.	KLOES
8. Improve information on website about services provided by section,	PSHM	April 2007	None identified	Will require resources within Web team to update site	Improved information on the web site.	Some information on the website but have been waiting for a Disabled Facilities Grant announcement.	KLOES
9. Review the housing assistance policy	PSHM	April 2007	None identified	Within existing resources	Grants and loans administered efficiently and in accordance with best practice Improved private sector housing stock	DFG review now published. Once surveys completed this will be reviewed as part of the Private Sector Renewal Strategy.	KLOES

HOMELESSNESS, HOUSING REGISTER & HOUSING ADVICE

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
1. Complete the feasibility study for redesign or refurbishment options for the Council's temporary accommodation to improve use/comfort and reduce cost.	HHN& PS	2008	Financial resources.	Any proposals to refurbish the temporary accommodation will require capital funding.	Satisfaction amongst users of T.A.	Heathervale improvements underway. Ashdene has been inspected and works carried out to ensure it meets HHSRS.	HMS & HI
2. To review the Allocations Policy annually to ensure that it complies with current legislation and is achieving the overall aims for the Policy.	HNM	Annually	None identified.	None identified.	Policy complies with guidance and achieves Council's aims.	This is being reviewed as part of the Choice Based Lettings policy.	HMS
3. To ensure the average length of stay in temporary accommodation is below 55 weeks.	HNM	Ongoing	None identified	None identified.	Level of stay in temporary accommodation is less than 55 weeks.	Target achieved. Average stay in Temporary Accommodation was 24 weeks 2007/08.	BVPI 183b
4. To reduce the number of people sleeping rough on any night to below 10.	HNM	Ongoing	Degree of influence on rough sleepers. Information on locations.	Need to work with other agencies e.g. Police.	Rough sleeping reduced.	Target achieved. No rough sleepers reported.	BVPI 202
5. To let all permanent Council properties within 21 days of vacation.	HNM	Ongoing	Some units e.g. Sheltered units, are difficult to let.	Within existing resources.	The length of time properties are empty falls to 21 days or less.	One day over target due to high level of sheltered voids and low demand.	BVPI 212

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
6. To provide at least 80 or 2.6 households per thousand of the population with advice which resolves their housing situation and prevents homelessness	HNM	March 2008	Number of households that seek advice.	Within existing resources.	Number of homeless households is reduced.	Target achieved. 158 clients had homelessness prevented via housing options service.	BVPI 213
7. Reduce void levels in temporary accommodation to produce a saving of £12,500 in 2006/07.	DHCS	April 2007	We are being pressed to prevent homelessness through good housing advice BVPI 213 and this will increase voids.	Within existing resources.	voids are reduced.	Proposed sale of St Jude's will assist in meeting target. See item on agenda.	AET
8. To produce a series of housing advice leaflets and ensure they are available in libraries and health centres.	HNM	Annual check	Staff resources may not always be available to undertake task.	Within existing resources, if possible.	Leaflets produced Housing Advice freely available.	Target achieved. Information also on website.	HI
9. To annually undertake checks of the Housing software to ensure allocation policy is being followed.	HNM	Annually	None identified.	None identified.	System is accurate and efficient.	This is being reviewed through Choice Based Lettings policy.	HI
10. Publish procedure guides for both the Allocations process and the mutual exchange scheme.	HNM	April 2007	None identified	Within existing resources	Procedure guides published	Target achieved.	KLOES
11. Introduce a sub-regional Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme	HHN & PS	DC&LG requirement that CBL schemes are introduced by 2010	Subject to successful grant bid Agreement with regional partners	Will require resources to establish scheme, but once established, should be managed with existing resources	CBL scheme established	Ongoing.	GOVT Guidance

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
12. Provide support to applicants to ensure that current level of homeless acceptances (24 per annum) is not increased	HNM	Ongoing	Property trends e.g. increase in mortgage interest rates could increase homelessness.	DCLG Funding Revenue A/C Budgets	Continued decrease of homeless applications	18 homeless acceptances in 2007/08.	HMS
13. Establish a protocol to fast track Housing Benefit where this may prevent homelessness	HNM	March 2007		Within existing budgets and resources	Reduction in loss of tenancy due to arrears.	Target achieved. Housing Benefit assessment is now part of options interviews.	HMS
14. Hold annual reviews with voluntary groups who provide support services or preventative services for homeless households	HN	December 2007		Within existing resources and budget	Set up regular liaison meetings. Improve working relationships to prevent homelessness and provide support	Housing Needs Manager attends regular meetings. Head of Housing Need & Private Sector has quarterly meetings with CAB and other agencies.	HMS
15. Minimise the number of evictions from social housing by keeping evictions in Council's stock to below 5 a year and raising prevention of eviction with RSLs annually	HNM/ Ten Man Dept/ EO	Annual target		Within existing budgets and resources	Reduced eviction rates.	Only 1 tenant evicted by the Council during 2007/08. Level of evictions amongst RSLs continues to be monitored.	HMS
16. Explore opportunities to bid for funding to expand Private Sector Resettlement Scheme	HNM	Ongoing		Within existing resources DCLG funding	Increased use of private rented sector and thus prevention of homelessness	Bond Scheme up and running. Top up funds utilised from DCLG grant.	HMS

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
17. Undertake TA residents survey to identify what TA improvements residents want and feedback key findings to TA Improvement Group	HNM	December 2007		Resources need to be identified for this.	To identify improvements to TA	This is an appraisal target for the Hostels Manager but not yet achieved.	HMS
18. Provide a detailed welcome pack to households moving into Temporary Accommodation	HNM	March 2007		Time and resources need to be identified.	To improve information and support services to households moving into TA	Target achieved.	HMS
19. Set up protocol with Social Services for 16/17 year olds assessments	HNM	March 2007		Within existing resources Adult & Community Care funding	Conflict resolution and reduced instances of homelessness	Target achieved. Finally signed by Social Services.	HMS
20. Support implementation of the Surrey Teenage Pregnancy Strategy	Homeless Task Group/ SCC/ HNM	Ongoing		Within existing resources	Reduce levels of teenage pregnancy/ provision of appropriate support and accommodation for teenage parents	The Housing Needs Manager attends Surrey Teenage Pregnancy Board meetings.	HMS
21. Meet the DCLG target of reducing number of households in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010	HNM	March 2010	Increase in the number of homeless as a result of external factors e.g. rise in interest rates.	Within existing funding DCLG grant funding	Number of households in temporary accommodation reduced by 50% by 2010	Target met December 2005. Letter of confirmation from DCLG July 2006.	HMS

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
22. Establish a mechanism to review and monitor advice and information services to ensure they meet the needs of BME communities	HNM/ Homeless Task Group	December 2007		Resources will need to be identified	Increased awareness of services available	This is being looked at as part of Homeless Review.	HMS
23. Undertake a Homeless Audit and produce a new Homelessness Strategy	HHN/ PSH	Audit December 2007 Strategy December 2008	Availability of resources.	Additional resources may be needed for the Audit	A comprehensive Strategy is produced that takes account of all homeless priorities	Review complete and meetings held with other agencies. Results to feed into Strategy update.	HMS HS

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
1. To increase the number of new community alarm installations provided each year by 2%.	HCS	Annually	None identified.	None identified.	Increase in the number of new subscribers to the service.	Target exceeded. Currently running close to 4%.	BV
2. Consideration to be given to opportunities to provide a response service for the Careline alarm for people without a contact to be pursued through partnership working with other agencies.	HCS	April 2008	There may not be sufficient funding to enable this.	Opportunities to use volunteers will be examined however if this is not possible then additional resources will be required and may not be available.	Personal response provided to all Careline users.	Unlikely this target will be met as Social Services have no resources to achieve.	BV
3. Investigate the feasibility of transferring the concessionary bus permits function from the Committee section to Community Services section.	HCS	December 2008	Workload of existing officers.	Additional resources will need to be identified within Community Services.	Bus permit function integrated within Community Services.	Target achieved. Service transferred in February 2008.	BV
4. Arrangements to be made to compare the charging policies for hairdressing services in Day Centres with those of Elmbridge.	HCS	April 2007	Other workloads.	None.	Comparison completed and any recommendations for change made.	Proposals have been drawn up and information to be included in budget preparation for 2009/10	BV

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
5. To review the current use of Queen Elizabeth Day Centre and produce a final proposal for the unit.	DHCS	April 2007	Complexity of current use and available options.	To be identified.	Review complete and a plan for future use of the building determined.	Centre closed December 2007. Future use still under consideration.	BV
6. Discuss with Hanover and James Butcher Housing Associations the possibility of using facilities within Aldwyn Place and Schroder Court to provide additional services to older people.	DHCS/ BCSO	April 2007	Review requires input from other agencies.	No additional resource identified as necessary at current time.	Review complete and options considered.	Lunch club at Aldwyn Place should open in summer 2008.	BV
7. Report to H&CS Committee on outcome of discussions with the Charity Commission regarding The Orchard.	DHCS HOL	December 2006	None identified.	No additional resource needed.	Report made to Committee.	Other work pressures have prevented progress on this issue. However last contact from Commission indicated that there were no objections to current use.	BV
8. Research and examine different models of support provided by other authorities to cater for frail older people attending Day Centres.	HCS/ ILO	Sept. 2007	None identified.	No additional resource needed.	Other models of provision evaluated.	Yet to be undertaken in depth. It is clear however that there is unlikely to be substantial funding for new initiatives.	BV

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
9. Aims of Day Centre provision to remain as at present but reviewed every 3 years. Performance indicators to be used to assess effectiveness of the Day Centre Service.	DHCS/ HCS	July 2007	None identified.	No additional resource needed.	Day Centres are used effectively.	Yet to be undertaken.	BV
10. Investigate possibility of establishing resident involvement groups at sheltered schemes	HCS	April 2007	Resident apathy	No additional resources needed	Resident groups established	Discussions underway at Floral House.	KLOES
11. Update Residents' Handbook. Specifically, include repair responsibilities in handbook	HCS	April 2007	None identified	No additional resources needed	New handbook published	Target achieved. Completed March 2008.	KLOES
12. Benchmark service to ensure we provide value for money	HCS	April 2007	None identified	Within existing resources	RBC able to compare costs of providing service with others. Areas of comparative high spend can be identified.	Surrey comparisons have been made and RBC still provide much higher service levels. Obtaining competitive costs is difficult.	KLOES
13. Review the future of Beomonds	DH&CS HCS	2009	Significant obstacles to overcome, including funding for any reprovision, and relocation of existing residents. Additional problem that scheme is currently in flood plain.	Will be a need for additional resources.	Refurbished or redeveloped scheme.	To be considered following disposal of Pinefields site.	

BENEFITS

Target/Indicator	Lead Officer	Implement by	Barriers to implementation	Resources required/identified	Success Indicators	Current Position	Target origin
1. To process all new Housing Benefit claims within 30 days.	CSBM	Ongoing	Computer downtime. Time taken by customers to respond. Performance of the Rent Officer service, Job Centre Plus and Inland Revenue. Unplanned staff turnover and absences.	Within existing resources.	Average time target achieved.	18.87 days	BVPI
2. Average time for processing notifications of change of circumstances to be 9 days or less for 2006/7.	CSBM	Ongoing	Computer downtime. Time taken by customers to respond and unplanned staff absences.	Within existing resources.	Average time target achieved.	8.03 days	BVPI
3. To ensure 98% of benefit claims are correct on the basis of the information available.	CSBM	Ongoing	Computer downtime. Unplanned staff turnover/absences.	Within existing resources.	Target achieved.	99.60%	BVPI
4. To ensure 55% of recoverable over-payments are recovered during 2006/7	CSBM	Ongoing	Computer downtime. Unplanned staff turnover/absences.	Within existing resources.	Target achieved.	56.10%	BVPI