

# Consultation Draft

Achieving excellence in housing management

## Service Improvement Plan for the Housing Revenue Account 2009 – 2012



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## Foreword

This Improvement Plan sets out our programme for managing and maintaining our council housing over the next 3 years. It has been developed with the overall objective of achieving excellent housing management services for council tenants and leaseholders in Brighton & Hove.

The plan sets out our strategic aims, the targets we are committing to meet in each area of work, and how we will deliver them. It brings together in one document all the priorities and standards we need to meet to satisfy our different stakeholders, including the council as a whole, the housing needs of the city and central government. Most importantly, it takes account of our residents' priorities, interests and concerns. We will use it as a live document to stretch ourselves to deliver excellent services.

Our residents voted in 2007 to keep the council as their landlord, in the knowledge that the council could not afford to bring all homes up to modern standards without making a lot of changes. This document outlines how we aim to deliver a sustainable 30-year business plan to merit their vote of confidence in the Council

We are committed to providing quality homes, safe neighbourhoods and excellent, good value, services for all. Our aspiration is that each tenant will have a home that's right for them in a neighbourhood that is safe and well maintained. We also want our homes, our services and the security of a council tenancy to give our tenants the means to achieve their full potential.

Our relationship with our residents underpins everything we do. They have an active role to play in creating a better community for everybody. We have committed to deliver real improvements on the issues that are most important to our tenants - decent housing; clean and safe neighbourhoods; and consistently high level and responsive services. I am very much looking forward to the challenges ahead.

**Councillor Maria Caulfield**  
**Cabinet Member for Housing**

## Part 1 – Vision and context

Our vision is:

***“to provide excellent Housing Management services, with our residents at the heart of everything we do.”***

Improvement planning is a vital tool to help us to achieve our vision. This Improvement Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) clearly sets out the long term vision and strategic framework for the management of council housing in our city.

The plan aims to:

- Set out the authority’s vision as a social landlord; our strategic objectives for the service; and the actions we will take to deliver our objectives
- Set out our medium term financial strategy to achieve a sustainable HRA business and retain the Council’s housing stock
- Shape a new design for the Housing Management service with the aim of bringing staff together, increasing accountability and improving services.
- Help deliver a customer focused, performance-driven culture and ensure that staff are supported and developed to deliver excellent services
- Integrate with both the city’s Housing Strategy and wider corporate objectives to place Council housing at the centre of a wider strategic approach to reducing inequality and promoting community well-being.
- Outline the role social housing should play now and in the future to improve peoples life chances, underpin social cohesion, and contribute to sustainable mixed income communities in Brighton & Hove.

- Introduce a wider cross-tenure, housing options approach to frontline tenancy management services to maximise the use of the housing stock, tackle worklessness, and promote greater social and economic mobility.

The plan has three parts. Part 1 places the plan in context and sets our vision and key objectives for achieving excellence in Housing Management. Part 2 sets out our priorities for the next five years, the actions we will take to achieve these and the success criteria we will use to judge how well we have achieved them. Part 3 considers how we will redesign our housing management service to ensure that we are able to deliver the objectives in the plan.

### Meeting Brighton & Hove Council's priorities:

The plan outlines a service improvement programme containing the key strands of work to be delivered to realise the vision. Our aim for an excellent management service, delivered by quality staff and driven through resident involvement, supports the priorities in Brighton & Hove Council's Corporate Plan 2008-2011 to:

- protect the environment while growing the economy
- make better use of public money
- reduce inequality by increasing opportunity
- fair enforcement of the law
- open and effective city leadership

### Meeting our strategic housing priorities:

We recognise that the drive to achieve excellence in Housing Management will not be a success if carried out in isolation – it must recognise and address national and regional objectives, and also the needs and aspirations of the city. It is important that the improvement plan links to the new city-wide Housing Strategy, the Local Area Agreement, and the Local Development Framework to ensure we are effectively meeting the needs of the city. The citywide **Housing Strategy** has three overall priorities reflecting the basic housing needs of the city:

- **Improving housing supply.** Making sure that the city has the right type of housing to meet the needs of residents

- **Improving housing quality.** Making sure that residents are able to live in decent homes suitable for their needs.
- **Improving housing support.** Making sure residents are supported to maintain their independence.

We follow the 6 underlying principles for the citywide Housing Strategy in everything we do:

- **A healthy city.** Making sure our services improve the quality of residents' lives
- **Reducing inequality.** Making sure our services are welcoming and responsive to the needs of our communities
- **Improving neighbourhoods.** Making sure our services contribute to creating safe sustainable communities
- **Accountability to local people.** Making sure local people are involved in decisions about the services that affect them
- **Value for money.** Making sure our services are efficient and provide maximum impact
- **Partnership working.** Making sure we work with all those who can help improve the quality of life in the city

## Meeting our residents' priorities

We are committed to working with all our tenants and leaseholders and their representatives to find out what their priorities are for the Housing Management service, and agree how we can best achieve them.

For information on tenant involvement see page 16

Over the last 12 months, we have involved tenants in a wide range of working groups to seek their views on how we can achieve excellence in service delivery. This improvement plan reflects the priorities that tenants have given us:



Our residents have told us they would like...	See page:
• to retain the council as their landlord	3
• to work with us on monitoring performance, quality, satisfaction and value for money	10
• to see an improvement in our customer service	10
• to be told of plans which affect them as far in advance as possible	10
• to work with us on long term planning of our investment programme	11
• to retain an element of participatory budgeting through the estates development budget	11
• for community wardens to work more closely with housing officers	11
• a dedicated cleaning service for common areas	11
• to see housing work more closely with our partners on providing safer and cleaner neighbourhoods	11
• to see detailed register of adapted, adaptable and accessible homes	13
• to be offered practical assistance to help people to move as an alternative to adaptations.	13
• to be offered practical assistance for downsizing	13
• the terms of the tenancy agreement enforced in order to tackle neighbour nuisance	14
• to see an improved assessment process so that we ensure that only those people who are suitable for sheltered can bid	14
• to be involved in agreeing local lettings plans	14
• a sheltered housing policy with a model for sheltered housing that includes scheme managers	14

## The plan in context – links to national policy

The new **Housing & Regeneration Act 2008** takes forward the recommendations made by Professor Martin Cave in his report **Every tenant matters: A review of social housing regulation** published in 2007. The Act has 3 main elements:

- to make it easier for local authorities to build new council homes to meet local needs
- to create the Homes & Communities Agency that will focus on the delivery of new affordable housing and work to regenerate run down areas.
- to set up a social housing regulator (the Tenant Services Authority) that will ensure providers improve standards and give tenants have a greater say in the management of their homes.

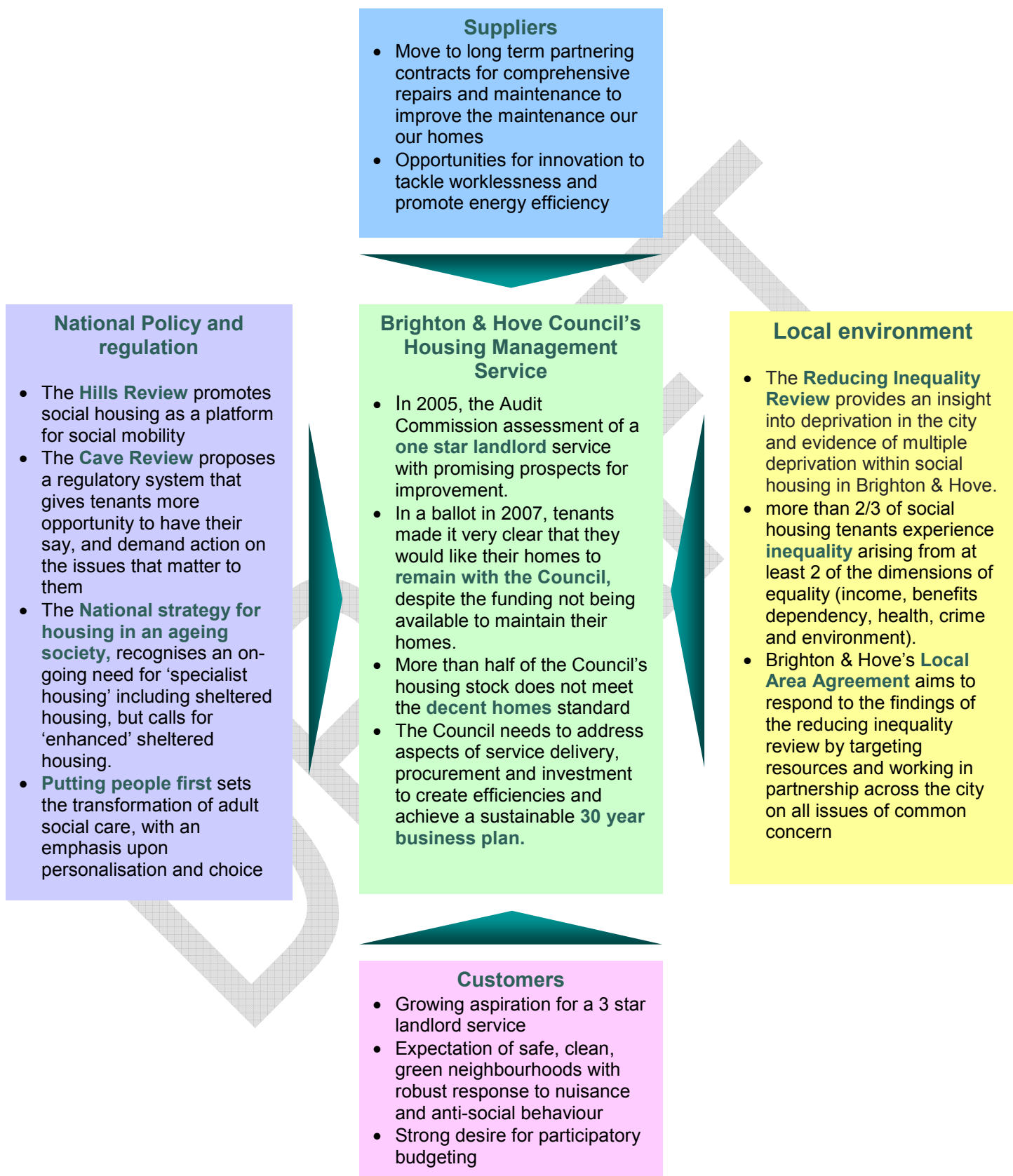
Alongside the Act, the government is carrying out a review of council housing finances and a **Housing Reform Green Paper** is also anticipated at the end of the year which is expected link housing services to economic dependence and social mobility.

The new **Welfare Reform Bill** focuses on helping people get back into work. This builds upon the work of the Hills Review, **Ends and Means: The future roles of social housing in England** that was published in 2007. Hills recognised the problem of high levels of worklessness in social housing and the need to retain tenants with mixed incomes.

The government recently published its housing strategy for older people, **Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society**. This national strategy brings together priorities from across government departments, in particular the 2007 Green Paper **Homes for the Future** and the Department of Health's 2006 White Paper **Our Health, Our Care, Our Say** and 2007 concordat on adult social care **Putting People First**. These documents are also feeding into the forthcoming social care Green Paper and new Independent Living Strategy. All of these strategic documents want to support people to live independently in the community though the provision of personalised self directed support.



# The context in which we work



## Part Two – Delivering our Priorities

Through our Service Improvement Plan we aim to achieve excellence in Housing Management by focusing on 5 core strategic priorities:

1. Improve services to an excellent standard, with residents at the heart of everything we do
2. Improve the quality and sustainability of our homes and neighbourhoods
3. Deliver value for money services and maintain a sustainable 30 year business plan
4. Make best use of our housing stock to address housing need
5. Ensure that social housing provides a platform for reducing inequality and creating opportunity

## Priority 1: Improve services to an excellent standard, with residents at the heart of everything we do

### This means:

- Brighton & Hove tenants receiving a first class and courteous service – every time
- Offering residents a range of involvement opportunities and evaluating the impact of resident involvement
- Providing services that are fully accessible and tailored to individual needs
- Rigorous use of customer feedback to improve the quality and value of services, by ensuring processes to capture feedback, and then implement and report on service improvements
- Learning from the best to drive up the quality of customer services through benchmarking against the best
- Develop the potential of local housing offices to serve their communities, by exploring how they can provide a range of services from the Council and other sectors

### To achieve this we will:

- Deliver a Housing Management '3 star' service improvement and redesign programme
- Develop initiatives to involve residents in monitoring of performance, quality, satisfaction, value for money
- Develop a new performance management framework to strengthen relationships with partners and customers
- Achieve the Customer Service Excellence Standard
- Develop a Customer Access Strategy for the Housing Management service
- Improve front line customer service skills through NVQ accredited training for staff
- Achieve Investors in People Status

### We will measure success by:

- Customer Service Excellence Standard awarded during 2009
- Increase overall tenant satisfaction from 72% to 80%
- 75% of all front line staff attained at least NVQ level 2 Customer Service by 2010
- Investors in People status achieved during 2008/09
- 75% of all estate cleaners attained NVQ cleaning in 2009

## Priority 2: Improve the quality and sustainability of our homes and neighbourhoods

### This means:

- Improving the physical environment of our homes and estates so residents feel safe, secure and part of a thriving community
- Making sure all our homes achieve and maintain the Brighton & Hove Standard
- Having a 'right first time' repairs service with appointments to suit the customer
- Using our procurement processes to maximise opportunities for improving sustainability and energy efficiency
- Developing the capacity of our workforce to deliver the investment programme.
- Establishing a high performing partnership to achieve the residents' vision for a cleaner, safer and greener environment and improved quality of life within our neighbourhoods
- Involving tenants in improving their neighbourhoods through the Estates Development Budget

### To achieve this we will:

- Improve and maintain the quality of the housing stock through a comprehensive asset management strategy agreed with tenants via the asset management panel
- Through our Procurement Strategy, tender for long term comprehensive partnering contracts for the maintenance and improvement of the housing stock
- Redesign our Repairs and Maintenance Team to strengthen performance management
- Seek to achieve Construction Clients Charter status by April 2010
- Seek to improve energy efficiency stock through the procurement strategy
- Redesign our estate service following the recommendations of the Tenant Focus Group

### We will measure success by:

- Increased customer satisfaction with local neighbourhoods
- All our homes meeting the Brighton & Hove Standard
- Achieving a balance between planned and responsive repairs with a target ratio of 40/60 ratio by September 2011.
- Achieve Construction Clients Charter status by April 2010
- Achieve Cleaner Safer Greener Neighbourhood Kitemark during 2009

## Priority 3: Deliver value for money services and a sustainable 30 year business plan

### This means:

- Delivering the 30 year business plan and medium-term financial strategy to maintain a sustainable business
- Delivering the housing management redesign programme to reduce management costs
- Delivering the procurement strategy to reduce unit costs of all repair, maintenance and capital works.
- Developing a local delivery vehicle to generate additional funding to invest in improvements to the housing stock
- Learning from the best to deliver value for money services through benchmarking against the best
- Developing a value for money culture amongst staff to inform all decision making through practical delivery of the actions arising from the Value for Money review and targeted training.

### To achieve this we will:

- Redesign the Housing Management Service to reduce unit costs
- Establish a local delivery vehicle to generate investment in the housing stock
- Develop a Medium-Term Budget Strategy and set and monitor annual savings targets to improve income streams and reduce expenditure
- Maximise income collection, whilst promoting financial inclusion
- Develop benchmarking with internal and external partners
- Review the HRA Business Plan financial model annually and ensure it meets the requirements of the service and central government

### We will measure success by:

- Achievement of annual savings targets and improvement in management and maintenance costs per dwelling per week
- Actions arising from the Housing Value for Money Review are implemented
- HRA Business Plan remains sustainable over 30 years
- Improve our income collection rate to 99% by 2010

## Priority 4: Make best use of housing stock to address housing need

### This means:

- Integration with the City's Housing Strategy to ensure the best use of the whole housing stock
- Developing new opportunities for low cost home ownership through the development of a home ownership strategy
- Tackling overcrowding through targeted housing options and well-being advice
- Releasing more family and adapted homes through targeted use of the transfer incentive scheme
- Offering local housing offices as gateways to a wider range of services

### To achieve this we will:

- Train and develop frontline staff in the housing options approach and ethos
- Strengthen the flow of information between housing offices, social care services and children's services so that the most vulnerable residents can be identified and supported
- Develop and maintain an accessible housing register
- Support households wishing to downsize
- Develop a targeted approach to deliver housing options and well-being advice to overcrowded households
- Redesign the Right to Buy & Leasehold team to Home Ownership team to enable delivery of an integrated home ownership service.
- Market and promote the enfranchisement of HRA properties where all the flats have been sold to leaseholders

### We will measure success by:

- All staff trained in delivering housing options advice during 2009
- Homeownership team established during 2009

## Priority 5: Promote social housing as a platform for reducing inequality and creating opportunity

### This means:

- Developing links between housing and employment advice
- Balancing rigorous tenancy enforcement with preventative approaches to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour
- Providing targeted interventions to those vulnerable households experiencing multiple disadvantages
- Developing an effective financial inclusion strategy to address fuel poverty, and support residents in financial difficulty
- Working with Adult Social Care to provide personalised services that address support and care needs
- Working with the Children & Young People's Trust to develop 'whole family' approaches to tackling family breakdown and resulting youth homelessness

### To achieve this we will:

- Develop a strategy for tackling worklessness in social housing
- Develop a Sheltered Housing Policy
- Deliver the actions in the LGBT, BME and Older People's Housing Strategy
- Develop a financial inclusion strategy
- Deliver services for the whole family as a partner on the 'Think Family' pathfinder
- Work with the city's most challenging families to reduce anti-social behaviour through the Housing Management Social Inclusion Action Plan

### We will measure success by:

- Employment training and apprenticeships established with our contractors
- Active participation in the Local Employment Partnership
- Remodel of sheltered housing as recommended by the Sheltered housing working group
- Introduction of 'community intervention teams'
- Reduction in youth homelessness as a result of family breakdown

## Part three – Delivery

To enable us to deliver our strategic plan we will review the housing management service, focusing on a range of key issues. In undertaking this review we will:

- Ensure that as a service we are equipped to focus on investment, tenancy management, and business improvement
- help our staff to do their jobs by encouraging continuous learning and rewarding excellence.
- build partnership, innovation and efficiency targets into all our contracts
- Use technology intelligently to help us deliver better, more efficient services and give us greater flexibility

### Key aspects to improving the Service

- **Investment.** Effectively managing the asset base for the future, ensuring the repairs, maintenance and improvement of the HRA stock by means of well developed procurement and asset strategise to provide value for money with excellent service delivery.
- **Tenancy Management.** Providing an efficient core housing management service to tenants and leaseholders with a focus upon 'getting the basics right first time', excellent customer service, and creating opportunities for tenant and neighbourhood empowerment.
- **Business Improvement.** Providing specialist services to tackle multiple disadvantage, dependency and worklessness and promote financial inclusion and opportunities for home ownership. Emphasis on targeted, personalised interventions to those households in need of additional support



## Improving our stock investment and asset management.

Our aim is to provide a proactive and planned investment and asset management service that is based on good asset management data and that incorporates residents' aspirations. We want to fully develop partnering with our constructors to obtain maximum efficiency from the long term partnering agreements for the repair and maintenance of the housing stock. The service will focus upon putting tenants and leaseholders at the heart of maintenance and improvement works to the stock, by making it easy for residents to report or query repairs or improvements by telephone, in person or electronically, including outside normal office hours. We aim to tell service users when their repair should be completed at the time they report it, and be able to arrange a repair at a time to suit them. We want to develop a wide range of methods to receive feedback from tenants on their satisfaction with our repairs service.

Our asset management function will focus upon working with our partners to collect accurate information on stock condition, so that this can be used to prioritise investment and strategically manage resources. We aim to be able to automatically update information from asset management programmes into our stock condition database. By moving to long term partnering agreements we will work with our constructors to develop an investment programme which covers the short, medium and long term and provides sufficient detail so that service users and others are clear about the extent and timing of works.

Our responsive repairs service will focus upon completing repairs to a high standard within our target timescales, generally at the first visit. We want to carry out repairs and safety checks to our empty properties quickly and efficiently and ensure that safety check and annual services are carried out on all internal gas appliances. We will seek to achieve Chartered Construction Client Status for our maintenance services as a way of demonstrating that we are providing an excellent service.

The major investment in the housing stock through the delivery of the new long term contracts will maximise opportunities for making it easier and safer for people to stay in their own homes, by providing housing that is more responsive to the needs of individuals and communities. Investment in adaptations will aim to assist with the management of pressures upon health and social care.

## Improving our tenancy management.

Our aim is for a service that will deliver tenancy management in an appropriate way in full consultation with our tenants. We will focus upon providing excellent customer service, and getting the service 'right first time'. Our workforce development strategy will develop our frontline staff to have a wide knowledge of the full range of enquiries that they receive, or to know who or how to access the necessary support services.

We want to offer a comprehensive range of ways for service users to contact them – by telephone, in person, through the website or electronically. We want to ensure that our services recognise and reflect the different populations of residents and users of tenancy and estate management services, with staff trained to deliver the right service to a range of service users.

At the start of every tenancy, we want to help our tenants to understand the condition of their tenancy, how breaches will be dealt with, and what to expect in return. Residents will be able to easily report Anti Social Behaviour and breaches of tenancy conditions, and we will ensure that we have efficient and effective arrangements for dealing with them.

We aim for estates which are clean, tidy and attractive. Abandoned vehicles, graffiti and vandalism will be dealt with swiftly according to set procedures. We will work with local residents and relevant partners to systematically inspect all estates to identify illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, footpaths, cleaning standards, condition of communal facilities and graffiti. We will deal quickly and efficiently with the issues identified.

## Enabling continuous business improvement.

By establishing a focus upon continuous business improvement, the service will set challenging service standards in conjunction with service users and stakeholders, which are tailored to meet local need. We will provide our service users with comprehensive and accurate information on services, including costs and benefits.

We will continue to develop our specialist services in area such as income collection, lettings and home ownership. Our income collection service will provide flexible payment options that make it easy for service users to pay rent, service charges and other debts. We will offer a range of ways for service users to contact them – by telephone, in person, or electronically - and provide customer-friendly information about their accounts. We aim to offer advice to prevent debt increasing by taking early action as soon as accounts fall into arrears and ensure that customer-friendly letters and home visits to vulnerable residents are available and carried out when appropriate.

We aim to prevent arrears and tackle fuel poverty by ensuring that all new tenants receive an accurate welfare benefits check at the start of their tenancies and advice on debt management as appropriate. We will make effective use of local lettings policies where appropriate, which balance our housing need against the need to promote balanced communities.

We aim to have a clear understanding of the local community and service user profile so that we can ensure that our services are targeted to meet local need. We aim work with our partners to providing specialist services to tackle multiple disadvantage, dependency and worklessness and promote financial inclusion and opportunities for home ownership. There are a number of steps that could be taken, including:

- Providing targeted, joined up employment advice and well-being support during the lettings process
- Revisiting employment training as part of any housing reviews

## Involving our tenants

Listening to our residents is fundamental to our way of working. This plan has been developed following a collection of processes involving residents. As part of the planning process we have engaged with residents in the following ways:

- Tenants Adaptations Focus Group
- Tenants Allocations Focus Group
- Tenancy Agreement Review Focus Group
- Estate Services Focus Group
- Sheltered Housing Tenants Focus Group and resident roadshows
- Estates Development Budget Working Group
- Asset Management Panel
- Local Area Panels and Housing Management Consultative Committee

Our residents are regularly consulted on housing management matters through meetings of local Area Panels, and the Housing Management Consultative Committee.

## Improving tenant involvement

We aim to adopt a range of different approaches, with different levels and styles of involvement. As the Landlord we aim to:

- Actively canvasses the views of service users, and stakeholders, including the traditionally hard-to-reach groups and uses them to review or improve services.
- involve our tenants in a range of activities that influence, major decisions that affect the service
- Show that consultation and involvement always begins at an early stage and that service user views are taken into account before all key decisions are made.
- Treat resident involvement as an integrated and important element of the service, designed for the convenience of the service user and not the organisation.
- ensure that our service users feel confident that their input will be valued and acted upon.
- be clear about the purposes of involving residents and should evaluate outcomes against these objectives;
- offer residents a menu of opportunities to get involved;
- Have a range of mechanisms in place that allow service users to participate effectively, in a way and level that suits them, in the design, management and performance of housing services.

## Financial strategy

### HRA Business Plan Financial Model

The HRA business plan projects the 30 year capital and revenue position for the period 2008/09 to 2037/38. Our financial model is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The Asset Management Strategy and benchmarking unit costs are integrated into the Business Plan.

The HRA receives an annual subsidy determination that currently results in a net transfer of resources to central government. The government is reviewing the method of subsidy distribution as the current subsidy system is producing a surplus for central government. The outcome of the review will not be known until 2009 and could impact on the 2010/11 HRA budget.

### Current financial position

Delivering decent homes remains an important driver of the financial model and consequently priority has been put on key components of decent homes including windows, doors, heating and electrical systems, plus high quality replacement kitchens and bathrooms which require significant investment but can substantially improve the quality of accommodation and resident living conditions. Non essential components, including environmental factors, have been excluded from the model except some water and energy reduction features which save residents money and help to protect the environment. The key to meeting the required levels of improvements is ensuring that the target costs of the works are met.

### Financial planning principles

The underlying principles to be adopted in the savings process will be:

- Value for money including improvements in procurement and partnership working
- Aligning resources with business plan priorities
- Improving income generation & collection
- Aligning the HRA business plan with commissioning strategies for Children's Services and care packages for adults
- Achieving maximum benefit from the asset base

The council will actively promote strong financial and risk management and maintain sufficient reserves to support financial planning as set out in the Financial Management section of the Corporate Plan.

### **Medium Term Financial Strategy (2008/09 – 2013/14)**

Our medium term strategy is focussed on reducing capital unit costs in order to reduce expenditure on the capital programme, and increasing resources to finance the works required to achieve the Decent Homes Standard by 2013:-

- Reducing Capital Unit Costs
- Increasing Revenue Contributions to Capital
- Prudential (unsupported) Borrowing
- Increasing Capital Receipts through the development of a local delivery vehicle

### **Long Term Financial Strategy**

The HRA Operating Account is projected to remain in balance for the remaining 30 year period. However it is very difficult to predict with any certainty more than 5 to 10 years ahead, particularly with the current housing subsidy system under review, and this plan and its assumptions will be reviewed and updated on annual basis in order to ensure it remains sustainable.

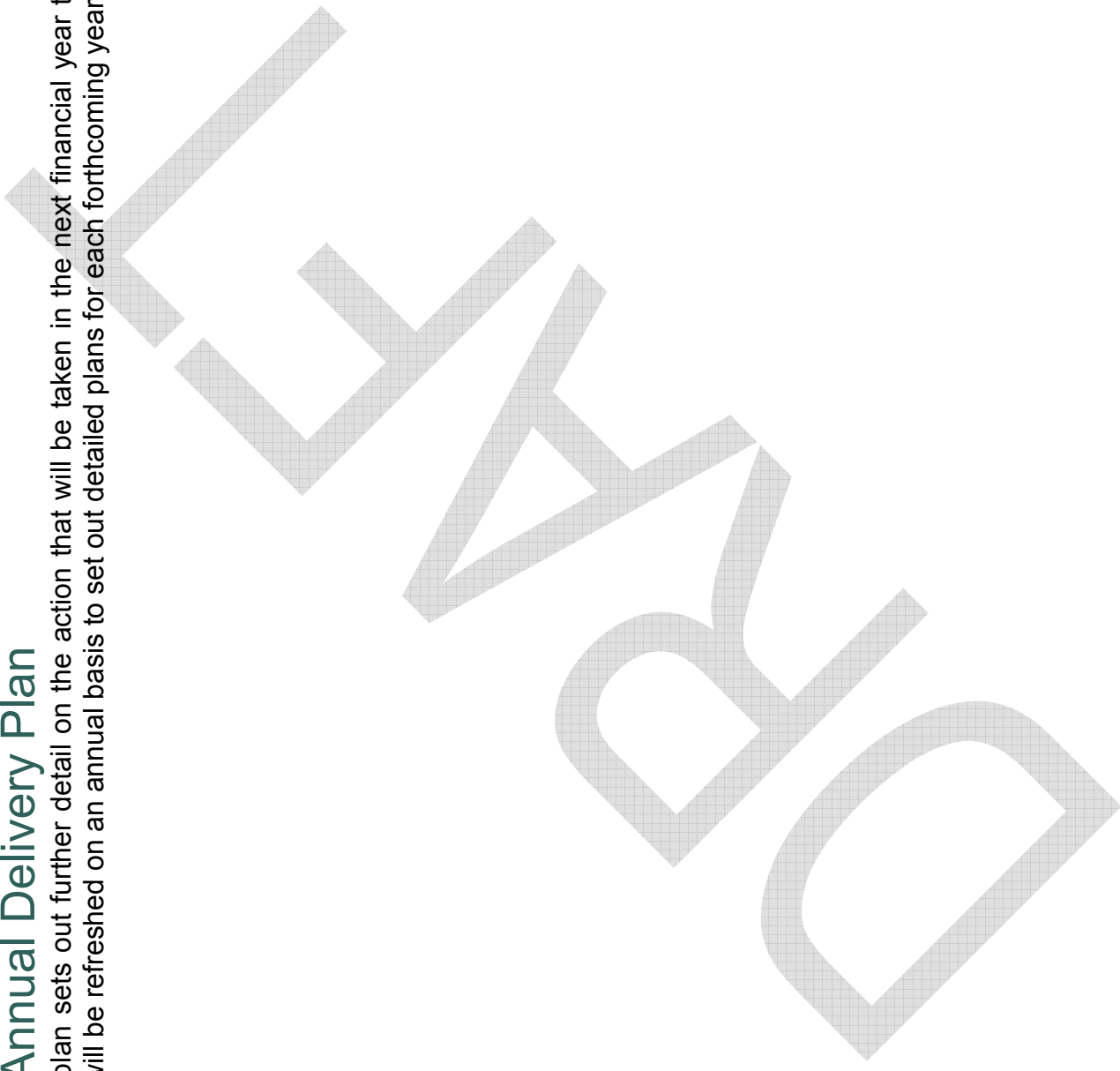
### **Value for money review**

Our service redesign programme is driven by the recognition of the need to achieve greater value for money in order to have a sustainable future. To secure this, benchmarking, service reviews, and annual efficiency targets will be developed. Our Performance Management Framework will drive further cost efficiencies and performance improvements, informed by resident involvement and a robust resource allocation process.

## Appendix 1.: Annual Delivery Plan

A one year delivery plan sets out further detail on the action that will be taken in the next financial year to work towards the business plan priorities. This will be refreshed on an annual basis to set out detailed plans for each forthcoming year.

[to be inserted]



## APPENDIX 2: Performance Plan

PI no.	PI definition	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Benchmark	Improvement Target	2008/09 year to date



## Appendix 3.

# Equality Impact Assessment Summary

The HRA Service Improvement Plan has been developed alongside the Housing Strategy through a staged process that has enabled us to engage with service users, services providers and the wider community and take into account their views, concerns and aspirations. To ensure that the over-arching Housing Strategy is truly inclusive we carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment to identify the positive and negative impacts our strategic objectives and actions will have on service users, staff and the community. These findings have helped shape our objectives and goals to help mitigate potential negative impacts.

Below is a summary of our approach to the 6 equality strands:

- **Race:** BME Housing Strategy in development.
- **Disability:** Strategy Statement on Physical Disabilities incorporated into the Housing Strategy and Older People's Housing Strategy. Disability of all kinds, including physical disability, learning disability and mental health issues, are also a key feature of the Supporting People and Learning Disability Housing Strategies.
- **Gender and gender identity:** Actions from the Gender Equality Scheme have been fed into the strategic development process. Gender Identity is also a key feature of the LGBT Housing Strategy.
- **Age:** Older People's Housing Strategy in development. Youth Homelessness Strategy developed in 2007. Supporting People Strategy links to older people's services, youth homelessness services and services for young people at risk.
- **Religion / Belief:** The BME Housing Strategy includes community safety objectives linked to religion and belief.
- **Sexual Orientation:** Addressing housing need relating to sexual orientation is a key feature of the LGBT Housing Strategy.

During the consultation period an equalities impact assessment on the draft service improvement plan will be undertaken.

**We would very much like your comments and feedback on this draft HRA Service Improvement Plan.**

**Please post your comments by 31 December 2008 to:**

**FREEPOST RRRT-ETLH-KYSK**

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