

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**

**PERFORMANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

**8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**STRATEGIC HOUSING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2008/09**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Sub-Committee with an update of the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan that was implemented following an inspection by the Audit Commission in January 2007.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the information and progress identified in the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 is considered.

**3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 The Audit Commission undertook an inspection of the Council's Strategic Housing Services during the week commencing 15th January 2007. This covered the development of the Housing Strategy, helping to provide more affordable housing, meeting housing needs, the housing options and homelessness service, and improving housing conditions in the private sector. The inspection was based on the Audit Commission's 'No.2 Strategic Approach to Housing' key line of enquiry – known as KLOE 2.
- 3.2 The Council submitted a Strategic Housing Service Self Assessment prior to the Inspection. The Inspection Team used the Self Assessment as the basis of focusing their on-site inspection work.
- 3.3 The Inspection Team published their Inspection Report on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007. On a scale from zero to three stars, the Audit Commission Inspection Team scored the service as a fair one star service, with uncertain prospects for improvement against the judgements within KLOE 2.
- 3.4 The Inspection Report also contained eight recommendations that contained practical pointers for improvement. They cover not only the strategic housing functions but also cross cutting issues of customer access, diversity, performance management and value for money. The dates stated by the Audit Commission for implementation of their recommendations have been revised due to capacity issues within the Strategic Housing team.

- 3.5 The eight headline recommendations made by the Audit Commission are listed below and the detail behind these is contained within the Service Improvement Plan attached at Annex 1:
- R1 – Strengthen the focus on customers
  - R2 – Strengthen the Council’s approach to diversity
  - R3 – Strengthen the strategic approach to housing
  - R4 – Make best use of existing housing
  - R5 – Enable the provision of more housing
  - R6 – Improve value for money and integrate it into working practices
  - R7 – Strengthen improvement planning and performance management
  - R8 – Strengthen the capacity in the service
- 3.6 Following the Inspection, an Inspection Improvement Plan was implemented to ensure that the recommendations from the Inspection are delivered. The Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan covers actions to deliver the eight recommendations and is adapted and monitored by Strategic Housing Group on a bi-monthly basis. This group includes the Head of Planning and Regeneration, Head of Housing, Head of Environmental Health and officers from these departments. A copy of the current Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan for 2008/09 is attached at Annex 1.

## Section 1

### Background

The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively and delivers high-quality services to the public. Within the Audit Commission, the Housing Inspectorate inspects and monitors the performance of Local Authority Housing Departments, Local Authority Supporting People Teams, Arms Length Management Organisations and Housing Associations. Inspections are carried out using powers under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999 and in line with the Audit Commission’s strategic regulation principles.

The Audit Commission undertook an inspection of the Council’s Strategic Housing Services during the week commencing 15th January 2007. This covered the development of the Housing Strategy, helping to provide more affordable housing, meeting housing needs, the housing options and homelessness service, and improving housing conditions in the private sector. The inspection was based on the Audit Commission’s ‘No.2 Strategic Approach to Housing’ key line of enquiry – known as KLOE 2.

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The Inspection Team published their Inspection Report on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007. On a scale from zero to three stars, the Audit Commission Inspection Team scored the service as a fair one star service, with uncertain prospects for improvement against the judgements within KLOE 2.

The Audit Commission made eight recommendations to improve not only the strategic housing functions but also cross cutting issues of customer access, diversity, performance management and value for money.

To implement these recommendations effectively a Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan was produced that put actions in place to improve service delivery. The Improvement Plan is updated regularly and monitored by Strategic Group on a bi-monthly basis. Members of this group include the Head of Planning and Regeneration, Head of Housing and Head of Environmental Health.

## **Section 2**

### **Details of Matters to be Considered**

That the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan 2008/09 attached at Annex 1 and the actions and progress contained within it are considered by the Sub-Committee.

## **Section 3**

### **Contribution to CHASE**

The Council's vision and objectives includes the aim of Building an Excellent Council. The continued implementation of the Service Improvement Plan will improve the Strategic Housing Service in line with this vision.

## **Section 4**

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications for the Council as a result of this report.

## **Section 5**

### **Human Resource Implications**

There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

**Section 6**

**Legal Implications**

The Audit Commission is the driving force for improvement in public services. Its practical recommendations and encouragement of best practice seeks to ensure that public services provide good value for money. By adoption of the Audit Commission's recommendations it will assist the Council in achieving this standard in respect of Strategic Housing.

**Section 7**

**Section 17 (Crime Prevention) Implications**

There are no crime prevention implications arising from this report.

**Section 8**

**Human Rights Act Implications**

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

**Section 9**

**Data Protection Act Implications**

There are no Data Protection Act implications arising from this report.

**Section 10**

**Risk Management Implications**

The risks of not meeting the Audit Commission recommendations are further inspections and significantly reduced chances of improving the inspection score. These risks are mitigated by the continued monitoring and progress contained within the Improvement Plan.

**Section 11**

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

The recommendations made by the Audit Commission contain issues concerning equality and diversity. Meeting these recommendations will ensure a fair and equitable service is being provided.

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**Section 12**

**Other Options Considered**

The Audit Commission recommended that a Service Improvement Plan was put in place to deliver the recommendations contained within the inspection report.

**Section 13**

**List of Background Papers**

Audit Commission Strategic Housing Inspection Report – May 2007

**STRATEGIC HOUSING**  
**SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**  
**2008-09**



Inspection Improvement Plan

<u>Inspection Recommendation</u>	<u>Responsible Officer (s)</u>	<u>Milestones</u>	<u>Progress</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<b>R1 Strengthen the focus on customers</b>				
<p>Improving access to services by assessing how well the current arrangements meet customer needs, taking customers' views into account and seeking to meet identified needs.</p>	<p>Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin</p>	<p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update the Strategic Housing section of the Council's web-site</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular engagement with Strategic Housing Customer Focus Group</li> <li>• Consult the customer focus group on access arrangements and information leaflets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q4 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a review of access to services including outreach provision, incorporating the views of customers and make recommendations that meet identified needs</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategic Housing section of the web-site is reviewed bi-monthly.</p> <p>A multi-agency customer focus group has been established first meeting took place Dec 07. A further meeting will take place in Dec 08.</p> <p>Feedback on access to services and information leaflets will be discussed at the meeting in Dec 08.</p> <p>A full review will take place following the next group meeting.</p>	<p>SHLP 24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU</p> <p>(Key changes resulting from the Improvement Plan are: - B&amp;B Service Level Agreements - Approval of Private Sector Housing Strategy - Gypsy &amp; Traveller Accommodation Assessment - Approval of C3 Strategic Housing Market</p>

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				Assessment - Use of council funding to subsidise new affordable housing)
Involving customers in determining service standards and monitoring performance against these.	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<p><b>Progress required by Q4 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Level Agreement implemented in respect of B&amp;B establishments.</li> <li>• Revise service standards following feedback from partners and customers.</li> </ul>	<p>Reviewed on an Annual Basis by the Temporary Accommodation Officer. Currently there are a total of 7 establishments who have signed a SLA with the Authority.</p> <p>Service standards are in place for each service area. They are reviewed annually and the next review will take place in December 08.</p>	SHLP 24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU
Gathering customer feedback across all aspects of the service and using this to improve services.	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Sector Housing team to establish and update a central customer profile database</li> <li>• Report service improvement outcomes of customer feedback, profile and complaints to the Head of Service and Cabinet Member</li> </ul>	<p>JC/LT to meet 24/9 to discuss what info needs to be collected to meet KLOE/Audit Commission recommendations and report back to DC.</p> <p>Private sector housing team will gather and monitor the customer feedback information that is received onto a central database and report to Head of Service.</p>	SHLP 24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU

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<p>Continuing to work in partnership towards significantly improving waiting times for customers needing adaptation work, ensuring that all available budgets are spent.</p>	<p>David Chaplin</p>	<p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a monitoring and review process to assess the outcomes of the DFG service including waiting times and the quality of life and independent living for residents.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q3 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree reviewed Service Level Agreement with Spirita Care &amp; Repair</li> <li>Agree joint Service Level Agreement between the Council and County Council on OT waiting times for DFG clients</li> </ul>	<p>Continuing review of waiting times for DFG activity with partners to encourage the smooth processing of work applications. All applications made to Cannock Chase are dealt with within the 6 month period allowed by the legislation, most within 28 days.</p> <p>LPI April to September 2008 – grants approved - 37</p> <p>Completed – 2007 and in operation</p> <p>Further discussion is being undertaken to try to reach an agreement, SCC Legal service unhappy with concept of SLA and want to have a contract, this is inappropriate for the situation as the work is mandatory and the purpose of the SLA was to define terms of activity. Work will have to be done with SCC Social Care &amp; Health to address means of providing an equivalent agreement. On 29/09/08 DC met with Staffs CC to again consider the possibility of developing an agreement. Further work will be undertaken during the Autumn/Winter 2008/09 to define priorities to work towards an effective service.</p>	<p>LPI – The number of DFGs given in the year. Target is 62.</p> <p>The legal requirement is for decisions on applications to be made within 6 months. CCDC normally make a decision on an application within 28 days.</p> <p>£483,000 (includes 40% CCDC element)</p>
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		<p><b>Progress required by Q4 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To deliver the annual DFG programme within the agreed budget</li></ul>	<p>To complete 62 grants during 2008/09 – On target August 2008</p> <p>Changes to the funding, extent and value of DFG's in May 2008. Report to be prepared for members in Autumn 2008 to include funding issues. The main changes to the scheme were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- increase in the mandatory grant to £30,000 from £25,000</li><li>- Alterations to the basis of the means test which now 'passports' a greater range of applicants to obtain the grant. Effectively the change means that most people receiving any financial support from the government are likely to receive assistance.</li><li>- the extent of works grant aidable has increased to include access to gardens, outhouses, garages and anywhere where the disabled person needs access to for their lifestyle.</li><li>- from 2008/09 local authorities are encouraged to support the DFG process with at least 40% of the capital funding coming from their resources.</li></ul> <p>Investigation to commence July 2008</p>	
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			on introducing a Schedule of Rates for certain types of adaptation for use in Cannock Lichfield & Tamworth districts. – work is continuing to produce the Schedule in association with other local Staffordshire Councils	
<b>R2 Strengthen the Council's approach to diversity</b>				
Providing clear leadership at Member and Senior Management level to demonstrate a commitment to diversity and to ensure that work to take forward diversity is fully supported and progress monitored	Deputy Chief Executive Mike Edmonds Anne Bird	<b>Progress required by Q3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Corporate and Service area Self-Assessment against Level 3 and Level 4 of the Equality Standard.</li> </ul>	Led by members of the Equality and Diversity PAT. Currently at Level 2 and assessing implications/work involved to reach Level 3.	
Developing comprehensive customer profile information and using this to ensure that services are appropriately designed and delivered to respond to customers needs.  Comprehensively monitor services by diverse needs and use the information to improve services and show that services are being delivered fairly to all groups.	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private Sector Housing team to establish and update a central customer profile database</li> <li>Report service improvement outcomes of customer feedback, profile and complaints to the Head of Service and Cabinet Member</li> </ul>	JC/LT to meet 24/9 to discuss what info needs to be collected to meet KLOE/Audit Commission recommendations and report back to DC.  Private sector housing team will gather and monitor the customer feedback information that is received onto a central database and report to Head of Service.	SHLP 24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU
<b>R3 Strengthen the strategic approach to housing</b>				
Establishing robust monitoring arrangements to assess that the strategic approaches adopted are	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cabinet approval of Private Sector Housing Strategy 2008-2011</li> </ul>	Approved in June 2008.	

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<p>delivering the intended outcomes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree SLA with Hestia to ensure priorities of the Affordable Warmth Strategy 2007-2012 are met</li> <li>• Monitor and review delivery of the Housing Strategy Action Plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet approval of Southern Staffordshire and North Warwickshire Gypsy &amp; Traveller Accommodation Assessment</li> <li>• Update and review key local housing data</li> </ul>	<p>Agreed in June 2008.</p> <p>Monitored by Strategic Housing Group and linked to the Service Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Approved in July 2008.</p> <p>Approval of C3 Strategic Housing Market Assessment – July 2008</p> <p>Local housing market assessments are carried out twice a year to update local housing data.</p>	<p>NI 187 – Tackling Fuel Poverty</p> <p>SHLP 24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU</p>
<p><b>R4 Make best use of existing housing</b></p>				
<p>Identifying options and working with partners to provide alternative forms of temporary accommodation to avoid the use of Bed and Breakfast, seeking to eliminate its use in accordance with government targets.</p>	<p>Julie Cope Louise Tandy</p>	<p><b>Progress On-Going</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue to access up to 6 temporary accommodation units from Council stock in line with Temporary Accommodation agreement in place</li> </ul>	<p>On-going. To investigate the possibility of taking over the management of 3 additional units from Council stock. Discussion to be arranged with tenancy services in Q4.</p> <p>NI156 - Performance reported Qtrly , Qtr 1 reported 2 households in T/A.</p>	<p>NI156 – Number of households</p>

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		<p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the option of securing the use of private sector accommodation. To arrange meeting with Local Estate Agent/s.</li> <li>To retain the option of liaising with RSL's with a view to accessing accommodation for use as temporary accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>The target is 4.</p> <p>BVPI 183a - Performance (mthly) August reported 3 weeks in B&amp;B, Target of 4 weeks met. As at 30/09/09 there were 2 families in B&amp;B.</p> <p>BVPI 183b – Performance (mthly) August reported 0, Target 0, Target met.</p> <p>Meeting took place on 25/06/08. Good demand for PS properties locally due to downturn in housing market sales, therefore unlikely that landlords will consider homeless households given present economic conditions. Agents interested in attending a future meeting. Also agreed to participate in Property Forum at next Landlord Forum.</p> <p>Meeting to take place in October with Midland Heart HA.</p>	<p>living in temporary accommodation</p> <p>BVPI 183a – Average length of stay in B&amp;B</p> <p>BVPI 183b – Average length of stay in hostels</p>
<p>Gathering and analysing performance information that can clearly demonstrate the impact</p>	<p>Julie Cope Louise Tandy</p>	<p><b>Progress required</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A database of all customers of the Housing Options Service has been</li> </ul>	<p>Report outcomes to bi-monthly Strategic Housing Group BVPI 213 – Performance (mthly)</p>	<p>BVPI213 – Housing advice service resolved</p>

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<p>that homelessness prevention activities are having, and in particular to understand the relationship between the level of acceptances and the housing outcomes for those households not accepted as homeless.</p>		<p>established to track outcomes of applicants not accepted as homeless.</p> <p><b>Progress On-going</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success of homeless prevention initiatives monitored and reported on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>• The service implications of prevention outcome reviews are reported to the Head of Service and Cabinet Member.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To commence <i>pilot</i> fast track money advice project with CAB (Rugeley) 01/06/08</li> </ul>	<p>August reported 0.52, Target 0.27, Target met and exceeded. (calculation = No of cases/No of households)</p> <p>April to August 2008 – 87 cases where homelessness was prevented.</p> <p>Bi-monthly Strategic Housing Group monitors homelessness information, including those not accepted as homeless. Monthly reports on prevention outcomes to the Head of Service will commence in Sept 08. Regular meetings are now being held with the Portfolio Holder for Housing where homelessness is also discussed.</p> <p>BVPI 214 – Reported yearly (calculated using total of Qtr1 – Q4) April to August 2008 – no reported cases of repeat homelessness.</p> <p>Partnership agreement with CAB to help reduce homelessness through possession due to bad debt. To review in 3months. June to August 08 – 5 cases referred (1 ongoing, 2 homelessness prevented, 2 financial situation unsustainable).</p>	<p>homelessness. Target of 0.27</p> <p>BVPI 214 – Statutory homelessness – repeat homelessness. Target of 2.55</p>
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		<p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review money advice project 01/09/08</li> <li>Recruit additional Housing Options Officer post (part-time) for 3 yrs with view to extending provision of out of reach service to access more customers generally</li> </ul>	<p>Review meeting was held with CAB on 11/9/08. Outcome was to extend the project for another 3 months and to review again in December 08.</p> <p>Funded by Growth Option agreed for 3 years commencing 2008/09.</p>	
<p>Implementing the private sector housing strategy to provide a comprehensive approach to delivering the service and increasing the numbers of decent homes in the private sector for vulnerable households.</p>	<p>David Chaplin Julie Cope</p>	<p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of Private Sector Housing Strategy 2007-2010</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review property accreditation scheme</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q3 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the possibility of a coordinated approach to deal with</li> </ul>	<p>Private Sector Housing Strategy approved by Cabinet in June 2008. LPI number of requests for assistance for Housing Act Part 1 – April to September 2008 – 169</p> <p>Review carried out on 17/09/08. Further work is being carried out to review the scheme and a meeting of the working group will be arranged in Q4.</p> <p>Landlord Forum held 15<sup>th</sup> July. Next Forum planned for December 08.</p> <p>Begin discussions with neighbouring authorities to assess if this is a viable option by December 2008.</p>	<p>LPI – number of requests for assistance for Hsg Act Part 1 activity.</p> <p>SHLPI19 – Hold 2 landlord forums per year</p> <p>SHLPI20 – Undertake a</p>

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		<p>empty properties with other local authorities</p> <p><b>Progress required by Q4 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have encouraged owners of empty properties to bring them back into use through monitoring, advice and support</li> <li>• Prioritise housing renewal towards properties in the worst condition first and assist vulnerable owners by means of grant or loan to meet the Decent Homes Standard</li> </ul>	<p>Bring 15 units back into use with Council intervention. LPI - April to September 2008 – 7 units</p> <p>New grant scheme commenced June 2008 to offer 40 grant packages to properties where vulnerable groups have been identified in occupation and where either Decent Homes or Housing Act 2004 matters occur. LPI –July to September 2008 applications - 8</p> <p>Work to commence – January 2009 on integration of the Kick Start scheme into Cannock Chase. The WMRA are supporting the Kick Start scheme to provide capital funding for improvements in the private sector in future years rather than direct support to local authorities. This Council will have to be part of the West Midlands scheme to enable them to provide support to local private residents.</p>	<p>monthly mail shot to all empty properties throughout the District</p> <p>LPI – Empty property units returned to use by intervention of the Council. Target of 15 properties during 2008/09.</p>
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<p><b>R5 Enable the provision of more housing</b></p>				
<p>Increasing the number of affordable homes delivered to meet agreed targets and establishing robust monitoring arrangements to assess progress and ensure that targets are met</p>	<p>Louise Tandy</p>	<p><b>Progress required</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with planners, Housing Associations and the Housing Corporation to exploit all opportunities to build new affordable housing throughout the District.</li>   <li>• Provide supporting information to any bids made through the Housing Corporation Continuous Market Engagement Clinics.</li>   <li>• Affordable Housing Monitoring database is regularly updated and progress reported.</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to utilise Council funding for subsidising new affordable housing.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council's Cherry Tree Road and Cornwall Road sites are being developed by South Staffordshire Housing Association and are due to start on site in October 2008 providing 20 family homes in total.</p> <p>Supporting information for developments is provided to the Housing Corporation.</p> <p>Affordable housing starts and completions are monitored quarterly and reported to Affordable Housing Group and Strategic Housing Group. There were 86 affordable units provided in the District during 07/08.</p> <p>June 08 Cabinet approved the use of £1.5m to support the purchase of an estimated 30 Existing Satisfactory Dwellings with partner RSLs during 2008-2010 to increase the affordable housing stock. To date, SSHA have made a successful bid to the Hsg Corp to purchase 15 properties.</p>	<p>NI155 – Number of affordable homes delivered (gross). CCDC target of 50 for 2008/09.</p> <p>SHLP10 – Provide 100 new affordable housing units in the District per annum by 2010/11</p>

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<b>R6 Improve value for money and integrate it into working practices</b>				
Establishing cost information across all the strategic housing service functions and comparing these, along with performance, with appropriate comparator authorities to assess value for money and identify areas for improvement.	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate a breakdown of all service costs</li> <li>• Identify appropriate benchmarking comparators</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress required for Q3 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review costs and service performance against comparator authorities to assess VFM and highlight areas for improvement.</li> </ul>	Tamworth BC is leading on a VFM exercise with other Staffordshire LAs. A meeting was held in July and a further meeting is scheduled for September. Initial areas identified for benchmarking are TA, affordable housing and bringing empty properties back into use. Tamworth are seeking guidance on developing a model to work from.	SHLP24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU
At a corporate level develop a strategic framework for value for money to ensure a systematic approach, and help embed value for money as a way of working in the organisation.	Bob Kean Judith Aupers	<p><b>Progress required by Q4 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Housing is assessed under the corporate strategic framework for VFM, which includes findings of review of costs and service performance against comparator authorities.</li> </ul>	Strategic Housing to be assessed following appointment of Head of Service/Manager.	SHLP24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU
<b>R7 Strengthen improvement planning and performance management</b>				
Adopting a comprehensive approach to improvement planning using a variety of means to identify areas to improve including customer feedback and	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A SMART Strategic Housing Improvement Plan 2008/09, which incorporates the Inspection Improvement Plan and the Housing</li> </ul>	A SMART Strategic Housing Improvement Plan 2008/09 has been produced and is monitored through Strategic Housing Group.	SHLP24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service

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comparison information from other organisations.		Strategy Action Plan along with improvements identified through customer feedback or benchmarking.		Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU
Making full use of the performance management framework to ensure that performance for key service areas is appropriately reported on and escalated as necessary, and that timely action is taken to address any performance issues.	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<p><b>Progress required by Q1 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All key services have appropriate performance targets and monitoring in place.</li> </ul>	Performance targets have been identified and are part of the Corporate performance framework.	SHLP24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU
<b>R8 Strengthen capacity in the service</b>				
Assessing the capacity of the strategic housing service to ensure that it is sufficient to deliver and sustain the planned service improvements.	Head of Service for Strategic Housing	<p><b>Progress required by Q4 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of capacity of Strategic Housing section to deliver the statutory duties, Housing Strategy Action Plan and Inspection Improvement Plan incorporating reviews of VFM, performance partnerships, training and the actions within the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>	Assessment of capacity will be undertaken on appointment of Head of Service/Manager.	SHLP24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU
Evaluating the outcomes of partnership working to assess the contribution and added value made to the delivery of services.	Julie Cope Louise Tandy Head of Strategic Housing	<p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a review of all current partnerships to assess value for money.</li> </ul>	An assessment will be carried out of partnerships based on the model developed through the Safe As Houses scheme. JC/LT meeting October to assess VFM on	SHLP24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Planning &amp; Regeneration/Head of Strategic Housing will evaluate the outcomes of partnership reviews and recommend to withdraw from those that do not increase capacity to deliver or add value or improve efficiency.</li> </ul>	homelessness prevention schemes.	Plan milestones through CORVU
Ensure that training and development is being effectively planned and used to support the skills needed to effectively deliver services.	Julie Cope Louise Tandy David Chaplin	<p><b>Progress required by Q2 08/09</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce and implement a Strategic Housing Training Plan linked to delivery of milestones within the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>	JC/LT have met to discuss and a plan will be produced by end of Sept. When in place, the Strategic Housing Training Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.	SHLP24 – Monitor success in meeting the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan milestones through CORVU