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## SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

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Meeting to be held in the Civic Hall, Leeds on  
Monday, 11th May, 2009 at 10.00 am

A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board  
in a Committee Room at 9.30 am

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### MEMBERSHIP

#### Councillors

- B Anderson (Chair) - Adel and  
Wharfedale;
- A Blackburn - Farnley and Wortley;
- A Castle - Harewood;
- B Cleasby - Horsforth;
- D Coupar - Middleton Park;
- A Gabriel - Beeston and  
Holbeck;
- D Hollingsworth - Burmantofts and  
Richmond Hill;
- G Hyde - Killingbeck and  
Seacroft;
- G Kirkland - Otley and Yeadon;
- J Marjoram - Calverley and  
Farsley;
- L Mulherin - Ardsley and Robin  
Hood;
- M Rafique - Chapel Allerton;

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*Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded on tape*

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**Agenda compiled by:**  
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**Stuart Robinson**  
247 4360

**Principal Scrutiny Adviser:**  
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# A G E N D A

| Item No | Ward/Equal Opportunities | Item Not Open |   | Page No |
|---------|--------------------------|---------------|---|---------|
| 1       |                          |               | <p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded.)</p> <p>(*In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, written notice of an appeal must be received by the Chief Democratic Services Officer at least 24 hours before the meeting)</p>   |         |
| 2       |                          |               | <p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b> That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:-</p> <p><b>No exempt items or information have been identified on this agenda</b></p> |         |

| Item No | Ward/Equal Opportunities | Item Not Open |   | Page No |
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| 3       |                          |               | <p><b>LATE ITEMS</b></p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>  |         |
| 4       |                          |               | <p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>To declare any personal / prejudicial interests for the purpose of Section 81 (3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 12 of the Members Code of Conduct.</p>   |         |
| 5       |                          |               | <p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>  |         |
| 6       |                          |               | <p><b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b></p> <p>To receive and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009.</p>   | 1 - 8   |
| 7       |                          |               | <p><b>DRAFT LEEDS HOUSING STRATEGY</b></p> <p>To consider a report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods on the draft Leeds Housing Strategy in line with the Budget and Policy Framework.</p>  | 9 - 86  |
| 8       |                          |               | <p><b>INQUIRY INTO PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR HOUSING - DRAFT REPORT</b></p> <p>To consider a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development seeking the Board's approval of the draft final report in relation to the above inquiry.</p> <p>(Draft Final report to follow)</p> | 87 - 88 |

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| 9       |                          |               | <p><b>INQUIRY INTO ASYLUM SEEKER CASE RESOLUTION - DRAFT REPORT</b></p> <p>To consider a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development seeking the Board's approval of the draft final report in relation to the above inquiry.</p>   | 89 - 108  |
| 10      |                          |               | <p><b>INQUIRY INTO STREET CLEANING - DRAFT FINAL REPORT</b></p> <p>To consider a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development seeking the Board's approval of the draft final report in relation to the above inquiry.</p>   | 109 - 132 |
| 11      |                          |               | <p><b>INQUIRY INTO THE EAST AND SOUTH EAST LEEDS (EASEL) REGENERATION PROJECT</b></p> <p>To consider a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development on evidence in line with session one of the Board's Inquiry into the East and South East Leeds (EASEL) Regeneration Project.</p> | 133 - 158 |
| 12      |                          |               | <p><b>ANNUAL REPORT 2008/9</b></p> <p>To consider a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development seeking approval of the Board's contribution to the Annual Scrutiny Report.</p> <p>(Draft Annual Report to follow)</p>  | 159 - 160 |
| 13      |                          |               | <p><b>WORK PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>To consider a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development on the Board's current work programme.</p>  | 161 - 168 |

# Agenda Item 6

## SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

**MONDAY, 20TH APRIL, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors A Blackburn, A Castle,  
B Cleasby, D Coupar, D Hollingsworth,  
G Hyde, G Kirkland and M Rafique

### **113 Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the April meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods).

### **114 Declarations of Interest**

The following personal interests were declared:-

- Councillor B Anderson in his capacity as a Director of West North West Homes (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 120 refers)
- Councillor A Blackburn in her capacity as a Director of West North West Homes (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 120 refers)
- Councillor B Cleasby in his capacity as a Lead Member for the Central and Corporate portfolio (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 120 refers)
- Councillor D Coupar in her capacity as a member on the Belle Isle North Estate Management Board (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 120 refers) and as a Member on Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care) (Agenda Item 12) (Minute 123 refers)
- Councillor D Hollingsworth in his capacity as a Director of East North East Homes (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 120 refers)
- Councillor G Hyde in his capacity as a Director of East North East Homes and as a Member on the Licensing Committee (Item 9) (Minute 120 refers)

### **115 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor A Gabriel, Councillor L Mulherin and Councillor J Marjoram.

### **116 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **117 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

#### **(a) Miscellaneous Properties (Minute 107 refers)**

The Chair referred to the above issue and informed the meeting that, in the absence of Councillor Marjoram, he would like to pass on his request that the Council seeks external legal advice when renewing the leases for miscellaneous properties.

Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods, who was in attendance, acknowledged this request.

(b) Inquiry into EASEL – Draft Terms of Reference (Minute 110 refers)

The Chair referred to the above issue and informed the meeting that following a request by the Board, a letter had been sent to the Chairs of the Central and Corporate Functions Scrutiny Board and Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

It was noted that the Central and Corporate Functions Scrutiny Board had considered the request for it to look into the procurement arrangements for EASEL and had recommended that this should be taken up by the new Board during the new municipal year.

**118 Executive Board Minutes**

**RESOLVED** – That the Executive Board minutes of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009 and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 be received and noted.

**119 Enforcement of Dog Fouling**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting a monthly update on the enforcement of dog fouling across the city.

Stacey Campbell, Service Manager was in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues as clarification to questions raised:-

- clarification as to why there had been low levels of fixed penalty notices issued in comparison to the high numbers of service requests in February 2009  
*(The Service Manager responded to advise that Fixed Penalty Notices issued would always be lower in comparison with other types of service requests dealt with by dog wardens and outlined the difficulties in gathering evidence to issue notices as well as highlighting the other service pressures, with particular reference to stray dogs. It was agreed that the monthly update report would be revised for the new municipal year to provide a breakdown of the various service requests made)*
- the concerns expressed about the lack of enforcement to prevent dog fouling and the need for more flexible working and effective monitoring in hotspot areas  
*(The Service Manager responded and confirmed that such issues would be addressed under the service review, which was requested by Scrutiny following its recent inquiry into dog fouling enforcement, however Fixed Penalty Notices were issued and paid and prosecutions did take place on a regular basis)*
- clarification of the action taken by the Council in introducing dog bins at 'hot spots' throughout the city

*(Andrew Mason, Chief Environmental Services Officer, who was in attendance, outlined the current protocol explaining that these bins were the responsibility of Parks and Countryside)*

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That this Board conveys it's thanks to the staff within the Dog Warden Service for their continuing efforts in this area.

(Councillor B Cleasby joined the meeting at 10.10am during discussions of the above item)

**120 Performance Report Quarter 3 2008/09**

The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement submitted a report regarding the Quarter 3 performance indicators (PIs) in respect of Environment and Neighbourhoods. The report and appendices charted progress against targets across the raft of individual performance indicators in this area, and highlighted areas of under-performance and/or concern in relation to improvement priorities and actions being taken to remedy matters.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

Councillor L Carter, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing  
Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods  
Andrew Mason, Chief Environmental Services Officer  
Debra Scott, Head of Service Improvement

For ease of reference, the Chair went through the appendices page by page, inviting Board Members to comment on those areas of under performance and/or concern.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues as clarification to questions raised:-

Corporate Balanced Scorecard 2008/09 Issues

- Value for Money / Resources (PI Ref BSC-8) – clarification as to what actions were being taking to improve on this indicator in relation to paying undisputed invoices on time
- *(At the request of the Chair, Councillor B Cleasby in his capacity as Lead Member, Central and Corporate portfolio, outlined the Council's current position on ensuring the payment of invoices.*

Environmental and Neighbourhoods Quarter 3 2008-09 Update

- PI Ref NI 16 'Serious acquisitive crime rate per 1,000 population' – the concerns expressed that North West Leeds had seen the largest increase in offences and the requirement for this data to be supplied to the relevant Area Committees  
*(The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing responded and agreed that this data should be forwarded to Area Committees. The*

- Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods agreed to feed this issue back to the Area Managers for appropriate action)*
- PI Ref NI 18 'adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision' – clarification of whether the department was any further in gathering relevant data for this indicator  
*(The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing responded by explaining that whilst the data was not available at the time of reporting, the Council had now received draft data and requested the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods to supply the Board with this information and to copy in the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement Team on the response)*
  - PI Ref NI 39 'rate of hospital admissions per 100,000 for Alcohol Related Harm' – the need for the Primary Care Trusts to supply the missing data to a future Board meeting  
*(The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods responded and agreed to consult with the Director of Public Health to supply this information)*
  - PI Ref NI 158 '% of non-decent council homes' – the concerns expressed about the apparent downward trend and the reasons behind this  
*(The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing and the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods responded and it was noted that such figures would continue to vary as they were based around assumptions in view of the fact that the decency programme does not involve whole house improvements. It was highlighted that the Council was still on track in meeting its target.)*
  - the need for the Board to be supplied with data in relation to burglaries and the impact this has had on the costs to insurers. Links were also made between burglaries and drug use and further information around treatment services for drug users was requested.  
*(The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods responded and agreed to supply the relevant information to the Board)*
  - PI Ref NI 196 'improved street and environmental cleanliness through reducing levels of fly tipping whilst increasing levels of enforcement activity' – the need for the Board to be supplied with data from the previous year  
*(The Chief Environmental Service Officer responded and agreed to supply the relevant data to the Board. The Board also noted that changes to recording practices had increased the level of reporting for fly tipping)*
  - PI Ref NI 184 'food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law' – clarification of how the Board could obtain more data in this area and how this linked into the licensing of premises  
*(The Chief Environmental Services Officer responded and informed the Board that this was a new indicator and therefore further work was being undertaken around base lines. In terms of the licensing issue, he agreed to provide Board Members with a more detailed explanation of how inspection data influenced the Council's licensing function)*
  - PI Ref NI 193 'kilograms of residual household waste collected per household / percentage of municipal waste land filled' – clarification as to why the department does not provide residents with a second brown bin and feedback to-date in relation to the fortnightly collection pilot



*(The Chief Environmental Services Officer responded and outlined the reasons why the department did not provide a second brown bin. The Board noted that the fortnightly collection pilot was working resulting in more recycling and less residual waste. However, in relation to the level of green bin contamination, he agreed to provide further details to the Board)*

- PI Ref NI 33A 'number of deliberate primary fires per 10,000 population' – concern was expressed about the high number of missing data around the national fire indicators

*(The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods responded and informed the Board that work was continuing with the fire service on those specific issues raised. He agreed to come back to the Board with an update in due course)*

- the need for education awareness to be promoted on fire safety by the new Board in the new municipal year and for leaflets to be distributed to residents warning them of dangerous electrical appliances e.g. deep fat fryers etc
- PI Ref LKI -CS8A 'addressing domestic violence by (a) increase the number of reported incidents of domestic violence' – the need for the department to continue working with the Police to understand how reported incidents were being captured, recorded and reported.
- PI Ref LKI -CS8B 'addressing domestic violence by (b) reduce repeat victimisation as a proportion of reported domestic violence incidents' – clarification of how the targets were set and whether they were seen as a challenge
- PI Ref LKI -HAS 11 'number of sanctuary installations completed' –the Board acknowledged the links between this indicator and its impact on the numbers of acceptances for violence and harassment levels
- PI Ref LKI -RC1 'number of household collections missed per 100,000 collections' – clarification of how the department intended to resolve this ongoing problem

*(The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods responded and commented on the problems associated with missed bin collections to-date around such issues as strike action (i.e. work to rule), snow and icy conditions etc)*

- the need to address the issue of mechanical breakdowns in respect of refuse vehicles  
*(The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods responded and agreed to investigate this issue further)*

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That this Board also notes and welcomes those areas where continued improvements had been made and conveys its thanks to the staff who had contributed to such achievements.

(Councillor M Rafique left the meeting at 10.25am during discussions of the above item)

(Councillor A Castle left the meeting at 11.25am at the conclusion of the above item)

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 11th May, 2009

**121 Update on the Supporting People Programme**

Referring to Minute 68 of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report presenting a quarterly update on the Supporting People Programme.

Debbie Forward, Supporting People Manager was in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments.

Board Members sought clarification on whether there was a scheme under the supporting people programme to support work with prolific offenders.

The Supporting People Manager responded and confirmed that the Supporting People Programme does support offenders to address their housing needs and that Sheffield Hallam University were conducting research to capture the impact of such services and the wider benefits. The Board also noted that the level of funding allocated to Leeds for housing related support services would reduce by £1 million in 2010/11 and therefore this saving would need to be found from existing services. In view of the efficiencies already achieved to date, the Board acknowledged the challenge of achieving this additional saving through the application of value for money measures without compromising service quality.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted and welcomed.

**122 Young People's Scrutiny Forum Report - 'Protecting Our Environment'**

The Head of Scrutiny Support and Member Development submitted a report presenting the report of the Young People's Scrutiny Forum entitled 'Protecting Our Environment'.

The Board specifically acknowledged the reports findings around waste management, environmental education and sustainability.

Laura Nield, Scrutiny Advisor, presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of whether the Forum had received the Board's previous recommendations in relation to waste management, environmental education and sustainability
- the need to congratulate the young people on their sterling work in this area
- to endorse 'Recommendation 4' within the Forum's report in relation to the Council undertaking more work in promoting the idea of 'reducing and re-using' as well as recycling
- clarification of the age and composition of the Young People's Scrutiny Forum

- clarification if Elected Members had been consulted on the report findings and to encourage, in future, more direct liaison with ward members, especially when seeking advice on green issues etc
- the need to work together with the Children's Services Board and the young people to monitor the implementation of the Forum's recommendation and to involve both the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds in this process  
*(The Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser responded and agreed to follow up this issue)*

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That the Forum's final report and recommendations be noted.
- (c) That approval be given to monitor progress in implementing those recommendations which fall within the Environment and Neighbourhoods portfolio, in conjunction with the Leeds Youth Council Scrutiny Panel.

**123 Current Work Programme**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Board's current work programme.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Current work programme (Appendix 1 refers)
- Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009 (Appendix 2 refers)

The Chair informed the meeting that he had received a letter from Councillor J Chapman, Chair of Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board, requesting that the Board investigates and monitors the current situation regarding Roseville Doors, as concerns were raised during the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that this issue would be put into the work programme as unscheduled pending the agreement of the successor Board to take this matter forward in the new municipal year.

**RESOLVED –** That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

**124 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 10.00 am (Pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.30 am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.50am)

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Originator: Bridget Emery

Tel: 3950149

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**Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

**Subject: Draft Leeds Housing Strategy**

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**Electoral Wards Affected: All**

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Leeds Housing Partnership is a multi-agency partnership body, affiliated to the Leeds Initiative, which is responsible for overseeing and driving strategic housing development and delivery in the city. In 2008, the Leeds Housing Partnership agreed to update the existing Leeds Housing Strategy to ensure that it better reflected the current housing challenges for the city. The Housing Strategy and Solutions section, within the Housing Services Division, is leading on the development of the strategy.

The updated Leeds Housing Strategy will be closely affiliated to the Leeds Strategic Plan, especially the 'Thriving Places' and 'Health and Wellbeing' strategic themes.

The strategy is being developed in a period of economic upheaval which is affecting the functioning of housing markets and the delivery of housing services in a number of ways. The Leeds Housing Strategy sets out the Council's flexible and innovative approach to addressing the housing challenges.

The vision of the Leeds Housing Strategy is to 'Create opportunities for people to live independently in quality, affordable housing'. The three key strategic themes are:

1. Increasing the supply of affordable housing
2. Improving housing quality
3. Promoting independent living

## **1. Purpose of This Report**

- 1.1. The Leeds Housing Strategy forms part of the Council's Policy Framework. In accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Executive's initial proposals for the Strategy shall be referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Board for further advice and consideration. The Scrutiny Board shall then report to the Executive on the outcome of its deliberations.
- 1.2 This report provides the background to the Leeds Housing Strategy . A copy of the updated draft Strategy is attached to this report for the Board's consideration.

## **2. Background Information**

- 2.1. The Leeds Housing Partnership is a multi-agency partnership body, affiliated to the Leeds Initiative, which is responsible for overseeing and driving strategic housing development and delivery in the city. In 2008, the Leeds Housing Partnership committed to updating the existing the Leeds Housing Strategy to ensure that it better reflected the current and emerging housing challenges and wider strategic context. The development of the updated Leeds Housing Strategy is being led by the Housing Strategy and Solutions section within the Housing Services Division.
- 2.2. The Leeds Housing Strategy is closely aligned to the improvement priorities, strategic outcomes and themes included within the Leeds Strategic Plan. The links between the 'Thriving Places' theme and the Housing Strategy are clear with shared ambitions relating to increasing the supply of affordable housing, improving housing decency and reducing homelessness. Housing and housing services also play a critical role in promoting the 'Health and Wellbeing' of the people of Leeds. Quality housing and housing services promote the capacity of vulnerable people to live independently and to exercise choice and control over their lives. The Council and partners are becoming increasingly aware of the negative impact that poor quality housing, overcrowding and fuel poverty have on people's health, wellbeing and life expectancy.
- 2.3. The Leeds Housing Strategy is being developed in an unprecedented economic climate and this is leading to a number of further housing challenges. Rising unemployment, deflationary pressure in property values, more restrictive mortgage lending practice, mothballed or discontinued housing development schemes, rising mortgage default and repossessions are some of the housing trends that have become increasingly evident in recent months. The Leeds Housing Strategy will set out how the Council and partners are responding to long-standing housing challenges and those that have emerged in recent months. The important principle is that the Council and partners must be flexible and innovative in order to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.
- 2.4. The updated Leeds Housing Strategy will cover the period 2009 to 2012. The term of the strategy has been kept deliberately short so that there is greater flexibility to respond to change as required. The actions and performance targets set out within the strategy are the key element of the document and these will be monitored on an

ongoing basis by the Leeds Housing Partnership. The Housing Services believe that the key housing challenges remain relatively constant despite the changes that have occurred in recent months.

- 2.5. The city has a shortage of affordable housing options and has housing markets that do not always function effectively.** Affordable housing can be broadly defined as housing for people who cannot or do not wish to purchase or rent housing through the open market. It includes social housing rented through the council or housing association, intermediate renting where the rent is higher than social renting but lower than buying or renting housing on the open market, shared ownership/equity housing and housing for sale at a discounted price.
- 2.6. The Leeds Housing Partnership developed the concept of a 'housing ladder' to describe the different housing options that need to be available to people in the city with housing for market sale or rent on the highest 'ladder rung' and social housing for rent at the bottom. There is compelling evidence to suggest that the 'Leeds housing ladder' does not always function effectively for all the people of Leeds. There is compelling evidence to conclude that the 'Leeds housing ladder' is not functioning effectively for all the people of Leeds. The Leeds Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) 2007 identified that a single person would need an annual gross income of £37k to purchase the average starter home in the city. The 20% reduction in average house prices in 2008 will have affected this calculation but nevertheless home-ownership remains difficult to secure for households unless they enjoy significantly above average income and/or considerable capital. Many households in the city have purchased properties at a cost that they are finding difficult to meet in the deteriorating economic climate. The continued contraction in the city's social housing stock, specifically that which is council owned, means that more people are finding it difficult to access social housing. It is not uncommon for 500 applicants to register a bid for a property advertised through the Leeds Homes' choice based lettings system. Research carried out by Re'new highlighted that housing association rental charges are increasingly unaffordable for people on below average or average incomes.
- 2.7. The city needs to improve the quality and sustainability of housing stock.** The Leeds ALMOs and other social landlords are working to bring all social housing stock up to the decency standard by 2010/11. A key challenge relates to investment options for continuing and improving stock condition. Another significant challenge relates to private sector housing as non-decency levels (33% or over 80,000 properties) are non-decent. The city has just under 20,000 back-to-back houses, which are difficult to improve to a decent standard of repair, due to inherent building design flaws. The most common challenge relating to non-decent private housing relates to excess cold. The rise in energy costs in recent years has meant that there was an increase from 19 to 24% in the proportion of the Leeds population who suffer from fuel poverty. It is estimated that two-thirds of existing housing stock will still be in use by 2050 and therefore the sustainability of current housing stock is a key challenge. The city needs to gear up to the challenge of making all housing carbon neutral by 2019. It is estimated that 46% of all carbon emissions relate to property.. The links between the quality of housing and health and wellbeing is compelling.

Excess cold is a major cause of a premature mortality and steep and narrow staircases in older housing stock increases the risk of falls and the need for hospital treatment/placement in residential care. Leeds has a relatively high rate of infant mortality, which NHS Leeds partly attributes to poor quality housing.

**2.8. Vulnerable people need to be assisted to achieve and maintain an independent living outcome if that is their choice.** The Leeds Strategic Plan includes strategic outcomes and improvement priorities relating to promoting the capacity of vulnerable people to live independently, to exercise choice and control over their lives through the provision of community based services and to reduce the level of homelessness in the city. There has been a recognition that the traditional approach to assisting people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness offered limited housing options and often missed opportunities to prevent homelessness. Services such as housing support, adaptations and assistive technology can play a crucial role in reducing dependency on day care services, residential care placements and hospital placements. There are significant 'invest to save' opportunities that can be generated through such services. Basic adaptations, such as installing handrails costing around £150, could be compared to the cost of around £50k to NHS Leeds of hospitalising an older person who requires a hip replacement. The Council has become increasingly aware that out-moded housing, such as some sheltered housing and hostel style housing for people with learning disabilities, does not support the drive to help people live independently and to exercise choice and control over their lives.

### **3. Main Issues**

3.1. The updated Leeds Housing Strategy is framed around the strategic vision: 'Creating opportunities for people to live independently in quality, affordable housing'.

3.2. The strategic vision includes three strategic themes:

- Increasing the supply of affordable housing
- Improving housing quality
- Promoting independent living

**3.3. Increasing the supply of affordable housing:** The Council has a target, through the Local Area Agreement, to deliver a minimum of 1500 affordable housing units in the two year period from 2009/10 to 2010/11. Affordable housing delivery is closely linked to wider housing development and the Council, again through the Local Area Agreement, has agreed to a target of delivering 6,800 additional new dwellings by the end of March 2011. The economic downturn has made these targets more challenging; however, Housing Services is confident that the affordable housing target will be met.



- 3.4. The cornerstone of the affordable housing delivery programme is the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership. The partnership is the prototype of the Local Housing Companies that the government are advising authorities to establish in order to deliver more affordable housing. The release of 87 acres of council land has resulted in £45 million being secured from the Homes and Communities Agency and the private sector. It is predicted that 460 affordable homes will be delivered through the partnership over this and the next financial year. The partnership is also overseeing the development of the first new build council housing in the city since the late 1980s. The updated Leeds Housing Strategy commits to the exploration of opportunities to expand this fledgling programme over the next three years.
- 3.5. Greater emphasis is being placed on helping people to remain home-owners. The Golden Triangle Partnership has been reconfigured to provide a mortgage rescue scheme in the north of the city. The strategy recognises the importance of developing a city wide mortgage rescue scheme. The Housing Services division is exploring opportunities with private sector companies and the Homes and Communities Agency to bring empty properties in the city into use as intermediate rented housing. The formal implementation of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document will set out minimum thresholds relating to the proportion of housing development that will need to be affordable and the tenure split that is required within the five housing market zones in the city. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment will identify public and private land that can be used for housing development, including affordable housing, up to 2024.
- 3.6. Improving housing quality:** the Leeds Housing Strategy commits to ensuring that all social housing meets the decency standard by 2010/11. The strategy also sets out the challenges and options relating to attracting future investment that can be used to maintain and further improve council housing stock after 2010/11. The strategy calculates the cost of bringing all private sector housing up to the decency standard at £250 million. The key housing quality challenge relates to addressing excess cold. The Leeds Housing Strategy sets out a recommendation to establish a 'Warm Zone' in the city similar to that which is in place in authorities such as Kirklees. A 'Warm Zone' involves the installation of cavity and loft insulation in every property in the authority catchment area. Particular emphasis will be placed on 'hard to treat' properties such as back-to-backs and the Council has commissioned independent research to identify how energy efficiency can be improved in such properties. The links between housing and health and wellbeing outcomes are explored in the strategy and it is noted that NHS Liverpool has given funding of around £9 million to improve private sector housing condition in the city. The Liverpool model needs to be tested and it needs to be identified whether comparable investment can be made in Leeds. The strategy will set out actions and targets relating to improving the sustainability of housing including developing new housing and refurbishing existing housing to achieve zero carbon emissions. The private rented sector will be an increasingly important housing option. Continuing to improve standards of landlordism and accommodation will be important priorities. Maximising the number of private rented landlords that are members of the Landlord Accreditation scheme and encouraging the letting of properties through the Leeds Housing Options Service

Private Sector Lettings scheme are some of the actions set out in the strategy to promote a thriving private rented sector.

**3.7. Promoting Independent Living:** the reconfiguration of the Council's homeless and housing advice services around a housing options model is a key priority. People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness will receive more personalised services that aim, in the first instance, to prevent homelessness. The service will use key homeless options, such as the youth mediation service, Sanctuary scheme, private sector lettings and a mortgage rescue scheme to maximise homeless prevention outcomes. The Leeds Housing Strategy sets out the challenges and actions that will result in an eradication of rough sleeping by 2012 and a minimum of a 50% reduction in temporary accommodation by the end of March 2010 from the position in 2004. Services such as housing support, adaptations and Telecare will assist vulnerable people to live independently. Research will be commissioned to establish the 'invest to save' benefits specifically in relation to health and wellbeing that are generated from such services. The strategy sets out the intention to develop an Accessible Housing Register, as part of the wider Leeds Housing Register, to improve the letting of adapted housing to disabled people. The strategy sets out the Council's ambitions to secure PFI Round 6 funding to modernise ALMO managed sheltered housing provision around a 'Lifetime Homes/Lifetime Neighbourhoods' model and to modernise housing provision for people with learning disabilities as part of the Independent Living Project.

#### **4. Implications for Council Policy and Governance**

4.1. The updated Housing Strategy will set out the key challenges and actions of the housing authority and partners over the next three years. The updated housing strategy will be presented to the Council's Executive Board in July 2009.

#### **5. Legal and Resource Implications**

5.1. The updated housing strategy will set out the investment requirements relating to the housing challenges facing the city. There is no legal obligation on the part of the Council to develop a housing strategy for the city. The updated housing strategy will have regard for all relevant legal duties relating to the authority.

#### **6. Conclusions**

6.1. The updated housing strategy will set out the key housing challenges for the city and the actions that will be taken to address these challenges. The Council and partners recognise that housing is a dynamic service area, and the Council and partners will need to be flexible to respond to evolving challenges. The Leeds Housing Partnership will monitor the strategy action plan on an ongoing basis.

## 7. Recommendation

7.1. The Board is requested to

- (i) consider the updated draft Leeds Housing Strategy;
- (ii) submit any written comments back to the Executive on the draft Strategy

### Background Papers

None.

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# **Draft Leeds Housing Strategy 2009 – 2012**

## **‘Create opportunities for people to live independently, in quality, affordable housing’**

### **Introduction**

The city of Leeds has been transformed over the last 20 years from a mainly industrial city into a broad-based commercial centre. Leeds is the largest city in the Yorkshire and Humber region with a population of over 750,000. Leeds has experienced the largest absolute increase in population, 4.8% since 2001, of any authority in the country. This perhaps reflects the status of Leeds as a quality place to live, work and bring up a family.

Access to affordable, quality housing, which can be treated as a home, is an important yardstick of a thriving place. Quality housing can be a foundation for every aspect of a person’s life: it can help children to excel and flourish in everything they do; be a source of self-expression; foster community pride; provide security as people get older; and be an asset that can be passed on to future generations. Affordable, quality housing is also a prerequisite for economic development and job creation.

The Leeds Housing Strategy is closely aligned to the improvement priorities, strategic outcomes and themes included within the Leeds Strategic Plan. The links between the ‘Thriving Places’ theme and the Housing Strategy are clear with shared ambitions relating to increasing the supply of affordable housing, improving housing decency and reducing homelessness. Housing and housing services also play a critical in promoting the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ of the people of Leeds. Quality housing and housing services promote the capacity of vulnerable people to live independently and to exercise choice and control over their lives. The Council and partners are becoming increasingly aware of the negative impact that poor quality housing, overcrowding and fuel poverty have on people’s health, wellbeing and life expectancy.

The Leeds Housing Strategy is being developed in an unprecedented economic climate. Some of the long-standing plans developed by the Council and partners to meet the housing challenges of the city were formulated during a period of sustained economic growth. The rising unemployment, deflationary pressure in property values, more restrictive mortgage lending practice, mothballed or discontinued housing development schemes, rising mortgage default and repossessions are some of the housing trends that have become increasingly evident in recent months. The Leeds Housing Strategy will set out how the Council and partners are responding to long-standing housing challenges and those that have emerged in recent months.

Despite the economic downturn, the Leeds Housing Strategy is clear that the key housing priorities remain constant. The city needs to increase the supply of housing, with a particular emphasis on increasing the range of affordable housing options, to improve housing quality and sustainability across all tenures and to promote the capacity for people to live independently. The Council and partners will need to be flexible and innovative to respond to changing challenges and opportunities. An increasing emphasis on helping home-owners struggling to make mortgage payments, to remain in their homes, and opportunities to bring vacant housing stock in the city into use are

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two examples of this flexible approach that will be set out in the strategy. The strategy will also reflect the steer from the Homes and Communities Agency that there will be an increased focus on the delivery of affordable rented housing.

The Leeds Housing Strategy recognises that at some point the economic position will stabilise and recover. Leeds as a city, including housing providers, needs to be ready for recovery. Long-term forecasts are for significant job growth within the Leeds district and city region. The Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy sets out a target to increase net additions to the housing stock from around 2,260 to 4,300 per annum. This increase is needed to support job creation given that Leeds already has more jobs than homes. The city will need to develop more housing if it is going to benefit from job creation opportunities and to reduce long distance commuting into the city.

In relation to new housing, the Housing Strategy is primarily focused on increasing the supply of affordable housing. The Council, through the Planning Authority, is accountable to government for net housing additions. The Housing Authority is primarily concerned with increasing the supply of housing for people who cannot or do not wish to secure a property on the open market. Affordable housing is that which provides for the needs of people who cannot afford to buy or rent in the open market. The term ‘housing ladder’ has been coined to describe the range of housing options that need to be available to people in the city, from low-cost rent to properties for sale or rent at market prices. A fully functioning ‘housing ladder’ would consist of sufficient options to cover the needs and preferences of all people in the city.

Significant evidence has been collected in recent years that demonstrates that the ‘Leeds housing ladder’ is not functioning to a level where most people’s housing needs and preferences are met. House price values, even with reductions of 20% in 2008, are such that property purchase is unaffordable for people without a significantly above average income or considerable capital. Council owned housing stock has continued to contract in recent years; therefore limiting access to this housing option and pushing people into unsustainable house purchase. Recent research has also highlighted that housing association rents are increasingly unaffordable for people in low or average income employment. The Leeds Housing Strategy will set out plans to increase the supply of a range of affordable housing options and to improve the functioning of the ‘Leeds housing ladder’. Affordable housing delivery is closely linked to wider housing development and the Housing Strategy will set out actions and targets relating to increasing the overall supply of housing in the city. Maximising use of existing stock will be a key element of action relating to increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Improving the quality and sustainability of housing in the city is the second key housing challenge for the city. It has been estimated that two-thirds of existing stock in the city will still be in use in 2050. The Housing Strategy will

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set out the actions that the Council, Leeds ALMOs and local housing associations are making to bringing all social housing stock up to the decency standard by 2010/11. The strategy will also consider options and opportunities for continuing to improve social housing stock post 2011. Perhaps the bigger challenge relates to improving stock condition within the private sector as rates of non-decency significantly exceed those within the social housing sector and the Council has more limited powers and resources to tackle private sector housing quality. Particular emphasis is placed on specific housing types such as back-to-backs that are more likely to contain Category 1 hazards, such as excess cold, limited fire escape routes and increased risk of falls, which are difficult to address due to building design. Improving housing quality and landlord practice within the private rented sector will be another key priority given the increasing importance of the tenure as a housing option of choice. Rising energy costs over the last two years has plunged more people into fuel poverty and opportunities to address this, primarily through improving the energy efficiency of housing, will be set out in the strategy.

Promoting the capacity of vulnerable people to achieve and/or maintain an independent living outcome is the third key housing challenge for the city. The strategy will set out how the Council and partners intend to maximise opportunities to prevent homelessness. The strategy is being developed at the same time that traditional homeless and housing advice services, provided by the Council, are being reconfigured around a housing options model. This new approach aims to deliver personalised housing options services, through a range of providers, to vulnerably housed people so that they are better able to remain in their current homes or are able to make planned, timely moves to alternative housing. The Housing Strategy is clear that the delivery of enhanced housing options services should complement rather than conflict with the Council’s duties to homeless households. The Housing Strategy will set out plans/actions to eradicate rough sleeping by 2012, in line with the governmental target. Housing-related support, adaptations and assistive technology will play an important role in helping people to live independently and prevent admissions to hospital or residential care. The Housing Strategy will set out plans to quantify the wider health and wellbeing benefits that are generated from such services. The Council and partners are committed to modernising housing provision, for older people and people with learning disabilities, to promote independent living and to enable people to exercise greater choice and control over their lives. The strategy will consider how the housing needs of groups such as refugees and Gypsy Travellers. For the latter group, the Housing Strategy will have regard for the findings of the Gypsy Traveller Housing Needs Assessment for West Yorkshire and the need to identify sufficient accommodation sites for the period up to 2015.

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**Strategic Vision and Themes**

The vision of the Leeds Housing Strategy 2009-2012 is to ‘create opportunities for people to live independently in quality, affordable housing’.

The strategic vision encompasses three strategic themes:

- 1. Increase affordable housing supply**
- 2. Improve housing quality**
- 3. Promote independent living**

The three strategic themes contain more specific strategic priorities:

**Increasing the supply of affordable housing:**

- a. Helping people to become and remain home-owners**
- b. Increasing the supply of social housing**
- c. Maximise use of existing housing stock**
- d. Deliver the right housing mix of new housing**
- e. Increase the supply of new accessible housing**



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**Improve Housing Quality:**

- f. Bring all social housing up to the decency standard**
- g. Identify future investment options for council housing**
- h. Increase the supply of private housing that meets the decency standard**
- i. Improve the long-term sustainability of private housing stock**
- j. Continue to improve standards in the private rented sector**
- k. Improve the standard of temporary accommodation leased through the private sector**

**Promote Independent Living:**

- l. Deliver high quality and enhanced housing options services so that people are able to find a solution to their housing need**
- m. Maximise opportunities to prevent homelessness**
- n. Reduce the incidence of temporary accommodation**
- o. Enable people to live independently through housing-related support, adaptations, lettings and assistive technology**
- p. Modernise housing provision for vulnerable people**
- q. Contribute to promoting community cohesion, reducing worklessness and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour**

**Strategy in Context**

**National Context**

**The Housing Green Paper Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable** sets out the government’s commitment to deliver 2 million new homes by 2016, and 3 million by

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2020. This will entail building 240,000 new homes per year by 2016, 70,000 of which should be affordable. The **2007 Comprehensive Spending Review** has increased the funding allocated for housing from £8.8 billion in 2007/08 to £10 billion in 2010/11. However, specific programmes, such as Supporting People, have had a cut in funding.

The **Housing and Regeneration Act 2008** builds upon the Housing Green Paper and the **Cave Report** into social housing regulation. The key provisions are:

- Obliging housing authorities to involve tenants in any options appraisal carried out to consider the future management of council housing
- Making it mandatory for housing authorities to carry out a tenant ballot prior to a stock transfer
- Establishing the Homes and Communities Agency as a delivery partner for affordable housing and regeneration
- Setting up a social housing regulator – the Tenant Services Authority

The local government white paper **‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’** includes a requirement for local authorities to develop a Local Area Agreement and partly redefines the strategic housing role of local authorities as centring around ‘place shaping’ as a catalyst for delivering economic growth and prosperity.

### **Regional Context**

The **Yorkshire and Humber Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026** identifies that the Leeds district already accommodates more jobs than dwellings. It estimates potential job growth at 6,000 per annum and household growth at around 4,000 per year. The Plan therefore recommends that 4,300 new homes be developed in the Leeds district per year for the next 15-20 years.

The **Yorkshire and Humber Regional Strategy 2005-2021** is framed around three key themes: ‘Creating better places’, ‘Delivering better homes, choice and opportunity’ and ‘Ensuring fair access to quality housing’. The priorities set out within the strategy inform the use of available regional housing funding. An emphasis is placed upon investment that integrates housing, economic and social activity. The strategy will be reviewed in 2009.

The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership (comprising the local authorities and other housing providers within the West Yorkshire sub-region) has signed off the **West Yorkshire Housing Strategy 2008-2015**. The priorities of the strategy are:

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- Housing growth, affordability and supply
- Creating sustainable housing markets and promoting economic growth
- Promoting community cohesion
- Vulnerable People
- Environmental sustainability, energy efficiency and health

**Climate Change Plan for Yorkshire and the Humber** sets out specific actions and targets for reducing carbon emissions generated from building stock. Approximately 46% of carbon emissions relate to property. The government has set targets that all new housing will be carbon neutral from 2016, public buildings from 2016 and commercial buildings from 2019. The plan considers how building design, maintenance and refurbishment can lead to better homes that use far less energy – providing more affordable warmth for inhabitants and helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

#### **Local Context**

The **Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-2011** is one of the key strategic documents for the city. The plan has been ratified by the Council and the wider local strategic partnership, **Leeds Initiative**, and sets out a shared set of outcomes and improvement priorities. The plan is framed around seven vision themes, which have been adopted from the longer-term **Vision for Leeds 2020**. The vision themes are Culture, Enterprise and Economy, Learning, Transport, Environment, Health and Wellbeing, Thriving Places and Harmonious Communities.

The Thriving Places theme includes the strategic outcome: ‘Improved quality of life through mixed neighbourhoods offering good housing options and better access to services and activities’. The Thriving Places and Health and Wellbeing themes contain improvement priorities relating to improving housing decency, increasing the supply of affordable housing, reducing homelessness and fuel poverty, and increasing the number of vulnerable people helped to live at home.

Housing will also contribute to the achievement of improvement priorities included within the other vision themes:

- an adequate supply of affordable housing will be needed to complement job growth
- stable housing gives children the foundation to learn and develop
- new housing development must contribute to wider environmental objectives such as cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

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- housing policy, such as temporary accommodation placements for the homeless and asylum seekers, impacts upon community cohesion.

The **Leeds Local Area Agreement** is closely aligned to the Leeds Strategic Plan. The Local Area Agreement sets out the 35 improvement priorities for the city and has been ratified by the Council, Central Government and the Leeds Initiative. The improvement priorities are linked to performance indicators included within the **National Indicator Set**. The agreement’s housing-related indicators are:

- NI141: Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living
- NI154: Net number of additional homes provided
- NI56: Number of affordable homes delivered
- NI158: Percentage non-decent council homes
- NI187: Tackling fuel poverty
- Reduce number of homeless people (Local Performance Indicator)
- NI139: Older people helped to live at home
- NI30: Re-offending rate of priority and prolific offenders

The National Indicator Set of 198 performance indicators also includes a number of performance indicators that are housing related:

- NI142: Number of vulnerable people maintaining independent living
- NI156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- NI160: Local Authority tenant’s satisfaction with landlord services
- NI1: Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI2: Percentage of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI5: Overall satisfaction with local area
- NI7: Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI32: Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- NI119: Self reported measure of people’s overall health and wellbeing
- NI131: Delayed transfers of care from hospitals
- NI143: Proportion of offenders under probation supervision in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence

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- NI145: Proportion of adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation
- NI147: Proportion of former care leavers aged 19 who are in settled accommodation
- NI149: Proportion of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation

**Leeds Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) (2007)** was carried out by consultants, Outside UK. It involved the assessment of cross-tenure housing need and demand within the Leeds district. The HMA identified that there was a need to develop 1889 affordable housing per units per annum up to 2020 in order to meet housing need.

**Leeds Local Development Framework (LDF)** provides the planning policies for Leeds and is a key delivery tool of the Housing Strategy. The Core Strategy currently being developed will set out strategic housing, including policies for affordable housing and housing mix. The existing Supplementary Planning Guidance and Informal Policy on Affordable Housing provide guidance to developers submitting planning applications for residential development, as to what affordable housing will be sought. This will be replaced by an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in 2009 (currently at draft stages).

The **Leeds Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** is produced jointly by NHS Leeds and Leeds City Council. It reflects on data and analysis in relation to the local population in order to identify current and predicted health and well-being needs and gives an account of what people in the local community want from their services. It is able to inform future service planning by identifying health outcomes that are not being met, health inequalities that need to be addressed, client groups with unmet needs, and services that require change.

Although Leeds is recognised as one of Britain’s most successful cities outside London, the JSNA highlights the diversity of the city’s health and wellbeing needs and highlights the gaps between those areas that are wealthy and thriving and those that suffer high levels of multiple deprivation, as well as the key issues of the impact of the changing population, vulnerable groups and broader community well being.

The JSNA addresses the link between health and housing issues; in particular, the importance of enabling people to access quality housing by illustrating the impact this has on people’s health and wellbeing. It highlights the importance of improving housing quality as a means of addressing contributors to multiple deprivation such as fuel poverty and infant mortality and identifies the key Super Output

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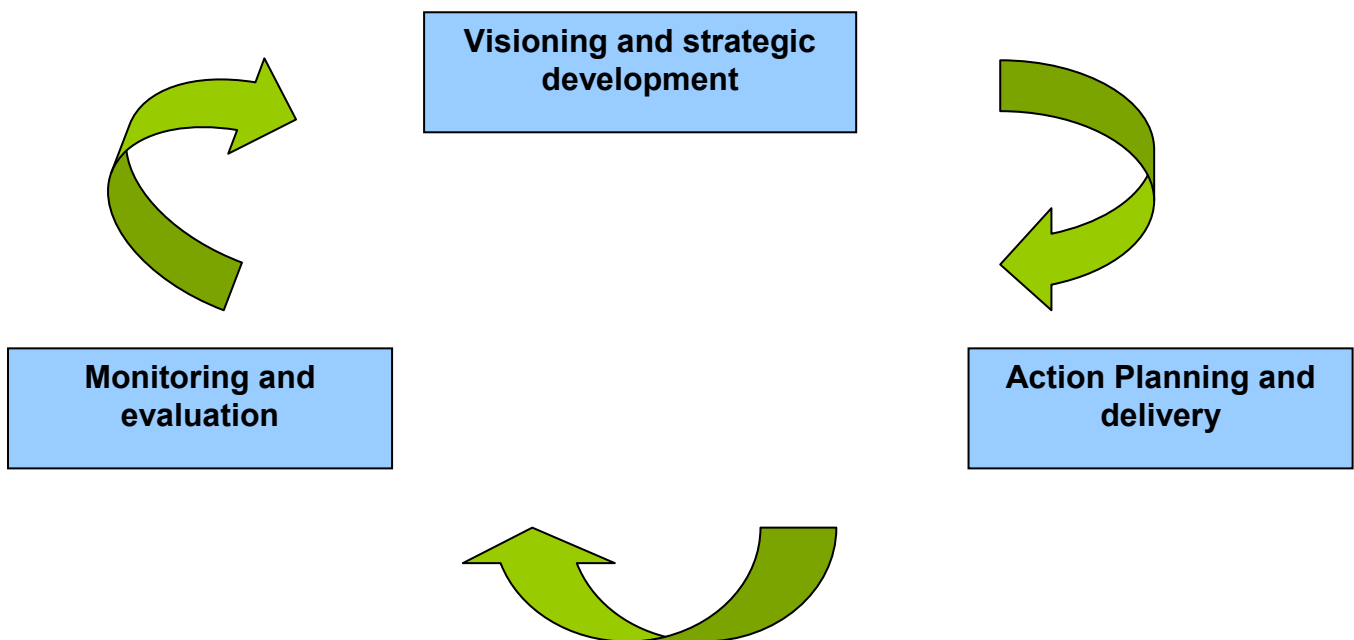
Areas (SOA) from the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 relating to Leeds that impact on people’s health and wellbeing.

There are also a range of housing related strategies and plans that will inform the development and delivery of the Leeds Housing Strategy: These include:

- **Leeds BME Housing Strategy**
- **Leeds Disabled People’s Housing Strategy**
- **Leeds Older People’s Housing Strategy: ‘Home not Alone’**
- **Leeds Supporting People Strategy**
- **Leeds Homelessness Strategy**
- **Leeds Private Sector Housing Strategy (in development)**
- **Leeds Empty Property Strategy**
- **Safer Leeds Partnership Plan**
- **Leeds Alcohol Strategy**
- **Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy**
- **Affordable Housing Plan: ‘Making the housing ladder work’**
- **Back-to-Back Housing Strategy**
- **Supplementary Planning Guidance (to be implemented December 2007)**

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**Strategic Housing Process and Governance**



The strategic housing process has three concurrent strands, with the Leeds Housing Strategy document representing the initial delivery of the first stage. The Housing Strategy document will also detail agreed actions, with accompanying success measures, against each of the strategic goals included within one of the three strategic priorities: **‘Increase affordable housing supply’**, **‘Improve housing quality’** and **‘Promote independent living’**.

The most critical element of the strategic housing process will perhaps be monitoring delivery against the agreed actions. Council officers will be responsible for collecting this information so that it can be evaluated through the Leeds Housing Partnership governance framework. It is envisaged that the reporting cycle to the Leeds Housing Partnership will be modified to reflect the three strategic priorities of the Leeds Housing Strategy.

The Leeds Housing Partnership will oversee the updating of the strategic vision, priorities, goals and actions as required to ensure that they continue to reflect the housing challenge.

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**Resources**

To be completed.

|                           | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> | <b>Beyond</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>HCA funding</b>        |                |                |                |               |
| <b>PFI</b>                |                |                |                |               |
| <b>RHB Private Sector</b> |                |                |                |               |
| <b>Supporting People</b>  |                |                |                |               |
| <b>Commuted Sums</b>      |                |                |                |               |
| <b>Other?</b>             |                |                |                |               |
|                           |                |                |                |               |
| <b>Local Capital</b>      |                |                |                |               |
| <b>HRA/Decency</b>        |                |                |                |               |
| <b>Other?</b>             |                |                |                |               |



## Strategic Theme 1: Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing

The Yorkshire and Humber Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 stipulates that the Leeds district needs to increase the supply of new housing from 2,260 to 4,300 per annum in order to support anticipated job growth. Leeds already has more jobs than homes. Essentially, the Regional Spatial Strategy states that this additional stock is required in order to attract new employment investment and to ensure that workers are not unnecessarily commuting long distances into the city. The Council has agreed, through the Local Area Agreement (LAA), to a target to deliver 10,200 additional dwellings over the three year period from 2008/09 to 2010/11. This equates to 3,400 new homes being developed in the city each year.

The term of the Leeds Housing Strategy is three years and the existing outlook, in relation to house building, is challenging. As of February 2009, recorded house building starts are averaging 100 per month, which implies completions of approximately 1200 per annum at some point in the future, if market confidence does not pick up. Many house building schemes in the city are being mothballed or curtailed due to the downturn in the economic climate. However, there are still approximately 4400 units under construction in the city, many of which are too far advanced to make deferral of completion worthwhile. A significant proportion of these units will be completed after April 2009. In addition, the Council has granted detailed planning permission for approximately 10,000 units, construction of which has not yet started. In theory, work could commence on these units in a relatively short period if there is a recovery in the economic position. The Council is therefore confident that the house building targets set out within the LAA will be delivered.

In relation to new housing, the Leeds Housing Strategy is primarily concerned with increasing the supply of affordable housing. Affordable housing can be broadly defined as housing which is provided for people who cannot or do not wish to purchase or rent through the open market. In relation to new housing, the Leeds Housing Strategy is principally focused on addressing the housing needs of people who are unable or do not wish to secure housing through the open market. Nevertheless, the three year target relating to net additional dwellings is still critical to the Leeds Housing Strategy. The delivery of affordable housing is often linked to wider housing development. Under Section 106 agreements a developer will agree to develop a specific number of affordable housing units as a condition of being awarded planning permission to develop new housing. Any contraction in overall house building will therefore impact upon the target to increase the supply of affordable housing and place greater pressure on existing housing options.

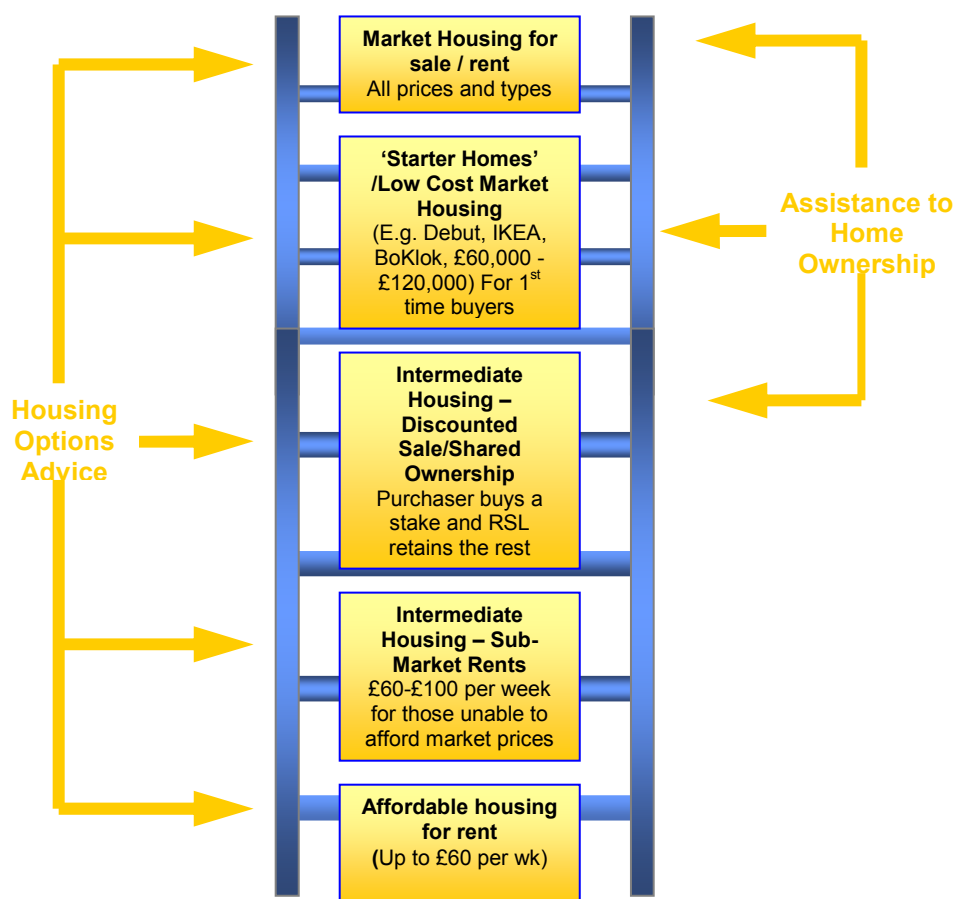
The term affordable housing includes the following housing options:

- **Social Rented Housing** is that let through a Council, ALMO or Housing Association
- **Intermediate Housing** is that which is sold or let at a price above social renting but below a market value or rent.

Intermediate housing encompasses three main housing options:

1. **Shared equity/ownership** where the occupant owns a share of the property, generally by securing a mortgage, and pays rent for the remaining part of the property
2. **Discounted sale** where a housing association sells the property at a discounted price with a condition that an equivalent discount is repaid if the property is sold on
3. **Intermediate/submarket rent** where the property is let at a rent that is higher than social housing but lower than a market rent.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing has been an increasingly important priority for the Council in recent years. In 2007, the Council ratified the Leeds Affordable Housing Plan 2007 to 2015. The Plan coined the term 'housing ladder' to describe the range of housing options that needed to be available to ensure that Leeds has a fully functioning housing market meeting the needs of all people in the city. The 'rungs' of the 'housing ladder' are as follows:



There is compelling evidence to conclude that the 'Leeds housing ladder' is not functioning effectively for all the people of Leeds. The Leeds Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) 2007 identified that a single person would need an annual gross income of £37k to purchase the average starter home in the city. The 20% reduction in average house prices in 2008 will have affected this calculation but nevertheless home-ownership remains difficult to secure for households unless they

enjoy significantly above average income and/or considerable capital. Many households in the city have purchased properties at a cost that they are finding difficult to meet in the deteriorating economic climate. The continued contraction in the city's social housing stock, specifically that which is council owned, means that more people are finding it difficult to access social housing. It is not uncommon for 500 applicants to register a bid for a property advertised through the Leeds Homes choice based lettings system. Research carried out by Re'new highlighted that housing association rental charges are increasingly unaffordable for people on below average or average incomes. The Leeds Housing Strategy will therefore focus on how the Council and partners can work towards promoting the more effective functioning of the 'Leeds housing ladder' and helping people who are in some form of housing need to access affordable housing. Increasing the overall supply of housing is vital to this, not only as a source of affordable housing but also to create housing options for people who are able and choose to secure housing through the open market.

The Leeds Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) 2007 calculated that over a 15 year period 1889 affordable housing units need to be developed on an annual basis to meet unmet housing need in Leeds. The Council has agreed, through the Local Area Agreement, to deliver 1800 affordable housing units between 2008/09 and 2010/11. This target is demanding, especially if the contraction in house building starts continues in the longer term. The Leeds Housing Strategy recognises the need to initiate a flexible approach to delivering affordable housing. Fewer affordable housing units will be generated through Section 106 agreements and there will be fewer affordable home ownership units than was previously forecast. However, there will be an increased focus on social and intermediate rental options, including the first new build council housing since the late 1980s. An increased emphasis will be placed on maximising the use of existing housing stock, including as a source of affordable housing. The Leeds Housing Strategy will set out actions and targets relating to the purchase or lease of empty properties from developers by housing associations, which could be a let as a social or intermediate rental option, especially for key workers. The Leeds Housing Strategy will also set out action and targets relating to helping home owners, who are having difficulty meeting mortgage commitments are at risk of repossession, to stay in their homes. Increasing the supply of affordable housing must be allied to a commitment to deliver the right housing mix for the city. The majority of housing developed in the city has been one-two bedroomed flatted accommodation; whilst the Leeds Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) 2007 highlights a strong demand for larger family housing. There is also a significant need to deliver an increase in the number of larger properties to meet the needs of BME groups. The longer term accessibility and energy efficiency of new housing will also be considered by the Leeds Housing Strategy.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is one of the improvement priorities included within the Leeds Strategic Plan. A survey of Leeds residents carried out in 2007 identified that access to affordable housing was one of the three most important things that made somewhere a good place to live. Increasing the supply of affordable housing therefore makes a key contribution to making all areas in Leeds 'Thriving Places'. Accessible affordable housing makes a significant contribution to promoting health and wellbeing, with people's quality of life being heavily influenced

by contentment with their home. Affordable housing has a role in helping children to thrive, achieve in education and to maximise their potential. The availability of accessible, affordable housing makes a significant contribution to promoting the health and wellbeing of older people, enabling them to retain their independence, to exercise choice and control over their lives, to prevent or defer them from needing to move to residential care and is a platform from which community based services can be provided. The affordability of housing makes a significant contribution to economic development with job creation targets being predicated on an adequate supply of housing being available to accommodate workers. Housing affordability is a key cost indicator that will influence the decision making of organisations whether to invest or continue to invest in Leeds. Workers, including high-skill workers, may factor in housing cost considerations when deciding whether to relocate or remain living in the Leeds area.

The 'Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing' Theme includes the following priorities:

- a. Helping people to become and remain home-owners**
- b. Increasing the supply of social and intermediate rented housing**
- c. Maximise use of existing housing stock**
- d. Deliver the right housing mix of new housing**
- e. Increase the supply of new accessible housing**

The 'Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing' Theme will contribute to a range of strategic outcomes and improvement priorities, set out within the Leeds Strategic Plan. These include:

| <b>Theme</b>   | <b>Strategic Outcome</b>  | <b>Improvement Priority</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enterprise and the Economy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increased entrepreneurship and innovation through effective support to achieve the full potential of people, businesses and the economy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase innovation and entrepreneurial activity across the city</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Learning</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ An enhanced workforce that will meet future challenges through fulfilling individual and economic potential</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhance the skill level of the workforce to fulfil individual and economic potential</li> <li>■ Improve learning outcomes for all 16</li> </ul> |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | and investing in learning facilities   | year olds with a focus on narrowing the achievement gap<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the proportion of vulnerable groups engaged in education, training or employment</li> </ul>                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Environment</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cleaner, greener and more attractive city through effective environmental management and changed behaviours</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improve the quality and sustainability of the built and natural environment</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Health and Wellbeing</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved quality of life through maximising the potential of vulnerable people by promoting independence, dignity and respect</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the number of vulnerable people helped to live at home</li> <li>■ Increase the proportion of people in receipt of community services enjoying choice and control over their lives</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Thriving Places</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved quality of life through mixed neighbourhoods offering good housing options and better access to services and activities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the number of affordable homes</li> <li>■ Reduction in the number of homeless people</li> <li>■ Reduce the number of people who are not able to adequately heat their home</li> </ul>        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Harmonious Communities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ More community cohesion and integration through meaningful involvement and valuing equality and diversity</li> </ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the sense of belonging and pride in local neighbourhoods that help to build cohesive communities</li> </ul>  |

The 'Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing' theme also contributes to the following performance indicators, which are included within the National Indicator Set (highlighted in bold if also included in the Leeds Local Area Agreement):

- **NI154: Net number of additional homes provided**
- **NI155: Number of affordable homes delivered**
- **NI139: Older people helped to live at home**

- **NI141: Number of vulnerable people helped to achieve independent living**
- **Tackling fuel poverty**
- **Reduce number of homeless households (Local Performance Measure)**
- NI156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- NI1: Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI2: Percentage of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood
- Overall satisfaction with local area
- NI119: Self reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing
- NI131: Delayed transfers of care from hospitals
- NI142: Number of vulnerable people maintaining independent living
- NI145: Proportion of adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation
- NI147: Proportion of former care leavers aged 19 who are in settled accommodation
- NI149: Proportion of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation

### **Strategic Priority A: Helping people to become and remain home owners**

### **Strategic Priority B: Increasing the supply of social and intermediate rented housing**

Over 70% of the Leeds population own their own home and home ownership continues to be the preferred form of housing tenure for the majority of the population. The Leeds Housing Strategy maintains the commitment to help people secure sustainable home ownership if that is their preference but the downturn in the economic climate, with the resulting increase in mortgage defaults and home repossession, means that the focus has shifted towards helping people to remain home owners.

#### **Case Study: Golden Triangle Partnership**

The Golden Triangle Partnership, which covers North Leeds, York and Harrogate, was established to help prospective home-owners purchase a home through the release of an equity loan (of up to 45% of the purchase price) with the remaining cost being met through a conventional mortgage. The scheme is funded through the Regional Housing Board. It is projected that by the end of 2008/09, 28 people in North Leeds will have been assisted to buy their own home.

The Partnership has been re-modelled to provide a mortgage rescue service. Households who would be statutorily homeless, were they to lose their homes, and with a minimum 15% equity in their homes are being offered one of three options:

1. Equity loan to clear mortgage arrears/secured loans and to meet future mortgage payments/secured loan payments for the next 12 months
2. Equity loan to clear mortgage arrears/secured loans and to reduce outstanding mortgage/secured loan balance reducing future payments to an affordable level



3. Equity loan to clear mortgage arrears/secured loans and to meet future mortgage/secured loan payments until a planned sale can be made

The scheme will be sourced through the reconfigured Leeds Housing Options Service.

The Golden Triangle Mortgage Rescue Scheme only covers a specific part of the city. The development of a city wide Mortgage Rescue scheme, which again will be accessed through the Leeds Housing Options Service, is an immediate priority action for the Leeds Housing Strategy.

The cornerstone of the city's affordable housing delivery plans is the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership.

#### **Case Study: Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership**

The Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership is an innovative and trailblazing vehicle for delivering affordable housing in the city, and is a prototype for the Local Housing Companies that the Government is encouraging local authorities to establish. The Partnership is chaired by the leader of the Council and comprises senior representatives from both the housing and planning authority, the Homes and Communities Agency and the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber. The Partnership recognises that the Council is primarily a strategic enabler of affordable housing delivery, through planning consent and the release of land for development. The Council has released 87 acres of land for development through the Partnership, with the expectation that this would attract Homes and Communities Agency subsidy and additional developer investment. Some of this land has become available through work to purchase and clear areas of obsolete housing in the city, the funding for which was secured through the Regional Housing Board. By February 2009, the Affordable Housing Delivery Section had been successful in securing £45 million of Homes and Communities Agency funding and private sector investment to deliver new affordable housing on the land allocated to the Partnership. It is forecast that 460 affordable housing units will be produced in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

The Council's Planning Services are amending and developing new policies that will underpin the development of new housing, including affordable housing. The Leeds Local Development Framework sets out the planning policies for the city. The Council is currently in the process of replacing the existing Supplementary Planning Guidance with an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will set out the Council's requirement that specific minimum levels of affordable housing will be sought on development schemes exceeding 15 units. This ranges from 15% in the city centre to 30% in the outer area of the city. The SPD will also set out different tenure split targets depending on which of the 5 housing market zones that a scheme site is located within. The Planning Authority is also developing a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which will identify public and private land that can be used for house building, including land which could be used for affordable housing development, up to 2024.

The Council has not developed new council housing since the late 1980s. Three sites have been earmarked by the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership, which will generate 27 new council homes that will be managed by the Leeds ALMOs. The Council is not using Homes and Communities Agency funding for this development but is using monies from land receipts and commuted sums. The Council views this development as the beginning of an expanded programme of council house building. The Leeds Housing Strategy has noted the changes government are introducing in relation to permitting local authorities to retain full rental income and sale receipts, in the event of a 'Right to Buy' sale on new council housing. The Council and the Leeds ALMOs are also mindful of the opportunities that could arise from the current review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in terms of capital borrowing. The 2008 Housing and Regeneration Act also permits local authorities to pre-qualify with the Homes and Communities Agency as an approved recipient of grant.

Empty housing that developers have not been able to sell or let is a major opportunity to generate additional units of affordable housing. A notable example of this option has been Sanctuary Housing Association purchasing 23 'off the shelf' properties from Bloor Homes in the East Ardsley area of the city, which is part of a national agreement between the two parties. The purchase of these properties attracted subsidy from the former Housing Corporation (now Homes and Communities Agency) and was supported by the Council. It is forecast that approximately 100 affordable housing units could be secured through this route up to 2010/11. The Council is exploring opportunities to work with Savills, a national company, to bring empty stock into use as affordable housing. The proposals centre around the establishment of a mutual company, allied to Homes and Communities funding and private sector investment, to purchase/lease empty housing in the city. Current thinking is that units could be let on an intermediate rental charge, primarily to key workers, and perhaps on a 'rent now, buy later' option. It is projected that approximately 300 could be secured through the potential partnership up to 2010/11.

A number of developers have submitted a bid for 589 units in Leeds through the Home Buy Direct initiative. The Homes and Communities Agency have accepted the bid and the Leeds Housing Strategy is projecting that 300 affordable housing units will be secured through this route up to the end of 2010/11.

The Leeds Housing Partnership has raised concerns from local housing associations to the Homes and Communities Agency that current subsidy rates mean that development offering shared equity housing is often not viable. It is believed that the Homes and Communities Agency are sympathetic to these concerns and that grant rates will be restructured. There is an expectation that shared ownership schemes can be reconfigured around a 'rent now, buy later' model.

| <b>Key Actions</b>   |
|--|
| <b>1. Help home owners to remain living in their home through the Golden Triangle Partnership and the establishment of a city wide mortgage rescue scheme.</b> |
| <b>2. Deliver affordable housing through the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership.</b>   |
| <b>3. Implement agreed Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning</b>   |



|   |
|---|
| <b>Document (SPD) targets on affordable housing and tenure mix.</b>   |
| <b>4. Use Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to identify public and private land for housing development, including affordable housing.</b>                                 |
| <b>5. Build initial 27 units of new council housing and explore opportunities to expand this programme.</b>   |
| <b>6. Maximise current and explore further opportunities to use empty housing stock as affordable housing.</b>  |
| <b>7. Monitor the viability of existing Homes and Community agency subsidy rates and maintain dialogue with the HCA on opportunities for generating affordable housing on an ongoing basis.</b> |
| <b>8. Maximise affordable housing that can be delivered through Home buy initiatives.</b>   |
| <b>9. Explore opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable housing targeted at BME households.</b>   |

| <b>Key Targets</b>  |                |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>  | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| Net number of homes delivered (Minimum) <b>NI154</b>                                    | 3,400          | 3,400          | tbc            |
| Number of affordable homes delivered (Minimum) <b>NI155</b>                             | 500            | 1,000          | tbc            |
| Affordable housing delivered through Strategic Affordable Housing Partnership (Minimum) | 230            | 230            | tbc            |
| Affordable Housing delivered through S106 (Minimum)                                     | 100            | 150            | tbc            |
| Affordable Housing delivered through other initiatives (Minimum)                        | 170            | 620            | tbc            |

Targets for 2010/11 will be set by the Council, and monitored through the Leeds Housing Partnership, at a later point.

### **Strategic Priority C: Maximise use of existing housing stock**

Increasing the supply of affordable housing relates to making better use of existing stock as well as new house building. There are over 322,000 properties in the city, with over 20,000 of these empty and just under 9,000 empty for six months or longer. No matter how many new houses are built the Leeds Housing Strategy recognises that long-term empty homes are a wasted resource and an indicator that the 'Leeds housing ladder' is not functioning effectively. Empty properties often blight the area in which they are located. Empty properties are located across the city but most notably in older stock, such as back-to-backs and through terraces, in the inner urban areas, which are characterised by high levels of non-decency and new build housing located in the city centre.

Leeds has been successful in tackling the incidence of empty properties in the city. The city has a long-standing Empty Property Strategy and employing a dedicated officer to monitor the incidence and trends relating to empty homes in the city. The

Council also has a dedicated team that is responsible for bringing empty homes back into use. In 2008/09, just under 3,000 properties were brought back into use through some form of intervention on the part of the Council – the best performance of any local authority. However, it is clear that much is still to be done.

Existing action, such as levying 100% council tax on empty homes and encouraging landlords to join the Council's Landlord Accreditation scheme, will continue to be employed. The Leeds Housing Strategy has already set out plans to establish partnerships with private companies, and to attract Homes and Communities funding and private sector investment, to bring empty properties back into use as intermediate rented housing.

The 2004 Housing Act introduced the option of councils securing Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) to bring empty properties back into use. The Council, in common with most other authorities, had not used the EDMO option by the end of April 2009. The Council will take advantage of the additional guidance that the government has committed to supply to clarify use of EDMOs. One of the key challenges relating to EDMOs is finding organisations that are willing to take on the housing management responsibility of properties subject to an EDMO. The Council is carrying out a procurement exercise to establish contractual arrangements with housing providers who are willing to take on this role.

The threat of an EDMO can create a stimulus to property owners to bring a house into occupation. The city is facing the challenge of a high number of empty properties, high levels of private sector non-decency, elements of poor landlord practice and having a high number of people who are homeless, threatened with homelessness or unsuitably housed. The Leeds Housing Strategy sets out plans to find joint solutions to these challenges. The reconfigured Leeds Housing Options Service has a Private Sector Lettings Scheme. Landlords who offer properties through the scheme are guaranteed the equivalent of up to four weeks rent to cover damage to the property – the scheme will potentially be extended to cover rent arrears. Tenants are offered housing support through Foundation Housing who can help ensure that they comply with tenancy obligations. In return, landlords are obliged to join the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme and to bring the property up to a decent standard of repair. The Council is contacting property owners with empty properties to determine whether they would be interested in letting properties through the scheme and advising that it is an alternative to applying for an EDMO. The Council is using this route as a further means of having a dialogue with property owners and encouraging them to bring stock into use.

The Council is preparing to act as a banker for the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership's 'Recycling the Empties' initiative and has 20 Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) in the pipeline on long-term empty, dilapidated properties, which are blighting the locality in which they are situated. The Council is currently in discussions with local housing associations regarding the feasibility of such organisations purchasing, or long-term leasing these properties, carrying out the requisite improvement work and letting the properties as affordable housing. It was assumed that this scheme could become self-financing as further empty properties could be purchased with receipts generated from sales. Falling house prices makes

this model more challenging but CPOs will continue to be an important tool to tackle the incidence of the worst forms of empty properties.

Under-occupation of housing is perhaps another indicator of stock not being used to its optimum capacity. The Council and the Leeds ALMOs are taking steps to address the incidence of under-occupation in council owned properties by launching the 'Under Occupiers Cash Incentive' scheme in July 2008. The scheme aims to release family sized housing and to reduce the number of large households who are waiting for re-housing in the city. The scheme involves giving tenants who are under-occupying larger Council properties a cash incentive of £1,000 per bedroom to downsize to a smaller property. Tenants would also be awarded Priority Extra/Direct Let status to be re-housed through the Leeds Homes Register. By the end of January 2009, 27 families had been rehoused through the scheme at a cost of £56,000. The comparative cost of developing 27 family size houses is around £.3.5 million (£150k per unit), this demonstrates the cost effectiveness of the scheme. The potential savings of not having to place families in temporary accommodation also need to be considered. The Council believes that this is a scheme that can be expanded to help more families and will be developing an Under Occupiers Strategy in 2009.

| <b>Key Actions</b>  |
|---|
| <b>1. Update the existing Leeds Empty Property Strategy to reflect emerging challenges and opportunities for action.</b>                          |
| <b>2. Continue to levy 100% council tax charge on empty homes.</b>  |
| <b>3. Continue to encourage property owners to join the Leeds Landlords Accreditation scheme and highlight the benefits of letting out stock.</b> |
| <b>4. Maximise current and explore further opportunities to use empty housing stock as affordable housing.</b>                                    |
| <b>5. Identify organisations willing to manage housing subject to Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs).</b>                                   |
| <b>6. Maximise dialogue with property owners to encourage them to bring empty properties into use.</b>  |
| <b>7. Use Leeds Housing Options Service Private Sector Lettings Scheme as an option for bringing empty properties into use.</b>                   |
| <b>8. Secure Compulsory Purchase Orders through the 'Recycling the Empties' scheme on worst instances of empty properties.</b>                    |
| <b>9. Council and Leeds ALMOs to develop an Under-Occupiers strategy and encourage other housing providers to develop comparable plans.</b>       |

| <b>Key Targets</b>  |                |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>  | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| Proportion of total housing stock empty for any time period (Maximum) | 4%             | 3.5%           | 3%             |
| Total number of empty homes brought back into use (Minimum)           | 2,900          | 2,900          | 2,900          |
| Empty properties brought back into use through purchase/lease by      | 100            | 200            | tbc            |

|   |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| housing associations  |                                  |                                  |                                  |
| Number of Council tenants moving to alternative housing and releasing under-occupied properties | No target (report number to LHP) | No target (report number to LHP) | No target (report number to LHP) |

### **Strategic Priority D: Deliver the right housing mix of new housing**

### **Strategic Priority E: Increase the supply of new accessible housing**

The Leeds Housing Strategy is concerned not only with increasing the supply of new housing, including affordable housing, but also ensuring that the housing delivered meets the needs of the people of Leeds.

A key issue relates to the development of family sized housing. The Leeds Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) 2007 identified that between 1998/99 and 2006/07 the proportion of new housing development in the city that was flatted accommodation rose from 11.6% to 73.6%. Only 7% of existing households and 27% of newly formed households expressed a preference to live in flats. The development of additional units of larger housing is needed to meet the needs of BME households. 22% of Asian households with housing applications on the Leeds Homes Register require a 3 bedroom property compared to 10% of White households. The BME Housing Strategy and the 2008 Leeds Private Sector Stock Condition Survey both highlight that BME households are disproportionately likely to occupy non-decent housing, experience overcrowding, fuel poverty, homelessness and premature mortality. An increase in the development of larger housing therefore seems to be a critical element of the drive to better address BME housing need. The Council's interim planning policy considers housing mix for all development proposals. The interim policy, which was developed jointly by the Housing and Planning Authority, recommends that a minimum of 65% of all new residential housing developments should consist of houses with gardens, including communal gardens, and at least 40% of new housing should comprise units of 3 bedrooms or more. The application of the interim policy should help to deliver a better mix of family sized and smaller housing units. The Leeds Housing Strategy recommends that the Leeds Housing Partnership explores examples of new high density family sized housing which has been delivered through innovative design.

The Climate Change Plan Built Environment identifies that 46% of total carbon emissions emanate from building stock. The government has set a target that all new housing will be zero carbon from 2016. This is a target that needs to be made after the end of the three year term of the Housing Strategy. Nevertheless, the city needs to make a clear reduction in greenhouse emissions from its housing stock and make demonstrable progress towards achieving the aspirations detailed in the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Leeds Development Framework Core Strategy seeks new housing to be developed up to Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Housing up to 2010, Level 4 in the period 2010 to 2013 and Level 6 from 2013 to 2016.

Leeds has an ageing population, with the proportion of residents aged 60 or over likely to rise by approximately 18% in the period up to 2021. Older people are more likely to experience some form of life affecting illness, including loss of mobility. The

Leeds Housing Strategy seeks to promote the opportunity for people to live independently in their existing homes. The development of accessible housing, including new housing, will be a key element of the drive to promote independent living. The government has set a target that all new social housing and general housing development will need to conform to the 'Lifetime Homes' standard from 2011 and 2013 respectively. The 'Lifetime Homes' standard is a set of 16 design criteria that aim to promote mobility within the home. Adhering to these design standards increases the cost of housing production by around £500 per unit. However, this is a small fraction of the cost of adapting a property or placing a person into residential care. All housing developed through the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership will conform to the 'Lifetime Homes' standard. The proposed sheltered housing modernisation programme (see Priority P) will also develop housing that meets this standard.

| <b>Key Actions</b>  |
|---|
| <b>1. Use the interim planning policy to achieve a better mix of family sized housing, with garden provision, and flatted accommodation.</b>  |
| <b>2. Leeds Housing Partnership to identify examples of innovative high density family sized housing and strive to influence developers making planning applications.</b>                     |
| <b>3. Reduce greenhouse emissions emanating from the city's housing stock and make demonstrable progress to improving the environmental sustainability of new housing.</b>                    |
| <b>4. All new housing delivered through the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership to conform to the Lifetime Homes standard.</b>   |
| <b>5. All new social housing developments to conform to the Lifetime Homes standard from 2011.</b>  |
| <b>6. Consider reasonable targets relating to proportion of general housing development that should conform to the Lifetime Homes standard during the term of the Leeds Housing Strategy.</b> |

| <b>Key Targets</b>  |                    |                    |                |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>  | <b>2009/10</b>     | <b>2010/11</b>     | <b>2011/12</b> |
| <b>% of total new build development that consists of houses with some form of garden provision (Minimum)</b>                        | <b>65%</b>         | <b>65%</b>         | <b>65%</b>     |
| <b>% of total new build development that is 3 bedroom plus units (Minimum)</b>  | <b>40%</b>         | <b>40%</b>         | <b>40%</b>     |
| <b>New housing meets specific environmental sustainability in Code for Sustainable Homes</b>  | <b>Level 3</b>     | <b>Level 4</b>     | <b>Level 4</b> |
| <b>Proportion of new housing delivered through the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership meeting the Lifetime Homes standard</b> | <b>100%</b>        | <b>100%</b>        | <b>100%</b>    |
| <b>Proportion of new social housing</b>   | <b>No target –</b> | <b>No target –</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>meeting the Lifetime Homes standard</b>   | <b>to be monitored through LHP</b>             | <b>to be monitored through LHP</b>             |  |
| <b>Proportion of new general housing development meeting the Lifetime Homes standard</b> | <b>No target – to be monitored through LHP</b> | <b>No target – to be monitored through LHP</b> | <b>No target – to be monitored through LHP</b> |



## **Strategic Theme 2: Improving Housing Quality**

Improving the quality of the city's housing stock is a key challenge for the Leeds Housing Strategy. There are in excess of 322,000 housing units within the city, with approximately 248,000 of these units being privately owned. The 'Improving Housing Quality' strategic theme will focus on the challenge and actions required to improve the quality and sustainability of the Leeds housing stock. Maximising the proportion of stock that conforms to a prescribed standard of decency will be one element of this. All social landlords in the city have brought or are working towards bringing their housing stock up to the decency standard by 2010/11. The Leeds Housing Strategy will set out how this target will be achieved, and, perhaps more importantly, will consider options for longer-term investment in social housing stock. Specific reference will be made to the future management and investment options for council owned stock, which is managed by the three Leeds ALMOs and Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation.

The challenge relating to improving housing quality within the private sector is perhaps the most significant that is contained within the Leeds Housing Strategy, with 77% of housing stock being privately owned. There are limitations on the amount of new housing that can be developed, especially in the current economic climate, and the Leeds Housing Strategy recognises that housing need will be primarily addressed through the existing housing stock, with the main part of this being privately owned. Increasing the level of housing decency in the private sector is a key priority within the Leeds Housing Strategy.

The Leeds Private Sector Stock Condition Survey identified that 33% (81,800 properties) of private housing in the city fails to meet the decency standard, with this figure rising to over 70% for back-to-back housing. The 2004 Housing Act introduced a new system of risk assessing the condition/habitation of residential housing, Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS), with Category 1 hazards defined as the most serious risk to an occupants' health and wellbeing. Properties that have Category 1 hazards cannot be defined as meeting the decency standard. The stock condition survey also identified that 13.8% (34,300 properties) have one or more Category 1 hazard, with this figure rising to 45% for back-to-back housing. The most common hazards in Leeds are excess cold, limited fire escape routes and increased risk of falls. The stock condition survey estimated that approximately 21,000 properties in the city suffer from excess cold. The challenges relating to back-to-back housing are largely unique to the West Yorkshire sub-region and are most acute in Leeds, given the number of such units (19,500) that are part of the Leeds housing stock.

Recent research has estimated that around two thirds of existing housing stock will still be in use in 2050. This point needs to be aligned to the calculation included in the Climate Change Plan for Yorkshire and Humber that 46% of the UK's total carbon emissions emanate from

property. The government has set targets that public buildings will be carbon neutral from 2018 and commercial buildings from 2019. These targets relate to a time period after the end of the Leeds Housing Strategy term. Nevertheless, the city needs to make a commitment to reduce greenhouse emissions and to achieve improved standards against the Code for Sustainable Homes in relation to existing housing stock. Improving the energy efficiency is a key action in the drive to promote the environmental sustainability of housing stock. Promoting energy efficiency will contribute to tackling the incidence of fuel poverty: where a household spends more than 10% of their household income on meeting energy costs. A 40% rise in energy costs over the last two years has led to an increase in the number of Leeds residents who are 'fuel poor', albeit that more vulnerable households, older or disabled people, BME households and families with children, are more likely to be in this position. The Council and other housing-related services have limited power to control energy prices, so the focus of the Leeds Housing Strategy will be on promoting energy efficiency measures as a means of reducing energy costs and eliminating excess cold.

The private rented sector will be an increasingly important housing option and a vibrant sector is needed to stimulate labour mobility and to attract job growth/investment into the city. This tenure option will be an increasingly important one for people in housing need, who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Leeds has a large and diverse private rented sector, which accommodates around 41,600 households and where the majority of property owners are committed to high standards of landlord practice and housing management. However, non-decency is higher (44%) than for the private sector as a whole. One of the reasons for this is that around 56% of such stock was built before 1919 and therefore is more likely to suffer from one or more hazard such as excess cold, limited fire escape routes and high risk of falls.

Vulnerable households are more likely to live in such housing or with landlords who do not apply or aspire to apply high standards of housing management practice. It is not feasible to comprehensively regulate property and landlord standards across a private rented sector comprising over 41,000 properties. Some tenants may be more reluctant to highlight issues relating to disrepair, given the limited security of tenure inherent in Assured Shorthold tenancies. The Leeds Housing Strategy will therefore set out how key services, such as the housing options service and supported housing sector, can play a more proactive role in highlighting, and taking action against, poor standards of landlordism. At the same time, landlords need to be confident that tenants are being given realistic advice and not remaining in properties, when it is in neither the tenants or landlords interest for them to do so. A key principle in the drive to improve standards within the private rented sector will be to see landlords, as well as tenants, as the customers of housing services. Encouraging more landlords to become



members of the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme will be another key action.

The Council has estimated the cost of bringing all private housing up to a decent standard of repair at £250 million. Clearly, it is not realistic to assume that this level of funding could be secured through governmental grants. The Leeds Housing Strategy will set out plans to target intervention at the worst housing, which is occupied by the most vulnerable members of society, to use funding to lever in additional investment, especially from property owners and financial institutions, and to consider other innovative options to attract investment. The Leeds Housing Strategy has noted the example of Liverpool, where the local NHS Trust is investing £9 million into improving private housing conditions, because of the recognition of the link between improved standards of housing and enhanced health and wellbeing outcomes. A key action within the Leeds Housing Strategy will be to commission research to better calculate the wider benefits, especially from a health and wellbeing perspective that can be generated from improving housing conditions.

The links between housing conditions and health and wellbeing outcomes are evident, even in the absence of further research. Excess cold is a major cause of increased winter mortality, especially amongst older people. Older and disabled people are less likely to be able to function in back-to-back housing, with steep and narrow staircases a particular problem. This makes it more likely that people will need to move into residential care or will have a fall that results in a hospital admission. Living in poor housing conditions also has a negative impact upon a person's mental health and wellbeing. Children growing up in poor housing are less likely to thrive, to achieve in their education and other development, and to maximise their potential. NHS Leeds believes there is a strong correlation between the relatively high level of infant mortality that occurs in Leeds and family residence in poor housing conditions. The Leeds Housing Strategy has noted the work of Care and Repair Leeds (see case study Care and Repair Leeds) and the cost of carrying out minor adaptation work to prevent falls (£175), in comparison to the cost incurred by NHS Leeds to hospitalise a person who requires a hip replacement – approximately £50,000.

A survey of Leeds residents carried out as part of the formulation of the Leeds Strategic Plan identified that the quality of housing was one of the three main factors that influenced whether a neighbourhood was a good place to live. The 'Improving Housing Quality' theme will therefore significantly contribute to the Thriving Places strategic theme within the Leeds Strategic Plan. Improving the quality of housing will also contribute to strategic outcomes and improvement priorities included within the Environment strategic theme of the Strategic Plan, especially improving the quality and sustainability of housing and reducing carbon emissions. Good quality housing also contributes to promoting

harmonious communities and community cohesion, and investment in housing creates employment and stimulates the economy of Leeds.

The 'Improving Housing Quality' strategic theme includes the following key priorities:

- F. Bring all social housing up to the decency standard**
- G. Identify future investment options for council housing**
- H. Increase the number of private homes that meet the decency standard**
- I. Improve the long-term sustainability of private housing**
- J. Continue to improve standards in the private rented sector**
- K. Improve the standard of temporary accommodation leased through the private sector**

The 'Improving Housing Quality' theme will therefore contribute to a range of strategic outcomes and improvement priorities, set out within the Leeds Strategic Plan. These include:

| <b>Theme</b>   | <b>Strategic Outcome</b>  | <b>Improvement Priority</b>   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enterprise and the Economy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increased entrepreneurship and innovation through effective support to achieve full potential of people, businesses and the economy</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase innovation and entrepreneurial activity across the city</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Learning</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ An enhanced workforce that will meet future challenges through fulfilling individual and economic potential and investment in learning facilities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhance the skill level of the workforce to fulfil individual and economic potential</li> <li>■ Improve learning outcomes for all 16 year olds with a focus on narrowing the achievement gap</li> <li>■ Increase the proportion of vulnerable groups engaged in education, training or employment</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Environment</li> </ul>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cleaner, greener and more attractive city through effective</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Address neighbourhood problem sites, improve</li> </ul>  |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | environmental management and changed behaviours   | cleanliness, and access to, and the quality of, green spaces<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improve the quality and sustainability of the built and natural environment</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Health and Wellbeing</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduced health inequalities through the promotion of healthy life choices and improved access to services</li> <li>■ Improved quality of life through maximising the potential of vulnerable people by promoting independence, dignity and respect</li> <li>■ Enhanced safety and support for vulnerable people through preventative and protective action to minimise risks and maximise wellbeing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the number of decent homes</li> <li>■ Reduce premature mortality in the most deprived areas</li> <li>■ Increase the number of vulnerable people helped to live at home</li> </ul>       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Thriving Places</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved quality of life through mixed neighbourhoods offering good housing options and better access to services and activities</li> <li>■ Increased economic activity through targeted support to reduce worklessness and poverty</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the number of decent homes</li> <li>■ Reduce the number of people who are not able to adequately heat their homes</li> <li>■ Increased financial inclusion in deprived areas</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Harmonious Communities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved community cohesion and integration through meaningful involvement and valuing equality and diversity</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the sense of belonging and pride in local neighbourhoods that help to build cohesive communities</li> </ul>   |

The 'Improving Housing Quality' theme also contributes to the following performance indicators, which are included within the National Indicator Set (highlighted in bold if also included in the Leeds Local Area Agreement):

- **NI120: Reduce premature mortality in the most deprived areas**
- **NI139: Older people helped to live at home**
- **NI141: Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living**
- **NI158: Percentage of non-decent Council homes**
- **NI187: Tackling fuel poverty**
- **NI188: Planning to adapt to climate change**
- NI2: Percentage of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI119: Self reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing
- NI156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation.

**Strategic Priority F: Bringing all social housing up to the decency standard**

**Strategic Priority G: Identifying longer-term investment options for council housing**

The government has set a target to bring all social housing (stock managed by local authorities, ALMOs and housing association) up to the decency standard by 2010/11. The Leeds ALMOs were able to secure £480 million in additional credits from government, following successful two star Audit Commission inspection results in 2004 and 2005. This funding has been used to part finance the decency programme and it is estimated that around £858 million will have been invested in improving the condition of council housing by the end of 2010/11. Local housing associations have financed decency programmes through a combination of private sector investment and organisational reserves.

Data held by the Homes and Communities Agency calculated Leeds housing association decency, as of June 2008, at 91.6%. The Council is forecasting that ALMO decency will be around 85% as of April 2009. The Council and the Leeds ALMOs are confident that the decency standard will be met by 2010/11.

Many social landlords have faced similar issues in striving to meet the decency standard, especially back-to-back units and the accompanying challenges relating to Category 1 hazards. Council secured decency funding can only be used to finance improvement to the interior and immediate exterior of a property and could not be used to demolish and replace obsolete stock. Private Finance Initiatives in areas of the city such as Swarcliffe have helped lever in additional investment to carry out decency work and to deliver new housing to replace obsolete stock.

The Leeds ALMOs have also looked at wider improvement work exceeding the decency standard, including improving energy efficiency by installing cavity wall and loft insulation.

Many social landlords, including the Leeds ALMOs, will achieve the decency target during the term of the Leeds Housing Strategy. However, the Leeds Housing Strategy very much views this forecasted achievement as being an important milestone, rather than an end in itself. Stock will need to be maintained post 2010/11 and properties will fall out of decency if investment is not maintained or enhanced. The expectations of tenants are rightfully evolving and increasing and it is essential that social landlords accept the challenge of meeting rising tenant expectations. All social landlords will be exploring opportunities to secure appropriate investment post 2010/11. This will entail quantifying the likely cost of ongoing investment, the balance between capital and planned investment, and identifying organisational and external resources that can be secured to finance investment. Many housing associations will have to consider longer-term investment options within the context of financial institutions adopting less favourable and more restrictive lending practices.

With regard to council housing, the Council's Executive Board has approved a recommendation to commence an options appraisal to consider investment options for stock post 2011. A number of drivers have been identified for carrying out this work. The Council acknowledges that stock condition will begin to deteriorate if ongoing investment is not secured. The Council is also looking beyond the decency standard and is looking to bring stock up to a higher level of repair. Improvement priorities, such as lift replacement and ongoing adaptations, which sit outside the parameters of decency work, will need to be financed and will become more pressing challenges in future years. At the time of writing (February 2009), the Council has not been notified as to whether it has been successful in securing additional investment to modernise sheltered housing. If this bid is not or only partly successful, then the Council will need to consider other options for investing in sheltered housing. It is forecast that the ALMOs will have around £50 million less for capital works in 2010/11 (£100 million per annum less than at the peak of the decency programme) and this will be insufficient to meet the priorities listed above.

Other events may also affect the outcome of the investment options appraisal. The Government is carrying out a review of HRA (Housing Revenue Account) funding arrangements. Currently, Leeds is obliged to transfer surplus income from the HRA to Central Government to subsidise other authorities. The HRA review may mean that surplus making authorities are able to retain all income, which could partly cover the costs of longer-term priorities. The 2008 Housing and Regeneration Act allows local authorities to pre-qualify with the Homes and Communities Agency funding as an approved recipient of grant. The Council is actively pursuing this option.

In addition, ALMOs that secure an excellent Audit Commission inspection rating can bid unilaterally for Homes and Communities Agency subsidy; with two star rated landlords able to bid as part of a consortia. The Leeds ALMOs were inspected in 2008, with Aire Valley Homes Leeds receiving a two star rating and West North West Homes Leeds and East North East Homes Leeds receiving a one star rating. The latter two ALMOs have opted to be re-inspected from September 2009 onwards and are hopeful that a two star rating can be attained.

| <b>Key Actions</b>  |
|---|
| 1. All social landlords to continue to deliver capital investment programmes to bring all managed housing stock up to the decency standard by the end of 2010/11. |
| 2. Social landlords to draw up investment strategies to cover investment requirements and opportunities once decency is met.                                      |
| 3. Council to complete an options appraisal into the options for investing in council housing.  |
| 4. Council to establish arrangements for involving council tenants in the options appraisal process.  |
| 5. East North East Homes Leeds and West North West Homes Leeds to be subject to further Audit Commission inspection of housing management services.               |
| 6. Council to consider the implications of the HRA review for the future management and investment in council housing.  |
| 7. Council to pursue pre-qualification status with Homes and Communities Agency as an approved recipient of grant.  |
| 8. All social landlords to develop Affordable Warmth Action Plans.  |

| <b>Key Targets</b>  |                |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>  | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| % of non-decent council housing (Maximum) <b>NI158</b>  | ?              | 0              | 0              |
| % of non-decent housing association managed stock (Maximum)   | ?              | 0              | 0              |
| Proportion of social housing units achieving a SAP rating of 65 or higher (Minimum)                                 | ?              | ?              | ?              |
| % satisfaction of council tenants with landlord service (Minimum) <b>NI160 (Indicator reported every two years)</b> | 75% (2008/09)  | 80%            | 80% (2010/11)  |
| % satisfaction of BME council tenants with landlord (Minimum)   |                |                |                |

## Strategic Priority H: Increase the number of private homes that meet the decency standard

### Strategic Priority I: Improve the long-term sustainability of private sector housing

The 2007 Leeds Private Sector Stock Condition Survey identified that 33% of privately owned housing in the city was non-decent. It has also been estimated that around two-thirds of current housing stock will still be in use in 2050. It is unlikely, especially in the current economic climate, that there will be significant programmes of new house building during the term of this and subsequent housing strategies. Addressing the deficiencies of current housing stock is crucial if much of the current stock is to remain a sustainable housing option. The main challenges, and likely cost, are in summary:

| Reason            | Number of properties | % of total stock |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Category 1 Hazard | 34,300               | 13.8%            |
| Repair            | 27,100               | 10.9%            |
| Amenities         | 7,300                | 2.9%             |
| Thermal Comfort   | 51,400               | 20.7%            |

| Reason            | Total cost   | Cost per dwelling |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Category 1 Hazard | £91 million  | £2,800            |
| Repair            | £44 million  | £1,600            |
| Amenities         | £40 million  | £5,400            |
| Thermal comfort   | £74 million  | £1,400            |
| Total             | £250 million | £3,100            |

The Leeds Housing Strategy recognises that the Council in isolation does not have the financial resources to address the private sector decency challenge. The actions set out in the Leeds Housing Strategy will be framed around developing strategic partnerships to identify priority challenges and joint investment opportunities. Intervention and investment will need to be targeted at the most vulnerable members of society, especially where that maximises outcomes for all strategic partners. Council and other partner funding needs to be the catalyst for promoting property owner investment in housing stock.

At the point of writing (February 2009), the Council's Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board is carrying out an examination of the private sector housing challenge and the cost implications for the authority. The Council is



committed to establishing a Private Sector Housing Strategic Partnership Board, which will be chaired by the Executive Member for Environment and Neighbourhoods. The partnership board will also comprise senior officers from the housing authority, Homes and Communities Agency, Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber and NHS Leeds. The composition and purpose of the Private Sector Housing Strategic Partnership Board will mirror that of the Leeds Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership. The private sector housing partnership board will strive to identify joint strategic priorities and additional investment that can be used to deliver the outcomes required.

The inclusion of NHS Leeds on the private sector housing partnership board is critical to its effectiveness. The introduction to the 'Improving Housing Quality' strategic theme has highlighted the strong links between housing conditions and health and wellbeing outcomes. The Leeds Housing Strategy has noted the example of Liverpool where the local NHS Trust is investing £9 million in improving private sector housing conditions, on the basis that this will generate improvements in health and wellbeing for the people of Liverpool and therefore reduce need and costs across all aspects of the health service in the city. Nevertheless, it will be essential for the Council to establish the joint benefits that will be generated through such investment. The Council is planning to commission Sheffield Hallam University to carry out research, using an established and cross-disciplinary model, to establish the health and wellbeing benefits of improving housing conditions. It will also be important to study the Liverpool example and to identify whether the NHS Trust can demonstrate that there have been improvements in health and wellbeing that can be directly sourced back to the housing investment programme.

A strategic priority for NHS Leeds is to reduce the incidence of infant mortality in the city. There are 5.9 infant mortalities per 1000 births in comparison to the average for England and Wales of 4.9 deaths. There is a strong correlation between residence in the poorer areas of the city (Super Output Areas) and infant mortality, with the rate rising to 8% per 1000 live births for babies who are born to mothers resident in one of these areas. There is also a profound association between ethnicity and infant mortality with the rate being 9.6 for people of Pakistani origin and 9.8 for people of Afro-Caribbean origin. Such communities are more likely to live in deprived areas, with 92% of children born to Bangladeshi mothers living in one of the Super Output Areas. NHS Leeds believes that living in overcrowded and poor housing conditions is a major contributor to infant mortality. The Council has secured funding from the CLG to examine the causes and effects of overcrowding in the city and the link with infant mortality will be a key element of this work. The Council will also engage with NHS Leeds to identify how this joint challenge can be addressed.

In 2002, the government set a target for all housing authorities that a minimum of 70% of private housing occupied by vulnerable households (older people, people with a disability or other long-term life affecting illness, and families with children) would be brought up to the decency standard by the end of March 2010. This performance indicator/target was discontinued when the National Indicator Set was introduced at the beginning of 2008/09. Nevertheless, given the scale of the private sector housing challenge, an approach of targeted intervention and investment to assist the most vulnerable members of the Leeds population appears to be appropriate, especially if that generates wider health and wellbeing benefits. It is



currently estimated that 63% of private sector housing occupied by vulnerable households is decent.

The Council has more limited powers and resources to address private sector housing non-decency than in respect of council owned stock. The 2004 Housing Act permits local authorities to take enforcement action if Category 1 hazards are identified in a property. The most common Category 1 hazard is excess cold. Vulnerable households are more likely to live in housing suffering from excess cold and are less likely to be able to contend with the effects of these conditions. Excess cold disproportionately affects people with limited income to meet energy costs and exacerbates conditions, such as rheumatism, arthritis, bronchitis and cardiovascular illness, which older people are more likely to experience. Excess cold also exacerbates mobility problems and increases the risk of falls and other household accidents.

Tackling excess cold and fuel poverty in private housing is therefore one of the key actions within the Leeds Housing Strategy. Fuel poverty is defined as where a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income on heating a home to an acceptable standard. An acceptable standard is a temperature of 21 degrees centigrade in the main living areas. Leeds City Council published an Affordable Warmth Strategy in 2007 to cover the period up to 2016, with the strategy delivered through the Council's Fuelsavers Team.

A key action within the Affordable Warmth Strategy is to monitor trends relating to the incidence of fuel poverty in the city. There has been an increase from 19 to 24% in the period from 2007 to 2008 in the proportion of the Leeds population that are experiencing fuel poverty, an increase which can be largely attributed to the 40% increase in energy costs over the last two years. Fuel poverty disproportionately affects BME households: with 39% of Black and 30% of households of Asian origin spending more than 10% of income on energy costs<sup>1</sup>. The Fuelsavers Team also monitor fuel poverty levels by council ward. In 2006, the five council wards with the highest proportion of private sector residents who declared that they were having difficulty heating their homes were as follows:

| Ward                          | Difficulty heating home (Total) | Difficulty heating home (Vulnerable) | Difficulty heating home (Non-Vulnerable) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Gipton and Harehills          | 51%                             | 14%                                  | 65%                                      |
| Hyde Park and Woodhouse       | 21%                             | 37%                                  | 59%                                      |
| Killingbeck                   | 45%                             | 8%                                   | 53%                                      |
| Middleton Park                | 38%                             | 14%                                  | 52%                                      |
| Burmantofts and Richmond Hill | 38%                             | 12%                                  | 50%                                      |

The five wards with the lowest incidence of fuel poverty were Adel and Wharfedale, Wetherby, Harewood, Roundhay and Horsforth.

<sup>1</sup> BME data needs to be treated with some caution given the limited number of survey returns made by households from BME communities.

The Council has limited powers to influence energy prices and therefore the focus of the Leeds Housing Strategy will be on action to promote energy efficiency as a means of reducing energy costs and eliminating excess cold. The Fuelsavers Team has run a number of initiatives, designed to tackle fuel poverty amongst the most vulnerable households, such as 'Health through Warmth' and 'Warm Front'. The Leeds Housing Strategy recommends that the Council look beyond these initiatives to turn Leeds into a 'Warm Zone' area. There are currently 13 'Warm Zone' areas in the UK, including one covering the Kirklees authority area.

### **Case Study: Warm Zones**

Warm Zones give every household in the catchment area the opportunity to better insulate their homes and to make their homes warmer, reduce energy consumption and cost, reduce carbon emissions and to make a positive contribution to the environment. The scheme works on a ward-by-ward basis, by carrying out initial doorstep assessments and then more detailed surveys to establish the improvements required. All households are entitled to loft and cavity wall insulation, with households in fuel poverty, on income related benefits or occupying hard to treat homes offered improvements to heating systems. All households also receive benefit entitlement and energy efficiency advice.

Warm Fronts are part funded through governmental and EU funding, but it is anticipated that additional funding will be secured through the local authority, ALMOs and NHS Trust.

The Kirklees 'Warm Zone' covers the period 2007 to 2010. In February 2009, the scheme had achieved the following:

- 4760 homes fitted with loft insulation and 2485 with cavity wall insulation
- 11,500 homes given energy saving light bulbs
- Carbon monoxide monitors given to 17,277 households
- Created 76 full time equivalent jobs in carrying out insulation work

The existing neighbourhood analysis of fuel poverty rates will enable the Council to prioritise the delivery of the 'Warm Zone' in the council wards with the highest levels of fuel poverty. The establishment of a Leeds 'Warm Zone' would be dependent upon Council officers receiving approval from members and it will be important to demonstrate the wider health and wellbeing and employment benefits that could be generated through the initiative. The Council could also benefit by using the best practice developed through 'Warm Zone' initiatives in other areas, especially Kirklees. Reference could be made to the Kirklees scheme, specifically to how they are tackling issues associated with older housing stock. The Council has also commissioned the Building Research Establishment to carry out a study on how energy efficiency can be maximised in hard to treat properties. Back-to back housing is particularly difficult to treat as the hard external walls make it problematic

to carry out cavity wall insulation and the roof void, where insulation is placed, is often used as an attic room. The development of a 'Warm Zone' in Leeds will make a significant contribution to reducing greenhouse emissions emanating from housing stock and improving the rating of housing against the Code for Sustainable Homes.

The challenge of improving housing quality in relation to older housing stock, especially back-to-back housing is a key action within the Leeds Housing Strategy. There are approximately 19,500 back-to-back units in the city, with this housing form being almost unique to the West Yorkshire region and most prevalent in Leeds. The Council commissioned Re'new to develop a Back-to-Back Housing Strategy in 2008 and the Leeds Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey made significant reference to this housing form. Approximately 73% of back-to-back housing fails the decency standard, most commonly because of Category 1 hazards such as excess cold (difficulties associated with insulating properties), limited escape routes in event of fire (one door exit) and increased risk of falls (steep and narrow staircases). There are limitations on the action that can be taken to address these hazards, albeit that the findings of the Building Research Establishment work could inform future action.

Back-to-back housing is not a homogenous housing form and represents an attractive housing option for many people, especially as a starter home for younger, economically active people with no life affecting illnesses, who are able to contend with the property defects. However, around 62% of the housing form is concentrated in areas of the city, such as Harehills, Cross Green and Beeston, and this concentration exacerbates the deprivation, through high density living, high stock turnover and poor environmental conditions, in these areas. It is estimated that around 13,000 back-to-back units will still be in use in 2050 and it is important that the sustainability of these units is considered. Indeed, the Back-to-Back Housing Strategy makes the point that the housing form could remain an attractive housing option for many households, especially first time buyers, if a viable investment strategy was developed.

The Back-to-Back strategy estimated that around £377.9 million of funding would be required to replace, convert or refurbish the worst forms of back-to-back housing in the city over the next 25 years. This equates to around £15.1 million per annum and assumes government funding of around £1.9 million per year, which would lever in around £13.4 million of private sector investment. The uniqueness of the back-to-back housing form to the West Yorkshire region could represent a strong argument to secure additional investment through the Homes and Communities Agency. It is debatable whether a model based upon generating private sector investment of approximately 90% of total cost is viable in the current economic climate. An action plan, including investment submissions to the Homes and Communities Agency, will need to be drawn up.

Clearance of obsolete housing stock and group repair schemes are key elements of existing programmes to address poor quality housing. The Council receives funding through the Regional Housing Board to acquire and clear obsolete stock. The land released through this work is being placed in the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership portfolio for development. The Regional Housing Board funding is also used to finance group repair work, in the Beeston Hill and Burley Lodge areas,

improving the external fabric of properties. The Council is considering the feasibility of seeking an additional £20 million through the Homes and Communities Agency to extend the group repair programmes.

The Council will continue to provide options such as Home Improvement Equity Loans to encourage property owners to bring housing stock up to the decency standard.

**Case Study: Home Improvement Equity Loans**

Homeowners in Leeds are entitled to apply for an equity loan of up to 30% to make improvements to their properties. The loan option is part of the regional scheme that is administered by Sheffield City Council for the Yorkshire and Humber region. A key criteria of a loan being agreed is that the property must be of a decent standard upon completion of improvement work. The Council helps to steer the improvement work to ensure that the loan is used for the right purpose and the decency standard is met. Once properties are sold in the future, the percentage of the sale price relating to the original loan is paid back to the Council with proceeds being recycled back into the service, enabling it to become self-sustaining.

**Key Actions**

1. Establish a Private Sector Housing Strategy Partnership Board
2. Commission Sheffield Hallam University to establish health and wellbeing benefits of housing improvement programmes
3. Study Liverpool model and identify health and wellbeing benefits generated through housing investment
4. The Council and NHS Leeds to develop a joint strategic approach to reducing the rate of infant mortality in the city
5. Draw up a business plan in 2009/10 setting out the rationale for establishing a 'Warm Zone' in Leeds
6. Secure member and other investment partner support for establishment of 'Warm Zone' in Leeds
7. Identify delivery partners to provide 'Warm Zone' through a procurement process
8. Identify best practice from other 'Warm Zones' including identifying direct benefits to health and wellbeing levels generated through these initiatives
9. Implement 'Warm Zone' in Leeds from beginning of 2010/11 with initial focus on five wards with highest levels of fuel poverty
9. Reduce the number of Older People living in fuel poverty. Providing services and customer care to enable Older People to take-up and benefit from the energy advice service.
10. Reduce the number of BME people living in fuel poverty. Providing services and customer care to enable BME people to take-up and benefit from the energy advice service.
10. Develop back-to-back housing action plan, targeting intervention

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| on identified units and determining type of intervention required.   |
| 11. Develop investment proposals to Homes and Communities Agency to tackle the back-to-back challenge, including realistic assumption of private sector investment that can be levered in. |
| 12. Identify feasibility of securing Homes and Community Agency funding to expand existing group repair programmes   |
| 13. Increase take-up of Home Improvement Equity Loan option  |
| 14. Target BME people and older people for Home Improvement Loan option through raising awareness and take up.   |

| <b>Key Targets</b>  |                |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>  | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| Number of private sector properties made decent (Minimum)   |                |                |                |
| % of Leeds residents receiving income based benefits living in housing with low energy efficiency rating – below SAP rating of 35 (Maximum) NI187 |                |                |                |
| % of private properties with SAP rating of 65 or above  |                |                |                |
| Per capita reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions in the Leeds area   |                |                |                |
| Number of Leeds households receiving energy efficiency grants or loans  |                |                |                |
| Number of Leeds households taking up offer of Home Improvement Loan   |                |                |                |

### **Strategic Priority 10: Continue to improve standards in the private-rented sector**

Leeds has a diverse private rented sector, comprising 41,660 dwellings (13% of total stock) and a number of different markets: new build in the city centre, traditional student provision in the north-west of the city and older self-contained or multiply occupied housing in the inner urban areas. The private rented sector plays a vital role in the Leeds 'housing ladder', it is the tenure of choice for many people and will be an increasingly important housing option over the term of the Leeds Housing Strategy. One of the key attributes of the private rented is its flexibility, adaptability and ease of access in comparison to other tenures. The private rented sector has been identified over a long period of time as a tenure that can facilitate labour mobility and therefore will play a critical role in the forecast employment growth in the Leeds district. The private rented sector also contains many landlords who pride themselves on offering high quality housing and excellent standards of housing management.

Despite the many vibrant aspects of the private rented sector, it does contain the highest proportion of poor housing, with approximately 44% of stock (18,330 properties) failing the decency standard. This compares unfavourably to ALMO managed housing (forecast that 15% will be non-decent by the end of 2008/09) and



the owner-occupied sector, which has a non-decent rate of 31%. Approximately, 56% of privately rented housing was built before 1919 (compared to 20% of owner-occupied stock) and therefore is more likely to suffer from difficult to treat Category 1 hazards of excess cold, limited fire escape routes and high risk of falls. The worst forms of private rented housing are concentrated, albeit not exclusively, in Beeston, Cross Green and Harehills. A significant proportion of the back-to-back housing form is incorporated within the private rented housing market. The private rented sector also contains a number of landlords who offer poor quality housing and management and charge rent that do not equate to the standard of service provided.

The proposals for action set out in the strategic priorities to improve private sector housing decency and sustainability, especially those relating to developing viable investment strategies; also apply to the challenge of continuing to improve standards in the private rented sector. The Leeds Housing Strategy will set out plans to use enforcement action and to promote self-regulation as a means of improving standards. The contraction in the availability of social housing and more limited access to home-ownership means that the private rented sector will be an increasingly important housing option, especially for people who are in some form of acute housing need. The Leeds Housing Strategy needs to embrace the opportunities that the private rented sector provides, and this includes housing services viewing private landlords as customers. Housing services, especially within the Council, need to examine current service practice, to identify whether it creates an unnecessary deterrent to property owners letting and investing in their stock.

The Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme is a key component of the drive to promote self-regulation and drive up standards of landlordism within the private rented market. The scheme is administered through the Council. Accredited landlords are obliged to ensure that their properties conform to a high standard of repair and maintenance and do not contain hazards that would be prejudicial to the health and wellbeing of tenants or their visitors. Landlords are also required to comply with legal obligations in relation to property and tenancy management. Property inspections are carried out as part of the scheme acceptance process to ensure that it conforms to the necessary standards of repair and maintenance. Property improvement plans are drawn up if stock fails to comply with the required standard. Landlords benefit from membership of the scheme through the dissemination of good practice from other landlords and the provision of advice from Council officers. Membership of the scheme may make them more attractive to prospective tenants as a reputable landlord. Accredited landlords also benefit from a range of concessions relating to the removal of household waste.

The Leeds Landlord Accreditation scheme had 404 landlord members as of 1 February 2009, covering 18,501 bedspaces. Member landlords tend, albeit not exclusively, to have housing stock concentrated in the north west of the city. This means that accreditation is not necessarily covering private-rented housing located in the inner urban areas of the city, which is more likely to be non-decent and contain Category 1 hazards. The Council has set a target to increase the number of accredited bedspaces to 20,000 by the end of 2009/10. The Council is investigating the feasibility of establishing a Managing Agents scheme in the city. It is envisaged that such developments could increase the number of accredited bedspaces to around 80%. The Council has also noted the call from many accredited landlords to

establish a tenant referencing scheme in the city. Middlesbrough has a good example of a tenant-referencing scheme that could be a blueprint for a Leeds scheme.

### **Middlesbrough Shield Project**

The project provides a service to landlords, encouraging them to adopt good management practices and to end the cycle of inappropriate housing of anti social tenants. Credit and police checks are carried out and the project stays in contact with the landlord throughout the duration of tenancies. This scheme is self-financing as landlords pay a fee for the scheme to carry out the checks on their behalf. The Shield Project also offers a range of services to landlords free of charge.

Landlord feedback has also suggested that increasing the range of waste disposal concessions to include items such as mattresses, beds, sofas, carpets and construction waste could encourage landlords to join the accreditation scheme.

Property licensing is a key element of the enforcement programme to drive up standards in the private rented sector. The 2004 Housing Act requires that Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) be subject to licensing through the Council. HMOs tend to represent a poorer form of housing provision than self-contained units, especially in relation to fire safety standards, overcrowding, inadequate facilities and poor housing management. The licensing process will enable the Council to ensure that property standards conform to a reasonable standard for occupation, including landlords being obliged to address Category 1 hazards. Properties will need to comply with minimum standards in relation to the number of washing, cooking and toilet facilities and the property owner/manager will need to demonstrate that they are a fit and proper person to let out housing. Licensed landlords can potentially benefit from the initiative, as they can demonstrate that they are providing a better service than unlicensed landlords. The Leeds Private Sector Stock Condition Survey estimated that there were 6,600 HMO bedspaces in the city. Approximately 2,500 HMO bed spaces had been licensed by the end of February 2009, and the Council is committed to licensing all units by the end of the new Leeds Housing Strategy term. The 2004 Housing Act also enables local authorities to carry out selective licensing on private sector housing situated in areas characterised by poor quality housing, low demand, poor management standards and persistent anti-social behaviour. The Council is intending to introduce selective licensing in the Cross Green/East End Park area by the end of 2008/09, which will cover around 400 properties.

The Council's reconfigured housing options services will have a key role in improving standards in the private rented sector. The private sector lettings service, which sits within the housing options service, is currently working with 103 accredited landlords to offer assured shorthold tenancies as a homeless prevention option. Housing stock used is predominantly within the inner urban areas and therefore the scheme is contributing towards increasing the number of accredited landlords operating outside the north west area of the city. Property inspections are carried out as standard and this differs from the existing Landlord Accreditation Scheme, which does not inspect every property in a landlord's portfolio. The service carries out a range of checks on tenants prior to putting them forward to landlords as prospective

tenant, and this represents a prototype for a city-wide tenant referencing scheme. Housing options workers also negotiate rental charges below the Local Housing Allowance cap to a level that reflects the quality and location of the housing provided.

Reviewing how the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is operating is another priority action in relation to improving standards within the private rented sector. There is anecdotal evidence that landlords are pushing rental charges up to the LHA cap and that rental charges can be the same in low demand as in high demand areas for properties that are let to people on benefits. It is believed that the LHA could be distorting the link between rental charge and housing quality. The LHA rates apply to the city as a whole and the Housing Strategy would recommend that consideration is given to establishing a more localised approach to the LHA.

The housing options service will need to provide proactive housing advice to both tenants and landlords on tenancy law relating to repair obligations and possession proceedings. Officers from the housing options service should, wherever possible, negotiate with both parties to identify whether a resolution can be achieved that enables the tenant to remain living in the accommodation, provided it is in a reasonable condition. Tenants are entitled to remain in a private rented property for the duration of the fixed period of a tenancy and for a further notice period of two months. It is not appropriate to advise tenants to remain in a property, after the expiry of a notice period, until a bailiff warrant for possession has been executed. The Council does not have policies requiring this advice to be given, but have noted concerns raised by landlords and can make a commitment that no such advice will occur in future. The Leeds Housing Strategy also recognises that providers of floating housing support often work with vulnerable people who are accommodated in poor standards of private rented housing. Such service providers have a vital role in alerting Council enforcement and advice services to poor standards of accommodation and landlord practice in the private rented sector.

| <b>Key Actions</b>  |
|---|
| 1. Update the existing Private Rented Housing Strategy  |
| 2. Develop viable investment strategies to address the worst forms of private rented housing in the city  |
| 3. Encourage landlords to become members of the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme, especially those with stock located in the inner urban areas of the city |
| 4. Identify further benefits that can be offered to accredited landlords to encourage membership  |
| 5. Investigate the feasibility of establishing an Accredited Managing Agents scheme   |
| 6. Consider the feasibility of establishing a Tenant Reference scheme across the city or regionally   |
| 7. Continue to operate mandatory HMO licensing across the city  |
| 8. Introduce selective licensing in the Cross Green and East End Park areas of the city   |
| 9. Continue to develop the private sector lettings scheme through the reconfigured housing options service  |
| 10. Consider the feasibility of adopting locality based LHA benefit   |



|   |
|---|
| caps rather than one for the city   |
| 11. Improve standards of housing advice given to landlords and tenants through the reconfigured housing options service including encouraging membership of the Leeds Landlord Accreditation scheme |

| <b>Key Targets</b>   |                |                |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>   | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| Number of private sector properties made decent.   |                |                |                |
| Number of bed spaces accredited under the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme (Minimum)                                  | 20,000         |                |                |
| Number of licensed HMO bedspaces (Minimum)   |                |                |                |
| Number of houses subject to selective licensing  |                |                |                |
| Number of private sector lettings made through the housing options service   | 720            | 760            | 800            |
| Number of homeless preventions relating to tenants being able to remain indefinitely in private rented tenancy (Minimum) |                |                |                |

### **Strategic Priority 11: Improve the standard of temporary accommodation leased through the private sector**

Demand for temporary accommodation is such that provision commissioned through the Supporting People programme (hostels, refuges and other supported self-contained accommodation) is insufficient to meet demand. The Council currently has a contract with three private sector providers who supply additional units of temporary accommodation. In February 2009, there were approximately 223 households accommodated with the private providers, with around 180 of these being families with dependent children. The Council is committed to reducing temporary accommodation placements to no more than 260 households per night by the end of March 2010, which would include no more than 100 households placed with private providers.

The contract with the private providers expires at the end of 2009 and the Council is currently developing a specification to re-tender the service. The Council is aware that there are significant concerns regarding the quality of housing provided by the current contractors. The tender specification will place a significant emphasis on the quality of housing provided, with at least 60% of the tender score relating to quality submissions. The following conditions will be set out within the tender specification.

- The successful contractor(s) will be members of the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme

- All properties that will be used a temporary accommodation must be owned by the contractor and therefore subject to assessment under the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme
- The contractor(s) will be required to carry out a Housing Health and Safety Rating System assessment for each property used in the contract
- It will not be permissible to use properties with Category 1 hazards or in serious disrepair until these are addressed
- HMO units are not suitable for couples
- Gas safety checks must be carried out annual and electrical safety checks at least every five years
- Back-to-Back housing should only be used in exceptional circumstances and then only when it conforms to the Council’s guidance on fire safety principles in residential accommodation
- Ventilation in kitchens and bathrooms should conform with Building Regulations

Customers are able to request a statutory review if they believe that the temporary accommodation they have been allocated is unsuitable. The Council will need to strengthen the use of the statutory review process to identify and address poor standards of temporary accommodation. It will also be important for supported housing providers to use the statutory review process to highlight poor standards of temporary accommodation given to households who are being provided with support.

| <b>Actions</b>  |
|---|
| <b>1. Re-tender the current private sector temporary accommodation contract by the end of December 2009</b>   |
| <b>2. New service contract to include a range of housing standard conditions</b>  |
| <b>3. Use the statutory review process to identify and address poor standards of accommodation</b>  |
| <b>4. Service contracts to include penalty conditions relating to poor standards of accommodation</b>   |
| <b>5. Develop contingency plan to ensure contractual capacity is maintained in the event of Council terminating arrangements with particular provider</b> |

### **Strategic Theme 3: Promoting Independent Living**

Promoting independent living and enabling people to exercise choice and control over their lives are consistent themes within strategy development for vulnerable people. The Housing Strategy sets out the contribution housing and housing services can play in improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Leeds. The 'Health and Wellbeing' theme of the Leeds Strategic Plan includes a strategic outcome 'Improved quality of life through maximising the potential of vulnerable people by promoting independence, dignity and respect'. The strategic priorities and actions set out within the Housing Strategy will also reflect the drive towards developing personalised services, which better reflect the requirements and choices of individual service users.

People are assisted to achieve and/or maintain an independent living outcome through a range of housing services: such as housing options and advice, housing-related support, adaptations and assistive technology. Prevention is a key component of the independent living strategic theme, especially in relation to preventing accommodation loss that requires an individual or family to move to some form of institutional living such as hostel or residential care. The 'Promoting Independent Living' strategic theme will set out how the Council and its partners intend to tackle some of the most chronic manifestations of the housing challenge in Leeds, such as reducing the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation and rough sleeping. The Housing Strategy will have regard for the impact that living in temporary accommodation and rough sleeping has on family life, individual health and wellbeing, and the capacity of children to thrive and to realise their potential. The Housing Strategy will consider how housing options and housing-related support services will contribute to the safeguarding agenda for vulnerable adults and children. Plans and actions relating to modernising housing provision for groups such as older people and people with learning disabilities also reflect the aim of promoting independent living. The Housing Strategy will consider how this modernisation agenda can contribute to wider priorities such as reducing the need for vulnerable people to live in residential care settings.

The strategic priorities for the 'Promoting Independent Living' strategic theme are as follows:

**L. Deliver high quality and enhanced housing options services so that people are able to find a solution to their housing need**

**M. Maximise opportunities to prevent homelessness**

**N. Reduce the incidence of temporary accommodation**

**O. Enable people to live independently through housing-related**

**support, adaptations, lettings and assistive technology**

**P. Modernise housing provision for vulnerable people**

**Q. Contribute to promoting community cohesion, reducing worklessness and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour**

The 'Promoting Independent Living' Theme will contribute to a range of strategic outcomes and improvement priorities, set out within the Leeds Strategic Plan. These include:

| Theme  | Strategic Outcome   | Improvement Priority  |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Health and Wellbeing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduced health inequalities through the promotion of healthy life choices and improved access to services</li> <li>■ Improved quality of life through maximising the potential of vulnerable people by promoting independence, dignity and respect</li> <li>■ Enhanced safety and support for vulnerable people through preventative and protective action to minimise risks and maximise wellbeing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduce premature mortality in the most deprived areas</li> <li>■ Improve assessment and care management for children, families and vulnerable adults</li> <li>■ Improve psychological, mental health and learning disabilities services for all those who need it</li> <li>■ Increase the number of vulnerable people helped to live at home</li> <li>■ Increase the proportion of people in receipt of community services enjoying choice and control over their daily lives</li> <li>■ Improve safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable</li> </ul> |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  |   | children and adults through better information, recognition and response to risk  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Thriving Places</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved quality of life through mixed neighbourhoods offering housing options and better access to services and activities</li> <li>■ Reduced crime through prevention, detection, offender management, victim support and changing behaviours</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduction in the number of homeless people</li> <li>■ Create safer environments by tackling crime</li> <li>■ Improve life by reducing the harm caused by substance misuse</li> <li>■ Reduce offending by managing offending behaviour better.</li> <li>■ Reduce worklessness across the city with a focus on deprived areas</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Harmonious Communities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved community cohesion and integration through meaningful involvement and valuing equality and diversity</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the sense of belonging and pride in local neighbourhoods that help to build cohesive communities</li> </ul>   |

The 'Promoting Independent Living' theme also contributes to the following performance indicators, which are included within the National Indicator Set (highlighted in bold if also included in the Leeds Local Area Agreement):

- **NI141: Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living**
- **NI187: Tackling fuel poverty**
- **Reduce number of homeless people (Local Performance Indicator)**
- **NI139: Older people helped to live at home**
- **NI30: Re-offending rate of priority and prolific offenders**

- NI142: Number of vulnerable people maintaining independent living
- NI156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- NI1: Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI2: Percentage of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood
- Overall satisfaction with local area
- NI32: Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- NI119: Self reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing
- NI131: Delayed transfers of care from hospitals
- NI143: Proportion of offenders under probation supervision in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence
- NI145: Proportion of adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation
- NI147: Proportion of former care leavers aged 19 who are in settled accommodation
- NI149: Proportion of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation

**Strategic Priority L: Deliver high quality and enhanced housing options services so that people are able to find a solution to their housing need**

**Strategic Priority M: Maximise opportunities to prevent homelessness**

**Strategic Priority N: Minimise temporary accommodation placements and rough sleeping**

Addressing the housing needs of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness is one of the key strategic housing priorities for the city. The traditional route out of homelessness, via a temporary accommodation placement and social housing letting, is becoming increasingly less feasible, given the contraction in the social housing stock. At the same time, the government has directed local authorities to reorganise homeless and advice services around a housing options model, so that homeless prevention opportunities are maximised. The government has set all local authorities a target to halve the number of households placed in temporary accommodation by the end of March 2010. The Council has therefore embarked upon a transformation programme, centred around services provided at the current Homelessness Advice and Prevention Service (HAPS), to deliver a high quality and enhanced housing options service. The transformed service will focus on opportunities to prevent and end homelessness and this, in turn, will contribute to reducing temporary accommodation placements and the incidence of rough sleeping in the city.

The service change programme is framed around a number of key principles:

**Personalisation:** housing options services need to respond to an individual's specific housing needs. Standardised advice services, offering a homeless assessment as a passport to temporary accommodation and a social housing let, may miss the opportunity to prevent homelessness.

**Organisation:** housing options services must be organised with an emphasis on customer facing staff whose role is to prevent homelessness, in the first instance.

**Legal Focus:** People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness enjoy a range of legal rights. It is important that these rights be observed.

**Well-Trained Staff:** an effective housing options service requires well-trained staff across a range of housing-related disciplines.

**Customer Choice:** customers often prefer to remain living in their existing homes and housing options services should do everything possible to facilitate such outcomes. The option of a temporary accommodation placement and rehousing through a social landlord will remain the preferred one for many people.

**Realistic Advice:** it is essential that customers be given realistic advice on the housing options available to them.

**Empowerment:** The Council and partners can only offer customer's different housing options; it is for the customer to decide on the housing solution that best meets their needs.

**Safeguarding:** Housing options services should play a critical role in protecting vulnerable adults and children from abuse. All staff working in the housing options service will receive training on safeguarding issues.

**Changing Markets:** The contraction in social housing stock and reduced access to home-ownership may mean that some customers have to consider other housing options, such as the private-rented sector. Housing options services need to be alive to emerging opportunities, such as preventing homelessness through mortgage rescue initiatives.

**Partnership:** Effective housing options services work in close collaboration with a range of partners and are an access point for a range of services such as affordable housing and mortgage rescue initiatives, housing-related support and private rented accommodation.

**Customer Focus:** Staff offering housing options services should put customer service at the centre of everything they do. Other housing practitioners, such as private landlords, social landlords and supported housing providers, are also customers of a housing options service.

**Branding:** The Homelessness Advice and Prevention Service is being renamed the Housing Options Service.

#### **Case Study: Sanctuary Scheme**

Historically, the main cause of homelessness in Leeds is domestic violence and hate crime. Leeds has developed a Sanctuary Scheme to help people who have experienced domestic violence or hate crime to remain in their own home, if that is their choice. The scheme involves the installation of a range of security measures, including an emergency alarm, to create a 'safer' living environment. The scheme is a partnership between the Council, West Yorkshire Police and a local contractor, CASAC. Domestic Violence Co-ordinators, employed by the police, carry out an assessment of a customer's suitability for the scheme and decide on the range of security measures required. CASAC deliver the installation service, with the emergency alarm service provided by the Council's Care Ring Service.

Since the scheme started in July 2006, 814 households have been enabled to remain in their existing homes through the provision of a Sanctuary installation. Monitoring has also indicated that around 5% of applicants subsequently make a homeless application because they continued to feel unsafe. This suggests a prevention success rate of approximately 95%. The scheme has cost the Council approximately £550,000 since July 2006, but has generated significant savings in relation to reduced temporary accommodation placements, and for social landlords in terms of not having to void and re-let properties. The scheme enables people who have experienced domestic violence to remain living independently in their own home, to exercise choice and control over their housing arrangements and has



contributed to improved health and wellbeing, with families being able to maintain existing social networks, access to healthcare and school placements.

The Sanctuary installation service has been re-tendered with CASAC being awarded a further two-year contract from April 2009.

The reconfigured housing options service will focus on maximising homeless prevention opportunities. Homeless prevention activity is targeted at tackling the main causes of homelessness in the city, which are detailed in the quarterly P1E return to Central Government. The Sanctuary Scheme (see Sanctuary Scheme case study) will continue to be a key component in the homeless prevention strategy. The second most common reason for homelessness in Leeds is young people having a relationship breakdown with parents. The Council has commissioned a local youth agency, Archway, to provide a mediation service for young people. The mediation service aims to help young people reconcile relations with their parents so they can return home indefinitely, on a temporary basis so that they can make a planned move to their own accommodation or simply to improve relations to a point where the parent can provide assistance to the young person in their own independent accommodation. It is projected that in 2008/09 204 young people will be prevented from becoming homeless through mediation. The Council is currently in the process of tendering the contract to provide the mediation service.

Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy is the third most common reason for homelessness in Leeds. The reconfigured housing options service will focus on opportunities to prevent homelessness relating to loss of private rented accommodation. This will require housing options workers to be proactively engaging with private landlords and tenants to resolve disputes that could lead to accommodation loss. It will also require effective partnership working between housing options services and the Council's Environmental Services, which leads on taking enforcement action against landlords who are failing to fulfil tenancy obligations, such as repairs, or are trying to unlawfully evict a tenant. The Council will also continue to work with Mediation Leeds, which offers a mediation service for landlords and tenants.

The Council will also need to be alive to emerging opportunities to prevent homelessness. The downturn in the economy/housing markets will mean that an increasing number of people will require a housing options service relating to mortgage default and home repossession. Housing options officers will need to negotiate with lenders to make arrangements to defer possession action if the mortgagee has fallen into arrears or, if appropriate, to arrange 'payment holidays', giving the home-owner opportunity to address their financial circumstances/secure alternative employment. The development of a mortgage rescue service through the housing options service will be another key component in preventing homelessness amongst homeowners – see case study Golden Triangle Partnership.

Securing additional units of longer-term accommodation is another key element of the enhanced housing options service/drive to prevent homelessness. The Council has established a Private Lettings Service, which offers people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, the opportunity to accept an Assured Shorthold

Tenancy from an accredited private landlord, as an alternative to making a homeless application. The scheme has a target of achieving a minimum of 60 lettings per month. Available properties must meet requisite condition standards and housing options staff negotiate with landlords to agree appropriate rental charges. Landlords have indicated that the provision of ongoing support for tenants would increase the number of lettings made. The Council would be seeking to mainstream the provision of housing-related support services for private tenants through existing Supporting People contracts.

The government has set all local authorities a target to halve the number of households in temporary accommodation, from a base position at December 2004, by the end of March 2010. There were 521 homeless households placed in temporary accommodation at the end of December 2004, and therefore the Leeds target is to reduce temporary accommodation levels to no more than 261 households by the end of March 2010. At the end of December 2008, 364 households were placed in temporary accommodation, 251 of these were accommodated in stock leased from private landlords, with the remainder placed in units provided by Supporting People commissioned services. The target of no more than 261 households placed by March 2010 is demanding but attainable, if the remodelled housing options service maximises prevention opportunities and private sector lettings.

There are no plans to reduce the number of Supporting People commissioned units for homeless households as it is assumed that the reduction in temporary accommodation placements will result in less use of private sector leased properties. Nevertheless, Supporting People commissioned services will play an important role in improving service throughput and releasing accommodation for new placements. Supporting People commissioned services will be encouraged to use the Private Sector Lettings Scheme at the Housing Options Services as a rehousing option. The Leeds Supporting People Partnership transferred two Supporting People commissioned services, TEAS and Resettlement Service, from the Council to Foundation Housing in January 2009. TEAS is an important service as it offers housing support to households placed with private providers. The Leeds Supporting People Partnership will be seeking improvements in service utilisation levels, which should improve rehousing levels/throughput from the private sector leased temporary accommodation. The Resettlement Service has historically worked with formerly homeless households rehoused in ALMO managed stock; however, the Leeds Supporting People Partnership will be looking for the transferred service to work with customers who have signed up for tenancies secured through the Private Sector Lettings Scheme.

Leeds has made significant progress in recent years in reducing the number of rough sleepers in the city: in October 2002, a headcount identified 43 rough sleepers; a comparable headcount in June 2008 identified six individuals. Rough sleeping levels, identified through formal headcounts, have been stable at no more than 10 individuals for the last couple of years. The Council has a dedicated Rough Sleepers Co-ordinator, funded through CLG Homelessness Grant, and commissions an independent organisation, CRI, to provide a Street Outreach Service. The team is responsible for identifying rough sleepers in the city and putting in place appropriate support packages to help them secure and maintain appropriate housing

options. St George's Crypt also provides an emergency accommodation service for rough sleepers (see case study St. George's Overnight Centre).

### **Case Study: St. George's Crypt Overnight Centre**

St. George's Crypt has provided services for homeless and vulnerable people since 1930. The Overnight Centre is funded through the Supporting People programme and offers accommodation for up to 12 rough sleepers. The accommodation is currently very basic, with 9 people sleeping on mattresses in a communal dormitory.

St. George's Crypt, in partnership with Leeds City Council, has been successful in securing £988,000, through the government's Places of Change programme. This money will be used to create 15 self-contained bed spaces for rough sleepers. Dedicated space for training and skills development such as art, music, gardening, construction and food preparation will also be created. It is envisaged that some service users will secure employment through CREATE, a Community Interest Company developed by the Crypt. Service users can also access primary health care through surgeries held at the centre.

The Crypt has dramatically improved performance in relation to helping service users achieve more independent living: from 25% to 62% in the last year. It is believed that the redevelopment of the Overnight Centre will act as further catalyst to help rough sleepers secure more settled housing.

In November 2008, the government launched a new rough sleeper's strategy 'No One Left Out – Communities Ending Rough Sleeping'. The rough sleeper's strategy sets out the target to eradicate rough sleeping by 2012 and is framed around 15 key actions. These key actions include ensuring that rough sleepers have access to housing options services, have their legal rights as homeless applicants observed and that private rented lettings schemes are used as a rehousing option. The Council will ensure that rough sleepers have improved access to services at the remodelled housing options service. The rough sleeper's strategy also identifies rough sleeping amongst migrant communities as a key priority and this is a significant issue in Leeds as well. Feedback from the Street User Team has identified an increase in rough sleeping amongst asylum seekers with no recourse to public funds and refugees, especially from Eritrea, who have been dispersed to other areas and therefore have no local connection to the Leeds area. Whilst Leeds City Council may not have a duty to secure accommodation for such households it is important that they are offered comprehensive and effective housing options services so they can secure suitable accommodation, whether that be in Leeds or elsewhere.

| <b>Key Actions</b>   |
|--|
| 1. Update the existing Leeds Homelessness Strategy   |
| 2. Reconfigure current homeless and housing advice service (HAPS) around a housing options model   |
| 3. Develop Leeds Homes website to give customers unique bidding accounts through ArcHouse Plus development   |
| 4. Provide training to all staff at reconfigured Housing Options Service on Safeguarding for vulnerable adults and children                              |
| 5. Use statutory review process and Council complaints procedure to monitor standard of housing options and homeless assessment services                 |
| 6. Introduce case management and decision making procedures at reconfigured Housing Options service  |
| 7. Complete tendering of youth mediation service by the end of June 2009   |
| 8. Complete tendering of private sector leased temporary accommodation by end of October 2009  |
| 9. Establish mortgage rescue service (through Golden Triangle Partnership) at the reconfigured Housing Options Service                                   |
| 10. Refurbish St. George's Overnight Centre by April 2010  |
| 11. Develop a commissioning strategy for housing-related support services  |
| 12. Use Supporting People contract management process to improve throughput and independent living outcomes through commissioned temporary accommodation |
| 13. Identify capacity within current Supporting People commissioned services to provide floating support to private rented tenants                       |
| 14. Review service delivery from housing options service for rough sleepers to ensure services are accessible and effective.                             |
| 15. Establish the reasons for the disproportionate level of homelessness amongst BME groups and identify options to address this position.               |

| <b>Key Targets</b>   |                |                |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>   | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| Homeless Preventions (Minimum)   | 1500           | 1600           | 1700           |
| Private Sector Lettings (Minimum)  | 720            | 760            | 800            |
| Sanctuary Installations (Minimum)  | 360            | 380            | 400            |
| Mediation Preventions (Minimum)  | 220            | 240            | 260            |
| Homeless Acceptances (Maximum)   | 1100           | 1050           | 1000           |
| Statutory reviews completed within 8 weeks                                 | 100%           | 100%           | 100%           |
| Reduce temporary accommodation placements (Maximum) <b>NI156</b>           | 261            | 240            | 220            |
| Reduce temporary accommodation placements with private providers (Maximum) | 100            | 90             | 80             |
| Proportion of people achieving independent living (Minimum) <b>NI141</b>   | 71%            | 76%            | 80%            |
| Rough sleeping levels (Maximum)  | 10             | 5              | 0              |

## **Strategic Priority O: Enable people to live independently through housing-related support, adaptations, lettings and assistive technology**

Housing-related support services, commissioned through the Supporting People programme, are designed to help vulnerable people achieve or maintain an independent living outcome. The services commissioned through the programme range from sheltered warden services for older people, homeless hostels and supported housing for people with learning disabilities. The Supporting People programme is managed by a Commissioning Body, comprising representatives from the Council, NHS Leeds and West Yorkshire Probation Service, and is administered by the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate of the Council. The Leeds Supporting People programme commissions 371 services, through 68 organisations, for approximately 12,000 people.

The Council has used a combination of contract management and procurement to deliver continuous improvement in the quality and value for money of commissioned services. Supporting People commissioned services are assessed against the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) that gives an A-D rating against six criteria. There has been a 50% improvement in QAF performance in the last two years with all organisations receiving a minimum C rating. Performance against NI141 (Proportion of people achieving an independent living outcome) has improved from 54% in June 2007 to 79% in December 2008. The strategy will set out targets relating to continuing to deliver improvements in the quality and performance of contracted services.

The Leeds Supporting People programme received a grant settlement of £32.9 million in 2008/09, a reduction of £3 million from the position in 2003/04. Efficiency savings of approximately £7.5 million have been generated since 2003 through competitive tendering and contract management, which have been needed to balance the budget, given the real increases in costs, and to commission new strategically relevant services.

Supported housing services in Leeds have probably never been as efficient as they are currently in terms of quality of service provided and the value for money offered. However, the three-year term of the Housing Strategy will present a new set of challenges for the Council, as strategic commissioners, and for supported housing providers. The Supporting People grant settlement will be maintained at £32.9 million in 2009/10 and will be reduced by £1 million in 2010/11. This represents a pressure of approximately £3 million in real terms over the two-year period. The pressure in 2009/10 will be offset by the release of funding through the implementation of the second year of the Retraction Plan (removal of ineligible funding from services for non-housing related support activity); however savings of approximately £1.7 million will still need to be made in 2010/11.

From 2010/11, Supporting People funding will be absorbed into the Area Based Grant and can be used for any purpose the Council believes is appropriate. It will therefore be important for supported housing providers to



continue to demonstrate strategic relevance and continuous improvement in service quality and value for money. The Supporting People Commissioning Body will commission research to quantify the wider cost benefits, in relation to health and wellbeing, community safety, education and economic prosperity that are generated through supported housing services. In 2009/10, approximately £1.8 million will be released through the conclusion of the retraction arrangements and this funding will potentially be available for new commissioning and to pay an inflationary uplift to providers. The Family Intervention Project (see case study) is a commissioning priority for the Supporting People programme. A focus in 2009/10 will be to identify the efficiency savings (of between £1 and £1.7 million) that will be needed to balance the budget from 2010/11. The grant settlement for 2011/12 has not yet been determined.

The Personalisation agenda commits to giving social care service users the opportunity to better design, choose and control the services they use. This includes giving service users an Individual Budget: given an indicative service budget, which can be used to purchase a service from a provider of their choice. The Council has set a target that by April 2009 all social care recipients will know the cost of the service they receive and be given the opportunity to spend the money differently. A further target has been set that by April 2011, 50% of social care service users will be in receipt of Individualised Budgets. Housing-related support, commissioned through the Supporting People programme, will be included within Individual Budgets, if the client is also in receipt of a social care service. The Supporting People Commissioning Body will need to consider how a genuine 'open market' can be fostered so that service users can make a choice in relation to the housing-related support they purchase. A challenge may result where a customer decides not to purchase a service from the organisation that is also their landlord; such as sheltered housing services with on-site warden, and this may involve informing service users of comparative organisational performance. A customer may decide to purchase a service from an organisation that is not accredited through the Supporting People programme and there may well be conflict between promoting choice and safeguarding vulnerable people. The Supporting People Commissioning Body will also need to ensure that new providers sign up to meeting key housing-related outcomes such as helping service users to maintain an independent living arrangement.

#### **Case Study: The Hollies and Pennington Place**

The Hollies and Pennington Place are emergency direct-access hostel provision for single women and men respectively, providing 52 units of accommodation. Historically, the services were managed by Leeds City Council. Performance was poor with only 37.6% of service users achieving a positive move to more independent accommodation (NI141) in Q3 2006. In 2007, the Supporting People Commissioning Body decided to subject the service to competitive tender and this process ended with the services being outsourced to Leeds Housing Concern in October 2007. The procurement process will generate a saving of approximately £1.4 million over the term of

the five-year contract with Leeds Housing Concern. In addition, performance against NI141 has improved to 77% in Q4 2008.

Adaptation services for homeowners, private tenants and housing association tenants are principally funded through Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), which is administered through the Council's Adaptations Agency. The Leeds ALMOs carry out adaptations work for council tenants, who are ineligible for DFG funding. The ALMOs must use non-decency funding to finance the cost of adaptation work.

The 2007 Leeds Private Sector Stock Condition Survey estimated that 31,000 people, living in private sector accommodation, had some form of disability. This does not mean that all these people required adaptations to be made to their property, but in comparison the Adaptations Agency are projected to carry out 883 adaptations in 2008/09. Leeds City Council is to receive a DFG settlement of £2,570,000 in 2009/10, which represents a 3% increase in funding from the settlement for 2008/09. However, the grant awarded equates to only 43% of the bid submission made by Leeds City Council to meet service need.

The challenges associated with delivering adaptation services coincide with those set out within the 'Improving Housing Quality' strategic theme. The Council and the Leeds ALMOs experience significant pressures in relation to the availability of funding to meet need. There are clear links between the provision of adaptations services and wider health and social care priorities such as preventing or deferring entry into residential care, reducing dependency on home care services and preventing falls that lead to hip fracture/hospital admission. Research conducted by the University Of Bristol: 'Better Outcomes Lower Costs' calculated that adaptations costing on average £6,000 could save £26,000 (less the cost of the adaptation) for each year a person's entry into residential care is delayed. The local Home Improvement Agency, Care and Repair Leeds, has calculated the cost benefits of low level adaptations (fitting hand and grab rails) in relation to preventing falls – see case study: Care and Repair Leeds. The Adult Social Care Directorate of Leeds City Council is developing a Residential Care Strategy, which aims to reduce residential care placements by 50% by enabling older and disabled people to live independently. The links between reducing residential care placements and accessible housing are clear.

There are opportunities to consider how NHS Leeds and the local authority can work together to use adaptation services to generate improved health and wellbeing outcomes. Government guidance has recommended that the cost of carrying out adaptations on housing association properties should be covered by both the Council and the landlord. A Leeds protocol has been developed but this has not been agreed by all housing associations. A resolution to this position is a priority. The funding of adaptations on council-owned stock post-decency programme is a key issue that will need to be factored into the options appraisal for the future management of council housing. The local Home Improvement Agency, Care and Repair Leeds, also play a significant role in delivering adaptation services for older people.

### **Case Study: Care and Repair Leeds**

In 2007, Care and Repair Leeds was voted the best Home Improvement Agency in the country. The service is part funded through the Supporting People programme. Care and Repair Leeds delivers a range of services for older people that are designed to help them live independently and reduce dependency on health and social care services. These include disabled adaptations, home maintenance, falls prevention, garden maintenance and shopping. Adaptation services reduce the likelihood of an older person falling and requiring hospital treatment. The average cost of adaptation work carried out by Care and Repair in Leeds was £98 in 2007/08; in comparison, the cost of treating a person in hospital was £350 per day. The cost of a hip replacement is approximately £47,000. The Leeds Supporting People Partnership agreed to increase the funding to Care and Repair so that they could carry out a further 250 adaptation installations per annum and deliver a Housing Options service for older people.

Some people will need to move from their existing homes to adapted social housing, let through the Leeds Homes Register (LHR). The Council is committed to developing an Accessible Housing Register that will contain housing applications for people requiring adapted housing and adapted housing that is available to let. This will ensure that LHR landlords are better able to match applicants with adapted properties that meet their needs.

Assistive technology, such as emergency alarm services, will also play an increasingly important role in promoting the capacity of vulnerable people to live independently. Traditional alarm services are reliant upon the service user activating the alarm to request some form of assistance. Leeds City Council has been developing the provision of Telecare services since 2006. Telecare services make use of a new generation of alarms and sensors that are triggered by incidents, such as fire or flooding, and therefore are not dependent on any action on the part of the service user. Examples of Telecare services include alarms that detect falls or epileptic fits, medication reminders, bogus caller alerts and smoke/flood/gas leak detectors. It is believed that the development of Telecare services will reduce the demand and cost of residential and home care services, as people are enabled to continue to live independently. Telecare services are therefore a key element of the Council's Residential Care Strategy, which aims to reduce residential care placements by 50%. The Audit Commission has carried out a series of reviews of Telecare services in different authorities and calculated that West Lothian Council were projected to make annual savings of over £3.8 million in reduced residential and day care services.

Telecare services are being developed in Leeds using the existing Care Ring systems and call centre. Care Ring service users ordinarily need to nominate two key holders who can be contacted in the event of an emergency. It has been identified that a significant number of potential Telecare service users do not have access to such a resource and therefore the Supporting People



Commissioning Body has agreed to commission a citywide mobile response service, provided through the Council's security service, from April 2009, for an initial two-year term. It is assumed that the service will be working with 600 service users by the end of 2010/11. The Housing Strategy will set out actions designed to identify the contribution Telecare services, and more specifically the mobile response service, is making to promoting independent living. The Supporting People programme will need to consider whether the mobile response service should be commissioned on a longer-term basis and whether the service could be commissioned using a different model/subject to competitive tender.

| <b>Actions</b>  |
|---|
| 1. Use the contract management process to continue to deliver improvements in quality scores for Supporting People commissioned services against the Quality Assessment Framework   |
| 2. Develop and implement an annual procurement plan for the Supporting People programme   |
| 3. Conclude retraction arrangements in 2009/10 and use released funding (approximately £1.7 million) for new commissioning and inflationary uplifts to providers.   |
| 4. Develop and implement a plan to generate savings of at least £1 million (and up to £1.7 million) that can be realised in 2010/11   |
| 5. Carry out a programme of value for money assessments on retraction services and use released funding to offset budget pressures in 2010/11 onwards for new commissioning.  |
| 6. Commission research to quantify the wider cost benefits generated through the provision of housing-related support services  |
| 7. Commission research to quantify the wider cost benefits generated through the provision of adaptations services as part of wider research into the benefits of improving housing stock.  |
| 8. Develop and implement an action plan for delivering Individualised Budgets including housing-related support.  |
| 9. Agree, through the Leeds Housing Partnership, a Leeds protocol for the joint funding of adaptations on RSL properties between the Council and landlord.  |
| 10. Develop a joint strategic plan between NHS Leeds, housing authority and social services authority for adaptations service investment in the city.   |
| 11. Identify funding options for delivering adaptations on council-owned stock as part of the options appraisal into the future management of council housing.  |
| 12. Work with partners from the social services authority and NHS Leeds to establish the contribution Telecare Services make to the independent living agenda and consider investment options.  |
| 13. Use the Supporting People contract management process to monitor the effectiveness and long-term requirement of the mobile response service. Carry out an options appraisal to determine whether the service should be remodelled and/or subject to competitive tender. |
| 14. Develop an Accessible Housing Register as part of the wider Leeds   |

## Homes Register.

| <b>Key Targets</b>  |                |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>  | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| Proportion of people achieving independent living (Minimum) <b>NI141</b>                                | 71%            | 76%            | 80%            |
| Proportion of people maintaining independent living (Minimum) <b>NI142</b>                              | 99%            | 99%            | 99%            |
| Proportion of SP commissioned services achieving a QAF Level B rating                                   | 80%            | 90%            | 100%           |
| Proportion of joint supported housing/social care service users in receipt of an Individualised Budget. | 40%            | 50%            | 60%            |
| Carry out non-Council stock adaptations work (Maximum)  |                |                |                |
| High Priority   | 114            | 114            | 114            |
| Medium Priority   | 186            | 186            | 186            |
| Low Priority  | 305            | 305            | 305            |
| Carry out Council stock adaptations work (Maximum)  |                |                |                |
| High Priority   | 80             | 80             | 80             |
| Medium Priority   | 160            | 160            | 160            |
| Low Priority  | 269            | 269            | 269            |
| Number of Telecare installations (Minimum)  | 960            | 960            | 960            |
| Number of Telecare Mobile Response Service Users by year end (Minimum)                                  | 500            | 600            | 600            |
| Proportion of Telecare Mobile Response Service Users Assisted to maintain independent living            | 99%            | 99%            | 99%            |

### **Strategic Priority P: Modernising housing provision for vulnerable people**

The Council is committed to modernising housing provision for groups such as older people and people with learning disabilities in order to:

- promote independent living and choice and control
- to use affordable and extra-care housing as an alternative to residential care placements
- to promote health and wellbeing
- to increase community based services
- to give people a wider range of housing options
- to replace outmoded forms of housing.

The 2007 Leeds Housing Market Assessment highlighted that the housing expectations of older people were changing and that some of the traditional housing options available to this group were no longer fulfilling rising

expectations. A prominent example of this challenge is the sheltered housing stock managed by the Leeds ALMOs. The majority of the Council's sheltered housing stock was built prior to 1979 and predominantly comprises one bedroomed bungalow or low-rise flatted accommodation. The Housing Market Assessment identified a strong preference amongst older people for two bedroomed accommodation, so that family or live-in carers could stay over. There are also approximately 480 units of bed-sit accommodation, many that have communal washing facilities, which the ALMOs are often having difficulty letting due to low level of demand.

The Council has submitted a bid to Central Government for £271 million of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits to build 479 new units for social renting and demolish/replace 639 units of outmoded stock – 1,110 units in total. The bid proposes the development of 600 units of extra-care housing and 510 units of 'Lifetimes Homes' housing. The proportion reflects demographic projections for 2031 on the proportion of 'old-old' (over 75) and 'young-old'. 870 of the proposed units will be two bed + apartments, houses or bungalows. 291 of the units to be demolished is bed-sit provision. The proposal is also framed around the concept of 'Lifetime Neighbourhoods': the extra-care schemes will encompass a range of community services and be accessible to care and health services. The location of the 'Lifetime Homes' will be in close proximity to transport links, shops, green spaces and leisure facilities. It is proposed that development will take place across 14 sites, with extra-care housing schemes averaging 60 units and 30-35 units developed in the 'Lifetime Homes' schemes. Two of the schemes situated in Inner Leeds will be developed with a focus on BME elders. Housing will be built to a high standard of environmental sustainability (Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5) and will therefore contribute to reducing carbon emissions and tackling fuel poverty.

The Council will be informed of the CLG decision relating to the sheltered modernisation bid in mid-2009. Different proposals have been drawn up to reflect the possibility that the Council will not secure 100% of the funding requested. The funding bid does not include revenue funding such as housing-related support commissioned through the Supporting People programme. In addition to the new provision, extra care housing tends to be more expensive than traditional warden services, so this additional cost will need to be identified as part of Supporting People budget management.

The modernisation of housing provision for older people includes a development on the former Hemmingway House Old People's Home in Hunslet.

#### **Case Study: Hemmingway House Extra-Care Scheme**

The Council, in partnership with NHS Leeds and Methodist Housing Association, has recently been successful in securing £1.845 million from the Department of Health, to redevelop the former Hemmingway House residential home into extra care housing, primarily for older BME households. The scheme will be comprised of 45 units of social housing. It was originally

intended that there would be an equal split between units for social renting, shared ownership and market sale, but the downturn in housing market has meant that this model is no longer viable. The scheme will comprise 39 two-bedroom units and 6 one-bedroom units. Communal facilities, some of which will be available for use by the wider local community, will include communal lounge, café/restaurant, hair and beauty salon, activity rooms, visitor's suite, health and fitness suite, laundry, catering kitchen and assisted bathrooms. All of these facilities will reflect the proposed multi ethnic/multi faith aims and objectives of the development.

If the PFI bid is not or only partly successful then the Council and the Leeds ALMOs will need to consider future investment options for sheltered housing as part of the options appraisal into the future investment/management of council housing.

The Council has received a number of speculative proposals from developers relating to the development of extra-care housing. The Council believes there is an identified need for more extra-care housing than can be secured through the PFI bid, especially in relation to other tenure forms. However, the Housing Strategy will set out the action to develop an extra-care housing plan that will quantify demand and required supply across tenures and locations. The plan will also consider best practice in relation to size of extra-care scheme. The Brunswick Gardens Village development has been cited as an example of good practice and has 217 units of one and 2-bed extra-care accommodation. This is significantly higher than the number of units per scheme envisaged through the PFI bid. It is also important that such proposals be routed through the Council's Affordable Housing Delivery Section, which can co-ordinate the assessment of strategic relevance.

The government's strategy for people with learning disabilities, 'Valuing People Now' seeks to increase the number of people who own their home or live in rented accommodation on an assured tenancy arrangement. The strategy also set out a commitment to enable people with learning disabilities to exercise greater choice and control over the housing they occupy and the housing services they utilise. There are approximately 2300 adults with learning disabilities living in Leeds, 700 of who live in a registered care home or hostel.

The Council has recognised that the large number of people with learning disabilities who live in hostels or other institutional environments conflicts with the drive to promote independent living and to enable people to exercise greater choice and control over their lives.

#### **Case Study: Independent Living Project (ILP)**

The Council has secured £60 million PFI credits to modernise supported housing provision for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems. The funding will be used to close down 13 out-moded hostel services and replace them with 73 newly built houses, which can accommodate up to 343 people. 250 of these bedspaces are for people with

learning disabilities and the remainder for people with mental health problems. The properties will be managed by local housing associations, Progress Care Housing, and service users will be let tenancies on an assured tenancy arrangement. The development work has commenced and is due to be completed by 2011.

The ILP represents a fundamental shift in service provision for people with learning disabilities. The new services will continue to be part funded (for the housing-related support activity) through the Supporting People programme. Service funding will need to be reassessed to take into account the higher level of housing-related support activity that will be carried out as part of the more independent living arrangements, whilst at the same time moving from accommodation based to floating support. Some people currently accommodated in traditional hostel provision will be seeking to move to mainstream independent accommodation through a Leeds ALMO or other social landlord. Such customers will need to be assisted to make housing applications, be made appropriate priority awards to facilitate rehousing and be provided with floating housing support (as required) when they are rehoused. Arrangements need to be formalised to respond to the housing needs of people with learning disabilities who are no longer able to remain living in specific projects due to behaviour or safeguarding issues. A joint working protocol between the housing and social services authority will need to be drawn up to ensure that effective and appropriate responses are put in place for people with learning disabilities who require mainstream rehousing. Leeds developed a Leeds Learning Disability Strategy in 2008, which recommended that a specific Leeds Learning Disability Housing Strategy should be developed.

| <b>Key Actions</b>  |
|---|
| 1. Develop an Extra-Care Housing plan for Leeds   |
| 2. Consider sheltered housing modernisation investment options as part of the Options Appraisal into Council Housing if the 'Lifetime Neighbourhoods' PFI bid is not or only partly successful in securing funding to modernise/replace stock |
| 3. Deliver ILP modernisation programme by 2011 moving service users from hostels to more independent housing options  |
| 4. Implement modified funding arrangements through Supporting People programme to reflect new ILP provision   |
| 5. Develop joint working protocol between housing and social services authority to provide housing services for people with learning disabilities requiring mainstream housing  |
| 6. Develop a Leeds Learning Disability Housing Strategy   |

| <b>Key Targets</b>   |                |                |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Measure</b>   | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> | <b>2011/12</b> |
| People assisted to achieve independent living (Minimum) NI141  | 71%            | 76%            | 81%            |
| People assisted to maintain independent living (Minimum) NI142 | 99%            | 99%            | 99%            |

## **Strategic Priority Q: Promoting Community Cohesion, Reducing Worklessness and Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour**

The 2004 Housing Act places a duty on all local authorities to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers, travelling show people and new age travellers. August 2007, the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership commissioned Sheffield Hallam University to carry out an accommodation needs assessment to cover the five West Yorkshire authority areas. The West Yorkshire Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment has not been published to date but the Leeds Housing Strategy, and the Leeds Local Development Framework, will need to respond to the findings of the assessment in terms of pitches required.

The link between housing quality and health and wellbeing outcomes is an important theme across the whole of the Leeds Housing Strategy. NHS Leeds carried out a 'Health Impact Assessment' of Gypsies and Travellers in 2008. This identified that people accommodated at the Cottingley Springs site had the worst health and wellbeing outcomes in the city, in relation to life affecting illness, reported good health and being in full-time employment. The Cottingley Springs site is approximately 1.5 miles from the nearest GP surgery or pharmacy. Many Cottingley Springs residents are excluded from accessing primary health care because of previous behaviour. Consequently, many use A&E services to access primary health care. The communities experience high rates of mental ill health and substance misuse, but often do not access treatment services. There is also a low take up of cancer screening services. Service access is often inhibited by low levels of literacy.

The Council will need to work in partnership with NHS Leeds to address the health and wellbeing inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers. Establishing a housing related support service for Gypsies and Travellers is a commissioning priority for Leeds Supporting People programme. Such a service would work with community members to address unmet housing needs and to help them access appropriate health care, education, training and employment services.

The Leeds Housing Strategy is also concerned with ensuring that the housing needs of refugees are met. Asylum seekers are accommodated in Leeds as part of the UK Borders Agency dispersal programme, with specific groups, such as people from Eritrea, concentrated in the Leeds area. Refugees, who have been dispersed to a specific authority catchment area, establish a local connection to that area, in the event that they need to make a homeless application. Monitoring by the Street Outreach Team has highlighted that a significant number of refugees, dispersed to other local authority areas, are arriving in Leeds and because they do not have a local connection to the area, are not being offered temporary accommodation. This has led to an increase in the incidence of refugees sleeping rough and using the St. George's Crypt Overnight Centre. The Council has a duty to offer such customers a homeless assessment and a housing options service; including helping them access housing-related support. It will be important that all



refugees, dispersed to the Leeds area, be routed through the Council's housing options service. The Case Resolution programme, which involves the swift positive processing of long-term outstanding asylum applications, has increased the number of refugees in the city who are entitled to access housing services. This process will be continued during the term of the Leeds Housing Strategy and consideration will need to be given to the impact on housing options, support and social landlord services. Promoting the health and wellbeing of refugees will be another important action within the Leeds Housing Strategy. Data monitoring by NHS Leeds has highlighted that 5% of all births in the city relate to asylum seekers or refugees and that infant mortality disproportionately affects these groups. The Council will need to work with NHS Leeds to develop a joint strategic approach to tackle this issue, especially where this relates to poor housing conditions.

#### **Case Study: Canopy**

Canopy Housing Project is acquiring and renovating properties for refugee families in Beeston, a neighbourhood in Leeds with many vacant properties and a growing refugee population. Young volunteers from disadvantaged backgrounds are working alongside refugees to refurbish derelict properties. Refugee volunteers who take-up the tenancies are linked with a trading arm that Canopy is developing, so the skills they have gained can be used to secure permanent employment in the housing construction industry. The partnership also promotes refugee community development activities through supporting Refugee Community Organisations in the area. The partners are developing a toolkit and making a film to share their experiences and promote positive images on how new and long term resident communities can work together in reviving deprived neighbourhoods.

The Council's Jobs and Skills Service is working with housing providers to address levels of worklessness amongst vulnerably housed and social housing tenants. Unemployment rates are higher and invariably longer-term for vulnerably housed and social housing tenants than for people occupying other housing tenures. A scheme has been developed between the Council and Unity Housing Association: 'Tenants into Work' that signposts Unity Housing Association tenants to the Council's Job Clubs. A joint working protocol is being established between the Jobs and Skills Service and the housing options service. Customers of the housing options service will be signposted to the Job Club service. The housing options service has recognised that historical practice has potentially created disincentives for vulnerably housed people securing employment: private rented tenancy rents set at the Leeds Housing Allowance cap and where housing benefit is paid directly to the landlord. Work to negotiate rental charges to market levels and to pay housing benefit directly to tenants creates incentives for them to seek work. The Jobs and Skills Service has also started to work in partnership with Great Places Housing Association, who manage the hostel provision at St. Ann's Lodge in Burley, so that hostel residents are assisted to use Job Club services. There are further opportunities to expand this work to other supported housing services in the city.

Housing Services play an important role in tackling offending behaviour and anti-social behaviour. The National Offender Management Programme aims to reduce the offending behaviour of priority and prolific offenders. Interventions are centred on the themes of preventing and deterring offending behaviour, catching and convicting offenders and helping offenders to be resettled and rehabilitated. The latter theme has relevance to housing services, given the significant number of offenders who are homeless or vulnerably housed. In 2008, the Supporting People Commissioning Body agreed to commission 200 units of floating housing support to help offenders, subject to the Offender Management Programme, to achieve or maintain an independent living outcome. The Jobs and Skills Service are also working with the Leeds Offender Management Service, given the link between offending behaviour and worklessness. The Supporting People Commissioning Body also agreed to commission 55 units of housing related support for offenders with drug dependencies who are receiving support and treatment through the Housing Drug Intervention Project (DIP). The Offender Management and Housing DIP services will be subject to competitive tender during the term of the Leeds Housing Strategy.

The Leeds Housing Strategy is also concerned with tackling the anti-social behaviour perpetrated by a minority of families that blights the neighbourhoods in which they live and causes misery for other people who live in the community. Taking possession action against such families, if they are council or housing association tenants, is an important option and may certainly enhance the lives of the people who live in close proximity to them. However, possession action does not necessarily work to modify the behaviour of the family, and evicted families may find alternative accommodation in close proximity to their former home, often in the private rented sector.

#### **Case Study: Family Intervention Project**

The Family Intervention Project (FIP) works to address the anti-social behaviour and support needs of families whose behaviour is blighting the communities in which they live. FIP works with families who have been served Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, who have been served notice-seeking possession of their home or have been evicted from their home due to anti-social behaviour. Supported families are permitted to remain in their current home or are moved to an alternative council tenancy on the condition that they engage with FIP. Accommodation is provided on an Introductory Tenancy arrangement, meaning that a family can be swiftly evicted if they fail to engage or the anti-social behaviour continues. Intensive support, of up to 25 hours per week is provided, to cover all issues that may contribute to family behaviour: poor parenting skills, non-attendance at school, worklessness, drug or other substance dependency, low self-esteem, debt problems etc. It has been calculated that family intervention services can generate savings of up to £213,000 for one family from reduced need for interventions by education, health, police and wider housing services. The Leeds FIP is expanding from working with 56 to 100 families in 2009/10. It is anticipated that from 2009/10 onwards the Leeds FIP will be part funded



through the Supporting People programme.

Households who have perpetrated anti-social behaviour and have been evicted from their home are often found unsuitable to be tenant of the local authority. This means that they are unable to access council accommodation until a tangible improvement in their behaviour has been made. The Council often retains a duty to secure such households temporary accommodation, an arrangement that would have to be made on an indefinite basis if the suitability decision is maintained. Such households may also access private rented accommodation in close proximity to their former home. Suitability exclusions, in isolation, do not address the reasons for the anti-social behaviour. It is important that affected households be offered housing-related support, which can work to address the causes of anti-social behaviour. Excluded households also need to be aware of their right to challenge the suitability decision, through the Statutory Review Process.

| <b>Key Actions</b>  |
|---|
| 1. Respond to the findings of the West Yorkshire Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment   |
| 2. The Council to work with NHS Leeds to develop a joint strategy to address the health and wellbeing inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers.                                     |
| 3. Commission a housing-related support service through the Supporting People programme, for Gypsies and Travellers.  |
| 4. Establish joint working protocol between Jobs and Skills Services and reconfigured housing options service.  |
| 5. Continue to drive down private rented sector rent levels to create incentives for vulnerably housed people to seek employment.   |
| 6. Ensure that all refugees, including those with no local connection to the Leeds area, are routed through the reconfigured housing options service.   |
| 7. The Council and NHS Leeds to develop a joint strategic approach to reducing the incidence of infant mortality experienced by refugees, with specific regard to the impact of poor housing. |
| 8. Develop joint working arrangements between Jobs and Skills Service and supported housing sector.   |
| 9. Subject the Offender Management and Housing DIP services, commissioned through the Supporting People programme, to competitive tender.   |
| 10. Commission the Leeds Family Intervention Project through the Supporting People Programme and monitor its effectiveness at tackling anti-social behaviour.                                 |
| 11. Leeds Housing Partnership to monitor trends and issues relating to suitability/tenant exclusions.   |
| 12. Ensure that all households who are excluded from the Leeds Homes Register on suitability grounds are offered housing-related support.   |

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

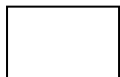
### Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

### Subject: Inquiry into Private Rented Sector Housing – Draft Report

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#### Electoral Wards Affected: All



Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At the beginning of the municipal year, the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) agreed to carry out an inquiry into Private Rented Sector Housing.
- 1.2 This Inquiry has now concluded and the Board is in a position to report on its findings and recommendations resulting from the evidence gathered. The Board's draft report will follow and be made available prior to the meeting for the Board's consideration.
- 1.3 Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 14.3 states that "where a Scrutiny Board is considering making specific recommendations it shall invite advice from the appropriate Director(s) prior to finalising its recommendations. The Director shall consult with the appropriate Executive Member before providing any such advice. The detail of that advice shall be reported to the Scrutiny Board and considered before the report is finalised".
- 1.4 Any advice received will be reported at the Board's meeting for consideration, before the Board finalises its report.
- 1.5 Once the Board publishes its final report, the appropriate Director(s) will be asked to formally respond to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations within three months.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to agree its inquiry report on Private Rented Sector Housing.

### Background Papers

None

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Originator: A Brogden

Tel:2474553

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

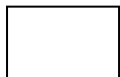
### Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

### Subject: Inquiry into Asylum Seeker Case Resolution – Draft Report

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#### Electoral Wards Affected: All



Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At the beginning of the municipal year, the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) agreed to carry out an inquiry into Asylum Seeker Case Resolution.
- 1.2 This Inquiry has now concluded and the Board is in a position to report on its findings and recommendations resulting from the evidence gathered. A draft report is attached.
- 1.3 Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 14.3 states that "where a Scrutiny Board is considering making specific recommendations it shall invite advice from the appropriate Director(s) prior to finalising its recommendations. The Director shall consult with the appropriate Executive Member before providing any such advice. The detail of that advice shall be reported to the Scrutiny Board and considered before the report is finalised".
- 1.4 Any advice received will be reported at the Board's meeting for consideration, before the Board finalises its report.
- 1.5 Once the Board publishes its final report, the appropriate Director(s) will be asked to formally respond to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations within three months.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to agree its inquiry report on Asylum Seeker Case Resolution.

### Background Papers

None

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**Leeds**  
CITY COUNCIL

**Draft**

**Asylum Seeker Case  
Resolution**

**Scrutiny Inquiry Report**

# Introduction and Scope



## 1. Introduction

1.1 In July 2006 the Home Secretary made a statement to clear a backlog of 450,000 legacy records relating to pre April 2007 unresolved asylum cases by July 2011.

1.2 The priorities for this case resolution programme was to focus on those who pose a risk to the public, those who could more easily be removed, those in receipt of UK Border Agency (UKBA) support and those who may be granted leave to remain.

1.3 The programme was initially to be undertaken over several tranches. The first tranche began in October 2007 and focused on supported family cases over 4 years old. This was due to be completed by March 2008. There were approximately 1,060 families in the first tranche in Yorkshire & Humberside, with 279 of these being in Leeds. This made up a total of 981 individuals, with approximately 95% of all these cases being resolved through the granting of status. However, for Leeds this time frame had slipped and we learned at the start of our inquiry that approximately 5% of the original cohort were still awaiting resolution. We

understand that these have all now been resolved.

1.4 The UKBA have now taken a decision to not proceed in tranches that focus on specific groups and instead will be resolving records on an ongoing basis across all family structures and support mechanisms.

1.5 Concerns about the overall management and potential impact of the case resolution programme on Council services and on the city as a whole were brought to the attention of the Scrutiny Board by the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing at the beginning of the municipal year. We therefore agreed to investigate this matter further.

## 2.0 Scope

2.1 The purpose of our inquiry was to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

- Assess the impact of positively resolved cases upon housing provision by the authority and the private rented sector;
- Assess the impact of the case resolution process upon homelessness figures;



# Introduction and Scope

- Consider the details of the Government's case resolution policy and process in a Leeds and wider regional context;
- Assess the possible service requirements as the case resolution process develops;
- Consider the impact of case resolution on the placement of asylum seekers across the city and explore links with existing community cohesion policies.

2.2 As well as meeting with internal officers to discuss the impact of the case resolution programme from the Council's perspective, we also recognised the need to meet with other key external partners involved in driving forward and managing the programme on a wider scale. This would enable Scrutiny to understand their roles and also allow them the opportunity to raise any particular issues.

2.3 We therefore welcomed the involvement of the UK Border Agency and the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership in our inquiry. We were also pleased to learn that, to their knowledge, Leeds is the first local authority in the region to conduct an inquiry into the case resolution programme.

Our inquiry was therefore welcomed.

2.4 The target set by the government to clear the backlog of legacy records by July 2011 clearly places additional pressures on local authorities to respond accordingly. Whilst we are very confident in the skills and commitment of officers within the Council to manage such pressures, our inquiry has demonstrated a wider need for all key partners to work more closely together in order to achieve this for Leeds and across the region and therefore many of our recommendations are focused around strengthening such partnership working in the future.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



### 3.0 The need for more accurate local baseline data

3.1 At the beginning of our inquiry, we were informed that the initial information provided by UKBA had indicated that there are approximately 3500 records for Leeds which will require resolution before 2011. However, the term 'records' was very significant as we learned that this was not necessarily referring to individuals. These records could relate to families and therefore involve more than 3500 individuals.

3.2 We also noted that these figures do not necessarily relate to actual cases either and that the work undertaken so far during this programme projects that more than 40% of these records will be either "ghosts" (those individuals who cannot be located by UKBA and are believed to be no longer residing in the UK), duplicates, or administrative errors.

3.3 After learning about the Council's experience in dealing with the initial family tranche, it was evident that more accurate baseline data on cases to be resolved as part of the case resolution programme, including projections of likely resolutions and timeframes, would have enabled the Council to assess the impacts upon housing

provision and homelessness figures and plan the management of these cases more effectively.

3.4 We acknowledge that the majority of these legacy cases will have already been determined and are therefore now awaiting final resolution. However, in view of the potential for cases to be identified as "ghosts", duplicates or administrative errors, particular importance was placed on UKBA sharing its projections around likely resolutions and timeframes with local authorities.

3.5 At the beginning of our inquiry, we noted that requests for detailed projections and core information from UKBA were still being greeted with a reluctance to share due to data protection concerns. We therefore raised this issue with UKBA during our inquiry.

3.6 Representatives from UKBA explained that from an operational perspective, it was imperative for them to ensure the accuracy of such data before it is shared with local authorities. Whilst it was highlighted that UKBA had started to share this information with the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership, there was an acknowledgement

## Conclusions and Recommendations



that UKBA needed to work more closely with the Council in providing all necessary information that will assist in the management and future planning of these cases.

- 3.7 In relation to the data protection concerns that were raised with the Council, UKBA explained that this should not be an issue and again gave a commitment to ensuring that every effort would be made to provide projections and planning information to local authorities.
- 3.8 However, at the time of concluding our inquiry we learned that UKBA had still not provided the information requested. In view of this, we recommend that the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency ensures that accurate baseline data on cases to be resolved as part of the case resolution programme is provided directly to the Council as a matter of urgency, as well as details around projections of likely resolutions and timeframes.
- 3.9 We also recommend that the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods proactively pursues any delays in receiving this information on behalf of the Council and for Scrutiny to also be kept informed of any data quality issues in future.

### **Recommendation 1**

**That the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency ensures that accurate baseline data on cases to be resolved as part of the case resolution programme is provided directly to the Council as a matter of urgency.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**That the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency ensures that details around projections of likely resolutions and timeframes are shared with the Council regularly to allow officers to assess potential impacts and plan the management of these cases more effectively.**

### **Recommendation 3**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods proactively pursues any delays in receiving the baseline data and projection details with the UK Border Agency on behalf of the Council in future.**

### **Recommendation 4**

**That Scrutiny is kept informed of any data quality issues relating to the case resolution programme in future and receives annual update reports on this matter.**

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## 4.0 Allowing sufficient time and resources for the Council to deal with referred cases.

4.1 As well as receiving accurate baseline data and projection details, the Council should also be given sufficient time and, where necessary, additional resources to manage any referred cases effectively.

4.2 Whilst we acknowledge the UKBA decision to resolve case resolution records on an ongoing basis and not to proceed in tranches that focus on specific groups, we would still expect to see a phased approach adopted for all case referrals in order to allow sufficient time for the Council to respond accordingly without undue pressure. This should also apply to other initiatives and programmes which local authorities are required to respond to, such as the New Asylum Model (NAM).

4.3 We understand that applications made after 5<sup>th</sup> March 2007 will now come within the NAM. The main objective of this model is to conclude an increasing proportion of asylum cases within six months leading to either integration or removal.

4.4 We noted that whilst UKBA are concluding about 60% of cases within the six month period, their target had now been increased

to conclude 75% of cases within six months by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009.

4.5 During our inquiry, we were also made aware of the High Court judgement around Zimbabwean asylum applications, which stated that those individuals who are returned to Zimbabwe and are unable to demonstrate that they are supporters of, or loyal to, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) would be at increased risk. We learned that UKBA were expected to deal with these cases as a priority and that the case resolution programme cases were to be resolved over the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. The UKBA regional teams were therefore assessing the numbers of cases that needed to be considered, which were thought to be around 322 across the region, and would liaise with local stakeholders, including the Council, once confirmed.

4.6 It was noted that in addition to the case resolution Zimbabwe cases, there would also be a cohort of Zimbabwe NAM cases to be resolved as a priority. However, these cases were separate to the normal NAM processes and therefore were not required to be resolved within the six month period.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



4.7 It was recognised that this enhanced programme would clearly place additional pressures on local authorities housing and homeless services which UKBA needed to take into account. At the time of concluding our inquiry, we were therefore pleased to learn that the Council had received information regarding grant claims for additional resources towards the management of these cases.

### **Recommendation 5**

**That the Council be given sufficient time and, where necessary, additional resources from the UK Border Agency to effectively manage any referred asylum seeker cases.**

4.8 It was also brought to the attention of UKBA that the Council supports a large number of failed asylum seeker cases under the provisions within the National Assistance Act and Children Act due to them having depended children or satisfying the destitute plus criteria.

4.9 Whilst the Council had previously requested that UKBA prioritise these cases to relieve some of the local authority financial pressures, we learned that no further progress had been made. When we raised this issue during our inquiry,

UKBA agreed to work with the Council in chasing up these particular cases but highlighted that a large percentage of these should now have been resolved. However, at the time of concluding our inquiry, we again noted that no progress had been made.

4.10 In light of the Council's previous attempts to work with UKBA in ensuring that an early agreement on progressing these cases is sought, we recommend that a deadline of August 2009 be given to UKBA to resolve such cases. Where this is not achieved, we recommend that the Chief Executive of the Council writes to the Immigration Minister setting out the Council's concerns about the lack of progress made by UKBA in resolving these cases.

### **Recommendation 6**

**That a deadline of August 2009 be given to UKBA by the Council to resolve those case resolution asylum seeker cases which fall under the provisions within the National Assistance Act and Children Act.**

**Where this deadline is not achieved, we recommend that the Chief Executive of the Council writes to the Immigration Minister setting out the Council's concerns about the lack of progress made by UKBA in resolving such cases.**



# Conclusions and Recommendations



## 5.0 Acknowledging the role of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership

5.1 We learned that the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership (YHRMP) is the new name for what used to be called the Yorkshire and Humberside Consortium for Asylum Seekers and Refugees. The Partnership is made up of Local Authorities, key regional agencies and other stakeholders working within the Yorkshire and Humberside region.

5.2 It was explained that the Partnership has a number of roles covering enabling, integration and central contract management. Funded by a grant from the UK Border Agency, the Partnership tries to ensure that agencies across the region provide appropriate and accessible advice, services and support for asylum seekers, unsuccessful asylum seekers, new refugees and migrant workers. Its activities therefore include a strategic leadership and co-ordination role; policy work; providing and sharing information; awareness raising; and encouraging and supporting organisations in the region to work together on issues and projects relating to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

5.3 Reference was also made to the Partnership's Strategic Migration Group (SMG) responsible for national and regional decisions that reflect the wider views of partners; policy work; and providing strategic leadership and advice for the region.

5.4 We therefore questioned how Elected Members are able to influence or share opinions around the strategy work of the SMG and was informed about the Yorkshire and Humber Local Authority Member Group. This was established last year and has representation from all Local Authorities in the region. Historically the focus has been very much on the 10 Local Authorities involved in the accommodation contract, but this group is currently being expanded to cover all 22 Local Authorities in the region. It was noted that the Leeds representative on this group is the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing. Any issues raised by this group are fed back to the SMG for consideration.

5.5 In view of the enabling role of the YHRMP, there is an expectation for UKBA to liaise closely with the Partnership's Strategic Migration Group about future initiatives so that any issues may be discussed and mechanisms put in place to help manage the

## Conclusions and Recommendations



smooth running of such initiatives at both a regional and local level.

5.6 However, we learned that whilst information about such initiatives is always shared with the Partnership, issues have been raised in the past around the timing of receiving such information. Previously the Partnership has been given very little time to act upon the information received from UKBA before such initiatives are implemented.

5.7 It was also highlighted that the Partnership would often need to press UKBA to release more information to them regarding such initiatives and that sometimes even local authorities would find out information about certain initiatives before the Partnership.

5.8 In relation to the case resolution programme in particular, we were informed that as a region, the Partnership has written to Phil Woolas, Minister of State for Borders and Immigration, setting out their concerns about the overall impact of the programme on the region as a whole, as well as the restraints on resources to deliver the programme and the tight timescales in which to do so.

5.9 Whilst local authorities continue to value the role of the

Partnership as a representative body and intelligence research hub for the region, it is clear that UKBA also needs to acknowledge the effective role of the Partnership and to strengthen its communication links with the Partnership in future.

### **Recommendation 7**

**That the UK Border Agency acknowledges the effective role of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership and strengthens its communication links with the Partnership in future.**

### **6.0 Strengthening partnership working**

6.1 As a result of our inquiry, we have identified a wider need for all key partners across the region to work more closely together in terms of sharing information, assessing potential impacts and planning the management of cases more effectively.

6.2 UKBA also acknowledged the importance of the policy division within the Home Office to work more closely with the operational division in ensuring that policies are deliverable and that all partners work more closely together to help address

## Conclusions and Recommendations



any conflicting policies or concerns locally.

6.3 We were pleased to learn that from January 2009 all local authority areas were assigned a named Case Resolution Directorate case owner to which cases in each area will be allocated. The role of the case owner is to allow much closer working between local authorities and UKBA, enabling clearer communications and any issues or concerns to be addressed quickly and directly.

6.4 It was also highlighted that the first Local Immigration Team in the region was launched in Newcastle during January 2009 and that further Teams would be rolled out across the region between now and December 2011.

6.5 However, whilst acknowledging that communication links between the Council and UKBA are slowly beginning to improve due to the introduction of the case owner role, we noted from YHRMP that the feedback from other local authorities about the services received from the case owners was very inconsistent.

6.6 During our inquiry, we also acknowledged the difficulties in the relationship between the Council and the private providers contracted to provide

housing for asylum seekers across the city. These were based around the inherited problems of distribution (particularly in Leeds) and the reluctance of some private providers to fully engage with the local authority. One of the problems highlighted was around some private providers issuing notifications for failed asylum seekers to leave their property within the 28 day notice period but not informing the Council in advance of this notice to enable alternative plans to be put in place.

6.7 It was highlighted that the YHRMP also had little power over the private providers and whilst some providers are not as forthcoming as others, it continues to try and encourage more open dialogue between all relevant parties.

6.8 To assist in improving relationships, it was suggested that UKBA may wish to include within the contract specifications a statement clarifying that such providers are required to liaise with the local authority otherwise this would be seen as a breach of contract. However, UKBA highlighted that within its commercial division, there is a contracts team managing this process to ensure that providers



# Conclusions and Recommendations



are delivering to the terms set out within their contracts.

6.9 Overall, there was a general acknowledgement that partnership working is vital if we are to deliver on the case resolution programme, or any other initiatives, as a region.

6.10 We therefore recommend that the YHRMP takes a lead role on producing an action plan aimed at strengthening the communication links between all key partners across the region and that the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency plays a proactive role in overseeing the delivery of this action plan.

**Recommendation 8**  
**That the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership takes a lead role on producing an action plan aimed at strengthening the communication links between all key partners across the region and that the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency plays a proactive role in overseeing the delivery of this action plan.**

## 7.0 Section 4 support

7.1 During our inquiry, particular reference was made to those asylum seekers in receipt of

Section 4 support from the UKBA who qualify for the case resolution programme. We learned that Section 4 support is provided in the form of self catering accommodation with vouchers to the value of £35 per week to purchase food and essential toiletries, and is provided to a failed asylum seeker who is destitute and also satisfies one or more of the following conditions:-

- They are taking all reasonable steps to leave the UK or to place themselves in a position where they are able to leave the UK, e.g. sign up for a voluntary return or demonstrate that they are complying with attempts to obtain travel documents to facilitate departure;
- They are unable to leave the UK because of a physical impediment to travel or for some other medical reason;
- They are unable to leave the UK because in the opinion of the Secretary of State there is currently no viable route of return available;
- The provision of accommodation is necessary for the purposes of avoiding a breach of their human rights.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



- 7.2 It was highlighted that many people have remained on Section 4 support for extended periods of time, often running to years, even though the regulations provide for a 3 monthly review of an individual's circumstances to satisfy the Home Office that an individual is still eligible for continuing Section 4 support.
- 7.3 In September 2008, UKBA had announced that the Case Resolution Directorate team in Yorkshire & Humber and North East would be reviewing the continuing entitlement to support all those individuals currently supported under Section 4 in the region, between 3,000 – 4,000 cases across the entire region (approximately 800 in Leeds).
- 7.4 We learned that the review of these cases will not be combined with a resolution for most and that when an individual's Section 4 support is terminated, they are expected to either return home voluntarily or be removed.
- 7.5 We were therefore very concerned about the implications of this approach, as we believe that individuals whose support is terminated could potentially 'disappear' and work illegally to support themselves thus creating difficulties in regard to knowing where individuals are to enable their cases to be successfully resolved through removal or the granting of status.
- 7.6 We noted that such individuals are likely to remain in Leeds given that no other local authority is obliged to support them as the legal responsibility remains with the metropolitan district they originated from. We therefore raised concerns about the welfare of these individuals, particularly in relation to their ongoing health needs and living accommodation given their vulnerability and limited options available to them.
- 7.7 The extent of this problem was again difficult to quantify and monitor given that there is no real data available relating to these individuals. References were made to the Council's Housing Enforcement Team as they were more likely to pick up any issues raised about poor housing conditions within the private rented sector. We therefore ensured that such matters would be raised as part of our separate inquiry into Private Rented Sector Housing, which was also being conducted this municipal year.
- 7.8 In acknowledging that it was the responsibility of the Home

## Conclusions and Recommendations



Office to remove those individuals whose applications had been declined, we were informed that the Council had sought assurances from UKBA that they had prepared for these difficulties and put in place a strategy for monitoring these individuals and maintaining contact. Whilst this was not clarified by UKBA, the understanding was that a case could be resolved as a “ghost” record when no contact or record of an individual can be found for over 6 months. However, we felt that a ‘ghost’ record did not necessarily mean that the individual had left the area. We therefore raised our concerns with UKBA as part of our inquiry.

7.9 Representatives from UKBA explained that when a decision is taken to terminate Section 4 support, every effort is made to work with the individual in ensuring that they are returned back to where they had originated from in a fair and compassionate manner.

7.10 However, where individuals have refused to maintain contact, we learned that UKBA had links into other information systems to help track these individuals, with the most valuable link being with local authority housing departments.

7.11 Whilst we acknowledge that the number of individuals who are tracked and removal action taken is rising, we would still recommend that the UKBA works with the Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Migration Group to explore alternative options for dealing with those individuals no longer eligible for Section 4 support with the aim of promoting a more cooperative approach.

### **Recommendation 9**

**That the UK Border Agency works with the Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Migration Group to explore alternative options for dealing with those individuals no longer eligible for Section 4 support will the aim of promoting a more cooperative approach.**

### **8.0 The allocation of asylum seekers to Leeds**

8.1 During our inquiry, we questioned whether limitations were put into place with regard to the numbers of asylum seekers allocated to Leeds and were informed about the existing Cluster Policy for the Yorkshire and Humber region. This policy makes it clear that cluster numbers are to be proportionate to the settled populations of the district and that an absolute cluster limit of

# Conclusions and Recommendations



1:300 of the general population is agreed for each local authority area.

- 8.2 Within Leeds it was noted that 2,501 is the maximum number allocated under this guide and that the city is at around 78% of its capacity as of the end of January 2009. It was highlighted that the regional Asylum Impacts Group, which is part of the wider YHRMP structures, is responsible for monitoring this policy and is currently in the process of re-drafting the written cluster guidance. In view of this, importance was placed on ensuring that such guidance does not conflict with the Council's policies around community cohesion and equality.

## **Recommendation 10**

**That the Council works closely with the Regional Asylum Impacts Group to ensure that the regional cluster guidance does not conflict with the Council's policies around community cohesion and equality.**

- 8.3 We also questioned whether UKBA had undertaken any impact assessment of their management of the case resolution programme in regard to equality and cohesion. It was explained that whilst research of

that nature is carried out by other elements of the Home Office rather than UKBA, the local work that is carried out by the Asylum Impacts Group would involve issues around community cohesion.

- 8.4 Where asylum seekers are being allocated to Leeds, it was felt that there needed to be systems in place to target 'cluster areas' and provide for a greater choice of housing accommodation throughout the city.

- 8.5 There was an acknowledgement that the existing joint working arrangements between UKBA and the Council could be built upon to help achieve this outcome and that UKBA would consider how more control over the distribution of private sector providers could be achieved to also deliver this outcome.

## **Recommendation 11**

**That the Council continues to work closely with the UK Border Agency to ensure that systems are in place to target 'cluster areas' and provide for a greater choice of housing accommodation throughout the city.**

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## 9.0 Regional and local integration strategies

9.1 Particular importance was placed on the work carried out by the YHRMP around integration as a whole and it was highlighted that the YHRMP was launching its Regional Integration Strategy following wide consultation with asylum seekers, refugees and other partners which helped to inform this strategy. It was hoped that this strategy would also be used on a local level too. In acknowledging this, we recommend that the wider issues around regional and local integration strategies are explored further by Scrutiny in the future.

DRAFT

# Evidence



## **Monitoring arrangements**

Standard arrangements for monitoring the outcome of the Board's recommendations will apply.

The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed will be asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations, including an action plan and timetable, normally within two months.

Following this the Scrutiny Board will determine any further detailed monitoring, over and above the standard quarterly monitoring of all scrutiny recommendations.

## **Reports and Publications Submitted**

- Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods presenting evidence in line with session one of the Board's Inquiry – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008
- Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presenting a summary report of the working group – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008
- Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presenting a summary report of the working group – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2008
- Summary report of the working group meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2009

# Evidence



## Witnesses Heard

- Sharon Hague, Asylum Services Manager, Leeds City Council
- Tom Wiltshire, Head of Housing Needs and Options, Leeds City Council
- Lelir Yeung, Head of Equality, Leeds City Council
- Mervyn Millington, Yorkshire and Humber Public Sector Group Contract Manager (part of the Y&H Regional Migration Partnership)
- Steve Lamb, Regional Operations Director, North East, Yorkshire and the Humber Region, UK Border Agency
- Steve Trimmins, Deputy Director Operations – Asylum, North East, Yorkshire and the Humber Region, UK Border Agency

## Dates of Scrutiny

- 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008 – Scrutiny Board Meeting (agree terms of reference)
- 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008 – Scrutiny Working Group Meeting
- 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008 – Scrutiny Board Meeting
- 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009 – Scrutiny Working Group Meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009 – Scrutiny Board Meeting
- 27<sup>th</sup> February 2009 – Scrutiny Working Group Meeting
- 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – Scrutiny Board Meeting (agree final inquiry report)

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Originator: A Brogden

Tel:2474553

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

### Subject: Inquiry into Street Cleaning – Draft Report

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#### Electoral Wards Affected: All

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At the beginning of the municipal year, the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) agreed to carry out an inquiry into Street Cleaning.
- 1.2 This Inquiry has now concluded and the Board is in a position to report on its findings and recommendations resulting from the evidence gathered. A draft report is attached.
- 1.3 Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 14.3 states that "where a Scrutiny Board is considering making specific recommendations it shall invite advice from the appropriate Director(s) prior to finalising its recommendations. The Director shall consult with the appropriate Executive Member before providing any such advice. The detail of that advice shall be reported to the Scrutiny Board and considered before the report is finalised".
- 1.4 Any advice received will be reported at the Board's meeting for consideration, before the Board finalises its report.
- 1.5 Once the Board publishes its final report, the appropriate Director(s) will be asked to formally respond to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations within three months.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to agree its inquiry report on Street Cleaning.

### Background Papers

None

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**Leeds**  
CITY COUNCIL

**Draft**

**Street Cleaning**

**Scrutiny Inquiry Report**

# Introduction and Scope



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Disposing of litter inappropriately is not only antisocial and unpleasant, but is also illegal. Yet research by ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns) reported an estimated cost of £547 million to local authorities in 2005-2006 to clean and clear streets of litter and refuse. More recently in March 2009, the joint report of the independent think tank, Policy Exchange, and the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) states that since the 1960s, the amount of litter dropped in the UK has increased by approximately 500%.
- 1.2 Whilst acknowledging that the Environmental Protection Act 1990 imposes a duty on land owners and duty bodies to keep specified land clear from litter and refuse, it is important to remember that we all play a part in the quality of the local environment and therefore have a responsibility to deal with litter in an acceptable way.
- 1.3 Whilst our report does acknowledge the need to educate individuals and influence behaviour towards littering, the primary focus of our inquiry has been around the statutory duty of the Council in keeping land clear from litter and refuse and exploring opportunities for further

improvements in the way that street cleaning services are delivered to the residents of Leeds.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of our inquiry was to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

- Legislation governing street cleaning services, including the National Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2006;
- Roles and responsibilities of the Council for street cleaning services in Leeds;
- Common perceptions around street cleaning services and the measure of success used;
- Comparative case studies of successful beacon authorities in relation to the 'better public places' theme;
- Street cleaning enforcement powers of the Council and opportunities for joined up enforcement with other individuals, groups and organisations;
- Frequency and monitoring of street cleaning services;

# Introduction and Scope

- Resource pressures relating to street cleaning services;
- The methods of community engagement used to reflect local priorities for street cleaning in Leeds.

## 3. Witnesses

- 3.1 During our inquiry, we sought the views of a wide range of stakeholders, including ENCAMS who provided a professional and independent opinion based around their experiences of working with other local authorities in addressing issues around street cleaning.
- 3.2 As the focus of our inquiry was around delivering effective street cleaning services to the residents of Leeds, we also acknowledged a need to gather opinions of local residents about the current standards of street cleanliness and their experiences of street cleaning services.
- 3.3 Using the local media, we invited residents to write in and share their experiences and opinions with the Scrutiny Board. We received numerous letters during our inquiry, which formed part of our evidence base and helped us to identify common issues and potential hotspot areas across the city.
- 3.4 We would like to sincerely thank everyone for their contribution and commitment to our inquiry and hope that our report reflects the high level of importance placed upon this issue by all stakeholders, including the public, and also the demand for this issue to become a priority for the Council.

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## 4. Delivering the statutory duties of the Council

4.1 It is the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) that imposes a duty under section 89 on land owners and duty bodies to keep specified land clear from litter and refuse. For local authorities, this includes all publicly maintained highways, housing estates, open spaces (including parks) for which they are responsible. We understand that this duty is not transferable, so where cleaning contractors are used to carry out the cleaning on behalf of local authorities, it is still the duty body that remains responsible.

4.2 The Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2006 accompanies the EPA. The main objective of the Code is to provide practical guidance on the discharge of the duties under section 89 of the EPA by establishing reasonable and acceptable standards of cleanliness. Leeds City Council therefore has to abide by, and fully understand the implications of, this Code of Practice.

4.3 Whilst Leeds City Council is the responsible body, as defined within the Code of Practice, historically this responsibility has been delegated to a number of different service areas who have been vested with the responsibility to look after

individual areas of land. For example, Parks and Countryside are responsible for all parks and open spaces over 0.2 hectares in size; Education Leeds is responsible for all school grounds and associated land; the ALMOs are responsible for all land forming part of Leeds City Council's housing stock; Highways Services have the statutory responsibility for maintaining the adopted highway across Leeds in a safe and clean condition; and Streetscene Services is responsible for keeping clean all adopted Highways as notified by Highway Services.

4.4 The individual functions carried out by Streetscene Services include gully cleansing; litter bins; street sweeping; manual litter picking; street washing; fly tipping removal; graffiti removal; needle picking; public convenience cleaning; and leaf clearing.

4.5 However, despite such delegations in place, we acknowledged that most services continue to receive complaints about the environmental cleanliness of land that does not fall within their particular service area.

4.6 Whilst the Council's call centre acts as the single point of contact for the public when dealing with

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street cleaning complaints, there was a general acknowledgment from all stakeholders that the current fragmented approach makes it more difficult to establish lines of accountability and can therefore cause delays when referring and dealing with such complaints.

4.7 Whilst we acknowledge that the development of a shared digital mapping system could assist in determining lines of accountability, this still does not address the underlying problem of having different service areas handling complaints disjointedly, which consequently can lead to confusion and sometimes duplication of work.

4.8 The current fragmented approach towards street cleaning services is very complex and confusing to the public, particularly when trying to establish the boundaries between private and ALMO land. In view of the fact that the duty placed upon local authorities is not transferable (i.e. the Council as a whole remains accountable despite such delegation arrangements in place), we did question whether it would be more sensible to simplify the process and allow for one service area to have the budget for street cleaning and become the responsible lead to undertake

the Council's duty to keep the city clean.

4.9 However, there were some reservations expressed to the Scrutiny Board by the different service areas and particularly from ALMOs. These are summarised below.

4.10 Firstly, we learned that apart from the grounds maintenance budget, there is no core funding source for street cleaning activities carried out by the ALMOs and that such activities are incorporated within their wider estate management role. This would therefore make it difficult to identify and separate out a specific budget in which to transfer to another service area. It was highlighted that in terms of any resources being transferred, this would be in the form of existing staff that carry out such activities, such as the Estate Caretaking Teams, and that any reduction in estate management resources would put further pressure on the ALMOs in delivering other service standards.

4.11 It was also highlighted that a lot of time and effort had been invested in working with local tenants in terms of carrying out estate walkabouts and inspections to help identify particular environmental hotspots.

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- 4.12 We noted that each ALMO has in place its own service standards, some of which have been agreed with tenants to reflect local priorities, and therefore a question was raised about whether the transfer of ALMO staff to another service area would detract from the local service standards already achieved by the ALMOs. It was felt that this would very much depend on any new management processes put in place and the level of influence that the ALMOs would have in terms of services provided within their specific areas.
- 4.13 Concerns were also raised about whether a single service area would be able to replicate the innovative approaches adopted by the ALMOs to address local needs. For example, the use of ALMO staff and also commissioned staff from local social enterprises to provide an enhanced garden maintenance service for their more vulnerable tenants, which has received recognition as part of the audit inspection process and is deemed invaluable to those residents that receive this service.
- 4.14 Whilst we do acknowledge the importance of maintaining such local services, these are deemed to be enhanced services. In view of this, it prompted a need to clarify a baseline service for street cleaning in order to establish what would constitute as an enhanced service and who would be responsible for managing and funding such services if street cleaning was to be transferred to a single service area.
- 4.15 The wider issues around minimum cleanliness standards and baseline service data are addressed further within our report.
- 4.16 In relation to Parks and Countryside, we learned that staff are generally employed to carry out site based horticultural duties, primarily within parks, and that cleansing responsibilities were just a small element of this work. In employing such a multi-skilled workforce, it was therefore considered very difficult to identify a specific budget and staff resource for such cleansing responsibilities.
- 4.17 In relation to the cleansing of school grounds and other associated education land, we noted that where school grounds are clearly defined with parameter fencing then the cleansing responsibilities lie with the school.
- 4.18 Each of the 249 schools within Leeds is allocated a budget, which includes an amount for maintenance work. Such



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maintenance work would involve cleansing responsibilities and it was explained that these responsibilities would generally form part of the school caretaker's role. We

acknowledge that where the responsibility for education land is clearly vested with the schools themselves, it would be very difficult for this responsibility to be transferred to the Council, particularly when trying to access the land, and therefore this responsibility should remain with the schools' governing bodies.

4.19 However, we noted that difficulties have arisen in the past where the land is vested with education but outside of any defined parameters. As the cleansing responsibilities for this land remains with Education Leeds, they have previously commissioned agencies to deal with fly tipping problems when required. In view of the fact that the maintenance of such land is being undertaken by Education Leeds on an ad hoc basis, there was a general agreement that there would be merits in transferring the responsibility of this land to a single service area within the Council.

4.20 We would also apply this same principle to formal parks given that there are also clear boundaries and clear responsibilities in place for the

maintenance of such parks. However, the responsibility for other associated land vested with Parks and Countryside could be transferred more easily.

4.21 In recognising the aspirations of Leeds to become a 'one Council', it is clear that the current arrangements in place for street cleaning are not providing a seamless service from the initial contact and referral stage through to service delivery.

4.22 Whilst acknowledging some of the implications of transferring all responsibility for street cleaning to a single service area, we believe that in principle this is the most appropriate approach in terms of establishing clear lines of accountability.

4.23 Obviously with such responsibility comes the need for adequate resources to be put into place too. However, our inquiry has highlighted that the complexity of the current arrangements has made it very difficult to identify and separate out specific resources in which to simply transfer to a single service area.

4.24 In view of this, we recommend that Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts a piece of research over the next 6 months to determine the wider implications, including any

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consequential management arrangements, and potential costs involved in bringing the Council's street cleaning responsibilities into one single service area and that the findings of this research is brought back to Scrutiny for consideration.

a more co-ordinated and coherent service across the city. We therefore recommend that the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods produces an action plan within the next 6 months aimed at improving such communication links.

## **Recommendation 1**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts a piece of research over the next 6 months to determine the wider implications, including any consequential management arrangements, and potential costs involved in bringing the Council's street cleaning responsibilities into one single service area.**

**That the findings of this research is brought back to Scrutiny for consideration.**

## **Recommendation 2**

**That unless the research findings from recommendation 1 identifies clear reasons not to, then the Executive Board supports the principle of having one single service area responsible for undertaking the Council's duty to keep the city clean.**

4.25 With regard to the existing arrangements in place, there is a clear need for communication links between the different street cleaning service areas to be strengthened in order to achieve

## **Recommendation 3**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods produces an action plan within the next 6 months aimed at strengthening communication links between the different street cleaning service areas.**

## **5. Standards of cleanliness across the City**

5.1 ENCAMS highlighted that whilst street cleaning standards within Leeds have improved over recent years, there still remain areas across the city that require further improvement.

5.2 We noted that Leeds was not alone, as other Metropolitan Authorities have also struggled to try to address problems around street cleanliness standards. It was also recognised that the legacy of Competitive Compulsory Tendering had contributed towards the complexity of the arrangements now in place for delivering street cleaning services.

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5.3 In terms of performance measures, we learned that National Indicator 195, which was introduced in April 2008, had replaced the Best Value Performance Indicator BV199, used for measuring environmental cleanliness.

5.4 The data for this indicator is based on surveys carried out three times per year covering five electoral wards on each visit and assessing twelve land use areas.

5.5 The following table shows how Leeds was performing against other comparable Core Cities in terms of the previous Best Value Performance Indicator (BV199) in relation to litter and detritus and also the spend per head of population.

| 2007/08      | Spend per head of population | BVPI 199a (litter and detritus) |
|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Liverpool    | £26.31                       | 7%                              |
| Manchester   | £23.31                       | 8%                              |
| Nottingham   | £16.98                       | 8%                              |
| Birmingham   | £17.96                       | 10%                             |
| Bristol      | £13.14                       | 13%                             |
| <b>Leeds</b> | <b>£14.24</b>                | <b>13%</b>                      |
| Newcastle    | £28.94                       | 16%                             |
| Sheffield    | £12.55                       | 16%                             |

5.6 The BV199a result states the percentage of streets across Leeds that were found to be in an unsatisfactory condition, therefore the lower the result the better the performance. Leeds' performance was considered average when compared to the other Core Cities, yet Leeds has one of the lowest spends per head of population.

5.7 ENCAMS placed particular importance on utilising resources effectively and achieving a minimum standard of cleanliness across the city. Examples were given of where other local authorities had prioritised resources within city centre areas, which consequently led to a reduced service being provided to residential areas.

5.8 Examples of street cleanliness standards across the city were also shared with the Scrutiny Board by all witnesses, including members of the public who had written to the Chair of the Board.

5.9 We recognise that even within neighbouring areas there can be significant differences in terms of cleanliness standards.

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5.10 As part of our inquiry, we queried the street cleanliness standards set across the city and sought clarification on who was responsible for setting these standards.

5.11 We acknowledged that the main objective of the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2006 is to provide reasonable and acceptable standards of cleanliness. It therefore sets out grades of cleanliness, along with accompanying illustrations.

5.12 We learned that such definitions are included within the Council's Strategic Summary of the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2006 and are as follows:



5.13 The Code recognises that a grade A cannot be maintained at all times and that it is generally accepted by the public that a grade B is an acceptable level of

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cleansing for short periods of time. However, a grade A must be achieved on a regular basis after cleansing.

people most of the time. This is to be responded to within one day (this means by 6 pm the following evening).

5.14 Litter accumulation and deposition is dependent on numerous factors, with levels of pedestrian traffic and vehicular traffic being the most obvious. Other factors include the time of year, time of day, the natural and physical features of the location and the presence of structural and physical items that could affect the area to be cleansed.

- *Low intensity* of use are lightly trafficked areas that do not impact upon most people's lives most of the time such as rural roads. This is responded to within 14 days.

5.15 It was highlighted that the most important factors are the intensity of activity in an area and health and safety limitations. The Code of Practice reflects these factors and highlights four main intensity zones (High, Medium, Low and Special Circumstances) with corresponding maximum response times. These are set out below:

5.16 Areas with special circumstances include situations where issues of health and safety and reasonableness and practicality are dominant considerations when undertaking environmental maintenance work. For example, carriageways, verges and central reservations of motorways and operational rail land within urban areas. This is to be responded to within 28 days or as soon as reasonably practical.

- *High Intensity of use* are busy public areas such as the city centre. This is to be responded to within ½ day (this means by 6 pm if reported by 1 pm or by 1 pm the next duty day if reported between 1 pm and 6 pm the previous day)
- *Medium Intensity of use* are everyday areas such as all housing land occupied by

5.17 The above response times are set from the time the duty body becomes aware of an issue (for example, through a complaint from the public). The duty body then has a set time limit to restore the area to a Grade A. Duty bodies that allow their land to fall below acceptable standards for longer than the allowed response time may be subject to a Litter Abatement Order or a Litter Abatement Notice under sections 91 and 92 of the EPA.



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- 5.18 In view of this, we queried whether the different service areas were aware of the duties and implications of the Code of Practice in terms of cleanliness standards and response times.
- 5.19 We had already established that the ALMOs had introduced their own service standards to reflect local priorities. Whilst they are still aware of the Code of Practice, it was explained that, generally, the ALMOs have found it difficult to achieve the grade A cleanliness standard set out within the Code and have also found difficulties in meeting the specified response times when dealing with referrals or complaints.
- 5.20 In relation to Parks and Countryside, we noted that the standards in place for the maintenance of parks go beyond the statutory EPA cleanliness standards as other charter marks such as the Green Flag Award, which is a national standard, and the Leeds Quality Parks Standard require wider conservation and horticultural standards too. However, the EPA standards would be applied to other associated land vested with Parks and Countryside.
- 5.21 We learned that Education Leeds was also aware of the Code of Practice and that a handbook had been produced for all schools setting out the standards expected of them in line with the Code. With PFI schools, it was also highlighted that as part of the contract, there would be clear performance standards in relation to the school site and that penalties would often apply when such standards are not maintained.
- 5.22 In view of the current fragmented approach towards street cleaning services, it is vital that each of the different service areas continue to remind the relevant staff of the minimum standards of cleanliness expected from the Council in line with the Code of Practice.
- 5.23 However, as the accountable body, we believe that all employees and Members of the Council should also be made aware of these standards and encouraged to report any street cleaning or other environmental problems across the city.
- 5.24 There is also a clear need for the Council to communicate better with the public about such standards in order to address differing views of the public in terms of their expectations of services.
- 5.25 We therefore recommend that the Council uses the Code of Practice to produce a Charter for Leeds that clearly sets out the

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statutory duties of the Council and other duty bodies for keeping land free of litter and refuse and, in particular, sets out the minimum standard of street cleanliness that the public can expect to see across the city. This Charter could then be referred to whenever it was felt that this minimum standard was not being met.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**That the Council uses the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse 2006 to produce a Charter for Leeds that clearly sets out the statutory duties of the Council and other duty bodies for keeping land free of litter and refuse and also the minimum standard of street cleanliness that the public can expect to see across the city.**

#### **6. Gathering more local baseline data around street cleanliness needs**

6.1 Whilst the performance data gathered as part of the National Indicator 195 is considered a robust measure of performance from a city-wide perspective, we recognise the value of gathering baseline data on a more local level too.

6.2 During our inquiry, references were made to the successes behind local Environmental

Action Teams, Local Area Management Plans (LAMPs) and Intensive Neighbourhood Management (INM) programmes in terms of focusing on the needs of a local area and thus making marked improvements in terms of the street cleaning services provided.

6.3 We also learned that the Council had adopted the District Local Environmental Quality Survey (DLEQS) within areas of Intensive Neighbourhood Management (INM), where the focus is on improving services in the most deprived communities in the city.

6.4 The DLEQS is adapted from a national survey and reports factually on selected environmental standards prevailing within a particular area. It monitors cleansing issues (litter, detritus, leaf fall); cleansing related issues (weeds and staining of roads); environmental crime (flytipping, flyposting and graffiti); litter bins and waste placed out for collection; landscaped areas (litter and maintenance); grading of environmental elements; and the location of problems within the transect.

6.5 Within the INM areas, every street had been surveyed and monitored. Whilst this proved to be a very complex and resource

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intensive exercise, such detailed survey data had meant that more accurate information was provided to enforcement and Streetscene services, enabling them to identify any need for targeted resources and education campaigns.

6.6 Whilst we welcome the Council's intentions to roll out DLEQS across the city, we learned that the level of resources required to carry out such detailed survey work has had a significant impact on the level of progress made.

6.7 In recognising that such detailed survey data would provide more accurate information and therefore enhance services in the long term, we do recommend that a detailed assessment of the full costs required to roll out DLEQS across the city is carried out within the next 6 months and brought back to Scrutiny for consideration.

**Recommendation 5**  
**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods commissions a detailed assessment of the full costs required to roll out DLEQS across the city and reports the findings back to Scrutiny within the next 6 months.**

## 7. Developing robust monitoring mechanisms

7.1 As well as achieving more accurate baseline data at a local level, we also identified a need for more robust monitoring of street cleaning services.

7.2 ENCAMS explained that the key element to success is to establish a robust monitoring system that everyone can link into.

7.3 As street cleaning services are judged purely on outcomes in terms of performance measures and not inputs, we understand that officers and operatives are now encouraged to exercise their discretion to determine levels of street cleanliness to allow for greater flexibility within the service to be responsive to specific areas of need.

7.4 Whilst we acknowledge the cost effective benefits of adopting a more responsive approach to street cleaning that is based around outputs and targeting particular hotspots, we are concerned that such an approach does not appear to be backed up with a robust monitoring and recording mechanism.

7.5 Whilst Area Managers are responsible for carrying out their



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own quality checks in relation to street cleaning services, which would involve visiting staff and conducting spot checks, they are covering large areas of the city and street cleaning supervision is just one of a number of their duties.

- 7.6 We believe that many residents judge the effectiveness of street cleaning services on what they see on the streets and not necessarily on the outcomes achieved. In view of this, if decisions about cleansing needs are not being monitored and recorded systematically, this causes difficulties for services to provide categorical evidence of when a particular street or area had last been assessed and cleaned. We believe that such an audit trail is vital to demonstrate where best value is being achieved by services.

**Recommendation 6**  
**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods ensures that robust monitoring and recording mechanisms are put in place for all street cleaning services to link into in order to produce an audit trail of when a particular street or area had last been assessed and cleaned.**

- 7.7 In view of such discretionary responsibilities, we learned that managers and operatives have taken part in a training course to

make them aware of minimum cleanliness standards.

- 7.8 However, we recommend that such training forms part of the formal induction programme for all operatives.

**Recommendation 7**  
**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods ensures that training around minimum cleanliness standards is included as part of the formal induction programme for all street cleaning operatives.**

### 8. Review of cleansing schedules

- 8.1 In adopting a more responsive approach to street cleaning, we learned that cleansing schedules are only used as a guideline to determine minimum cleansing frequencies.
- 8.2 However, in acknowledging that the Council's current cleansing schedule was formulated using historical data, we do recommend that a review of the schedule is conducted to ensure that correct minimum cleansing frequencies are being set across the city and also reflects areas of priority in terms of cleanliness needs.

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## **Recommendation 8**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts a review of the current cleansing schedule to ensure that correct minimum cleansing frequencies are being set across the city and also reflects areas of priority in terms of cleanliness needs.**

### **9. Dealing with obstructions to street sweeping operations.**

9.1 We recognised that one of the most common problems raised by the public during our inquiry was around on-street parked cars obstructing street sweeping operations.

9.2 The gutters of most kerbed roads are mechanically swept using a road sweeping vehicle. This removes any grit, litter and general dirt that has accumulated in the gutter. We therefore understand the frustrations of street cleaning operatives and also residents when the effectiveness of this mechanical sweeping is limited by on-street parked cars.

9.3 However, unless these cars are parked illegally, we understand that both the Council and the Police have limited enforcement powers to restrict such parking. We therefore noted that such problems would need to be

addressed by working with residents and gaining their co-operation to minimise obstructions during street cleaning operations.

9.4 In view of this, we recommend that the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods explores all possible routes of addressing the problem of on-street parked cars to help minimise obstructions to effective street cleaning operations. In addition, we would advise that the Director also brings this matter to the attention of the Transport Minister and requests that consideration be given to introducing enforcement powers that will enable local authorities to minimise the obstructions caused by on-street parked cars.

9.5 We would like an update report on this issue to be brought back to Scrutiny within 6 months.

## **Recommendation 9**

**(i) That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods explores all possible routes of addressing the problem of on-street parked cars to help minimise obstructions to effective street cleaning operations.**

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## Recommendation 9 (continued)

- (ii) That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods writes to the Transport Minister requesting that consideration be given to introducing enforcement powers that will enable local authorities to minimise obstructions to street cleaning operations caused by on-street parked cars.
- (iii) That an update report on this issue is brought back to Scrutiny within 6 months.

## 10. Changing public behaviour towards littering

- 10.1 As part of our inquiry, particular emphasis was made around changing public behaviour and educating people not to drop litter by making them aware of the penalties that can be incurred as a result.
- 10.2 We noted that enforcement services do link in closely with Streetscene services and acknowledge the successful work of the enforcement team, particularly in terms of enforcing matters relating to transient groups across the city and also the numbers of successful prosecutions in relation to flytipping.

10.3 However, research by ENCAMS (2006) showed that littering was deemed to be acceptable when an individual's sense of personal responsibility had been taken away because everyone else was doing it. It was considered most acceptable to drop litter when an area was already dirty and run-down, but not when it was tidy and presentable. It was considered most excusable to drop litter when everyone else was doing it, but not when in respectable company.

10.4 During our inquiry, particular reference was made to a number of known hotspot areas across the city, such as Headingley, Hyde Park and Holbeck, which are densely populated and also often include temporary residents such as students.

10.5 Due to the intensive nature of the work experienced in hotspot areas across the city, there is a clear need for more targeted enforcement and education campaigns to be carried out in these areas.

10.6 However, where particular hotspot areas are targeted with more intensive resources, it is important to ensure that other areas across the city do not receive a reduced service as a consequence of this and that they too are receiving sufficient

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enforcement and education resources.

10.7 Importance was also placed on targeting certain types of businesses, such as 'food on the go' establishments, where litter problems can clearly be traced back to those establishments.

10.8 We therefore recommend that the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods produces an action plan within the next 6 months for delivering street cleaning enforcement and education campaigns across the city and particularly within known hotspot areas.

**Recommendation 10**  
**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods produces an action plan within the next 6 months for delivering street cleaning enforcement and education campaigns across the city and particularly within known hotspot areas.**

10.9 We would hope that a Charter for Leeds will help towards educating people more generally about expected standards of cleanliness across the city and promote a sense of responsibility amongst communities.

10.10 However, we believe that communication links with the public could also be improved by

services linking into the community engagement plans of the Area Committees and also their joint tasking arrangements, which also encourages closer working with key partners.

**Recommendation 11**  
**That all street cleaning services link into the community engagement plans of the Area Committees to help improve their communication links with the public.**

10.11 Area Committees generally would benefit from receiving more information in relation to the street cleaning services provided in their respective areas. Such information should include clarification of the different street cleansing services they could expect to receive within their areas along with details of work schedules indicating at least the minimum frequencies for service provisions.

10.12 Whilst acknowledging that the service has adopted a more responsive approach which encourages officers and operatives to exercise their discretion to determine levels of street cleanliness and service need, Area Committees would also benefit from understanding how such decisions are made and subsequently monitored.

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10.13 We believe that Area Committees should also be receiving performance data on a regular basis to demonstrate how services are performing. This should include information about their respective Community Action Services Teams (CAST) or Community Pride Teams to ensure that these are being utilised effectively and are responsive to the needs of the Area Committees.

10.14 We also suggest that where Area Committees are currently holding themed debates as part of their meeting cycles, one of the themes could be around environmental cleanliness and could be used as an opportunity to open up a dialogue with other key stakeholders, in particular with local Town and Parish Councils.

10.15 In developing closer working links with local Town and Parish Councils, this would help existing services to further engage with local residents and maximise on such a valuable resource, particularly as some Town and Parish Councils have previous experience of the inspection regimes for street cleanliness.

10.16 Taking on board the above issues we have raised, we

recommend that the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods works with Area Committees and local Town and Parish Councils to produce an action plan within the next 6 months aimed at strengthening their links with the Council's street cleaning services and also maximising resources in terms of engaging with the public.

### **Recommendation 12**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods works with Area Committees and local Town and Parish Councils to produce an action plan within the next 6 months aimed at strengthening their links with the Council's street cleaning services and also maximising resources in terms of engaging with the public.**

### **Recommendation 13**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods ensures that Area Committees receive regular street cleaning performance data. This should include information about their respective Community Action Services Teams (CAST) or Community Pride Teams to ensure that these are being utilised effectively and are responsive to the needs of the Area Committees.**

10.17 We also recognise the value of working more closely with local community groups involved in



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championing environmental cleanliness issues as they too are a valuable resource in terms of monitoring cleanliness standards across communities.

10.18 We understand that in the past, the Council has commissioned ENCAMS to conduct training with community groups to enable them to make assessments and work with ENCAMS to come back to Leeds City Council with outcomes and actions. Whilst we acknowledge that at that time there was little interest expressed by community groups for such training, we would recommend that the Council remains proactive in engaging with local community groups and continues to offer such assessment training to these groups. We would also recommend that such training opportunities are offered to local Town and Parish Councils too.

### **Recommendation 14**

**(i) That the Council remains proactive in engaging with local community groups and continues to offer training which will enable such groups to carry out street cleanliness assessments.**

**(ii) That such training opportunities are offered to local Town and Parish Councils too.**

### **11. Making street cleaning a priority for Leeds**

11.1 We know that Leeds' performance in terms of street cleanliness is considered average when compared to other comparable core cities, yet Leeds has one of the lowest spends per head of population.

11.2 We fully appreciate that existing street cleaning services do the best job they can with the resources available. However, it is clear that significant additional resources are required in order to deliver a standard of service that meets with the expectations of all residents in Leeds.

11.3 We also recognise that in order for Leeds to compete with other core cities in attracting new developers and investors to the city, particularly within the current economic climate, then it needs to demonstrate to such developers and investors that Leeds is a clean and vibrant city for which they and their staff would wish to come and work and live.

11.4 Street cleaning therefore needs to be regarded as a priority for further improvement and investment.

# Evidence



## Monitoring arrangements

Standard arrangements for monitoring the outcome of the Board's recommendations will apply.

The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed will be asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations, including an action plan and timetable, normally within two months.

Following this the Scrutiny Board will determine any further detailed monitoring, over and above the standard quarterly monitoring of all scrutiny recommendations.

## Reports and Publications Submitted

- Report of the Chief Officer for Environmental Services presenting evidence in line with session one of the Board's Inquiry – September 2008
- Strategic Summary of the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2006
- Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presenting a summary report of the working group – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008
- Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presenting a summary report of the working group – 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008
- Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presenting a summary report of the working group – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009
- Summary report of the working group meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2009
- Summary table of the issues raised within the public letters
- Litter and the Law. A guide for the public. ENCAMS.
- Litterbugs. How to deal with the problem of littering. Policy Exchange. March 2009.



# Evidence



## Witnesses Heard

- Councillor David Blackburn, Chair of the West (Outer) Area Committee
- Dave Richmond, Area Manager, South East Leeds
- Steve Crocker, Area Manager, West and North West Leeds
- Rory Barke, Area Manager, North East Leeds
- Stephen Smith, Head of Environmental Services
- Claire Warren, Chief Executive, West North West Homes Leeds
- Phil Hirst, Housing Services Development Manager, Aire Valley Homes Leeds
- Mike Holdsworth, Operations Manager, Aire Valley Homes Leeds
- Tony Saynor, Head of Estate and Support Services, East North East Homes Leeds
- Brian Johnson, Director of Strategic Projects, ENCAMS
- James Holmes, ENCAMS
- Andrew Mason, Chief Environmental Services Officer
- Graham Wilson, Head of Environmental Action & Parking
- Phillip Turpin, Principal Projects Officer, Environmental Services
- Graham Little, Principal Manager (Environmental Services), West North West Homes Leeds
- Sean Flesher, Acting Head of Parks and Countryside
- Alex MacLeod, Programme Manager, Education Leeds

## Dates of Scrutiny

- 8<sup>th</sup> September 2008 – Scrutiny Board meeting (agree inquiry terms of reference)
- 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008 – Scrutiny Working Group Meeting
- 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008 – Scrutiny Board Meeting
- 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008 – Scrutiny Working Group Meeting
- 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 – Scrutiny Board Meeting
- 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009 – Scrutiny Working Group Meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009 – Scrutiny Board Meeting
- 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009 – Scrutiny Working Group Meeting
- 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – Scrutiny Board Meeting (agree final inquiry report)



Originator: A Brogden

Tel:2474553

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

### Subject: Inquiry into the East and South East Leeds (EASEL) Regeneration Project

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#### Electoral Wards Affected: All

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Following a request for Scrutiny, the Board agreed in February 2009 to carry out an Inquiry into the EASEL project. Terms of reference for this Inquiry were agreed by the Board in March 2009 and these are attached as appendix 1.
- 1.2 A working group of the Board met on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009 to consider evidence in line with session one of the Inquiry. Session one of the Board's Inquiry focuses on the background to the EASEL project and understanding its main objectives.
- 1.3 A summary report of the working group's discussions and a copy of the background papers submitted to the working group are attached as Appendix 2 for the Board's consideration.
- 1.4 Sessions 2 and 3 of the Board's Inquiry are scheduled to take place in the new municipal year.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to note the summary report of the working group's meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009.

### Background Papers

None

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**SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)****INQUIRY INTO THE EAST AND SOUTH EAST LEEDS (EASEL)  
REGENERATION SCHEME****TERMS OF REFERENCE****1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The overall aim of the EASEL regeneration project is to create sustainable mixed communities in eastern and south eastern parts of the city. The two fundamental objectives of the project are to make East and South East Leeds a place that people want to live and work and to tackle existing deprivation and overcome the negative perceptions of the area. To achieve this, the headline objectives for the EASEL Regeneration Plan are as follows:
- Creating affordable, attractive and high quality mixed tenure housing;
  - Increasing housing choice for existing residents and attracting new higher income residents to achieve a desired and sustainable housing market;
  - Investing in new and existing assets to transform the image and attractiveness of the area, realising the potential of its high quality green spaces;
  - Creating lively, busy centres for new neighbourhoods with good schools and local services;
  - Solving the underlying social and economic problems of the area focusing on improving attainment and skills, reducing crime and blight and promoting employment and enterprise;
  - Capitalising on existing public and private sector investment opportunities in schools, hospitals, and the neighbouring Aire Valley.
- 1.2 The project has been designed in a series of inter-connected phases, which involves the development of packages of land for housing, green space, leisure, commercial and other uses. The first phase of the project, based around the development of eight sites in Gipton and Seacroft, will be a direct land transaction contracted using a strategic development agreement. The subsequent phases represent approximately eighty five percent of the project and will be delivered through a joint venture company.
- 1.3 The EASEL regeneration project has been underway since Executive Board gave approval to procure a partner to regenerate the EASEL area in January 2004. In July 2006, the Executive Board approved the offer from Bellway plc for the sale of the phase one sites subject to resolution of site development costs. Executive Board approval of this phase was also subject to satisfactory progress being made on the proposed joint venture partnership. Since January 2004, the Executive

Board has received numerous progress reports and continues to monitor the developments of the EASEL project.

- 1.4 However, in February 2008, the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) received a request for a Scrutiny inquiry to be undertaken into the EASEL regeneration project following concerns that there had been delays in progress with the project and that people living in the EASEL area were not being kept informed of what was happening. In consideration of this request, the Board agreed to conduct an inquiry which focuses around the process arrangements in place for the EASEL project and explores the opportunities available to the Council and its partners for communicating effectively about the project with all the key stakeholders, and particularly the people living in the EASEL area. It was noted that the Council's Corporate Governance and Audit Committee is also conducting work around the governance arrangements of the EASEL project. The Scrutiny Board therefore does not wish to duplicate the work of the Committee.
- 1.5 The Scrutiny Board is keen to explore the future role of Scrutiny in reviewing the progress of the EASEL regeneration project and recognised that this inquiry would need to be continued in the new 2009/2010 municipal year.

## **2.0 Scope of the inquiry**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
- Details of the master planning programme for the EASEL project, with particular reference to housing densities and other regeneration outcomes;
  - The relationship of EASEL to the Aire Valley Regeneration Scheme;
  - Details of consultations carried out with the people living in the EASEL area and opportunities available for improving communications with key stakeholders, including the public, in future;
  - The potential role of Scrutiny in reviewing the progress of the EASEL regeneration scheme.

## **3.0 Comments of the relevant Director and Executive Member**

- 3.1 In line with Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 12.4 the views of the relevant Director and Executive Member have been sought and have been incorporated where appropriate into these Terms of Reference. Full details are available on request to the Scrutiny Support Unit.

## **4.0 Timetable for the inquiry**

- 4.1 The Inquiry will take place over a number of sessions. These sessions will involve working group meetings which will provide flexibility for the

Board to gather and consider evidence that will aid the discussions during the public Board meetings.

- 4.2 The length of the Inquiry is subject to change and will inevitably continue into the 2009/10 municipal year.

## **5.0 Submission of evidence**

- 5.1 Dates for any working group meetings and/or site visits are to be arranged.

### **5.2 Session one – Scrutiny Board Meeting (11<sup>th</sup> May 2009)**

To consider an initial report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods setting out the background to the EASEL regeneration project, including a project timeline.

### **5.3 Session two – Scrutiny Board Meeting (July 2009 - date to be confirmed)**

To consider evidence in relation to the following areas:

- The master planning programme for the EASEL project, with particular reference to housing densities and other regeneration outcomes;
- The relationship of EASEL to the Aire Valley Regeneration Scheme.

### **5.4 Session three – Scrutiny Board Meeting (September/October 2009 - date to be confirmed)**

To consider evidence in relation to the following areas:

- Consultations carried out with the people living in the EASEL area and opportunities available for improving communications with key stakeholders, including the public, in future;
- The potential role of Scrutiny in reviewing the progress of the EASEL regeneration scheme.

### **5.5 Session four – Scrutiny Board Meeting (November/December 2009 – date to be confirmed)**

- To agree final report

## **6.0 Witnesses**

- 6.1 The following witnesses have been identified as possible contributors to the Inquiry:

Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods  
Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing  
Chief Regeneration Officer  
Head of East Projects Office  
Senior Project Manager, EASEL, Regeneration Team  
Representative(s) from Bellways plc  
Consultation provider (once contracted)

## **7.0 Post inquiry report monitoring arrangements**

- 7.1 Following the completion of the Scrutiny inquiry and the publication of the final inquiry report and recommendations, the implementation of the agreed recommendations will be monitored.
- 7.2 The final inquiry report will include information on the detailed arrangements for how the implementation of recommendations will be monitored.

## **8.0 Measures of success**

- 8.1 It is important to consider how the Scrutiny Board will deem if their inquiry has been successful in making a difference to local people. Some measures of success may be obvious at the initial stages of an inquiry and can be included in these terms of reference. Other measures of success may become apparent as the inquiry progresses and discussions take place.



## **Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) Inquiry into the East and South East Leeds Regeneration Project**

**Summary report of the working group meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009.**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 A working group of the Board met on 6<sup>th</sup> April to consider evidence in line with session one of the Board's Inquiry into the East and South East Leeds (EASEL) Regeneration Project.
- 1.2 Session one of the Board's Inquiry focuses on the background to the EASEL project and understanding its main objectives. The working group received a report from the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods setting out the background to the project, including a project timeline summarising the activities and milestones associated with the project and the procurement of the partner developer. This report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The following Members and officers attended the working group meeting to discuss the evidence submitted:
- Councillor B Anderson (Chair of the Scrutiny Board)
  - Councillor G Hyde
  - Councillor L Mulherin
  - Angela Brogden, Principal Scrutiny Adviser
  - Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer
  - Peter Anderson Beck, Head of the East Office, EASEL and Aire Valley Leeds Regeneration
  - Maggie Gjessing, Senior Project Manager, EASEL
- 1.4 A summary of the key issues raised by the working group is set out below.

### **2.0 Main issues raised**

#### Objectives of the EASEL project

- 2.1 In acknowledging the objectives of the EASEL project, as set out within the Director's report, the working group questioned whether these remained relevant and if so, the level of priority given to each one. In response, it was highlighted that whilst the project objectives are ambitious, they all remain relevant and receive the same level of priority as collectively they are linked to the success of the project.
- 2.2 During the meeting, the working group decided to address each of the project objectives separately to determine key responsibilities for achievement.
- *Creating affordable, attractive and high quality mixed tenure housing.*

- 2.3 It was highlighted that whilst the Council is in control of the planning system for meeting this objective, the necessary investment needed to fulfil this objective would come from the partner developer, Bellway.
- *Increasing housing choice for existing residents and attracting new higher income residents to achieve a diverse and sustainable housing market*
- 2.4 It was reported that the Joint Venture Company (JVCo) aims to seek to increase housing choice for existing residents and attract new working residents into the area to achieve a diverse and sustainable housing market. Key to delivering on sustainable mixed communities, the intention here is to be able to offer existing residents affordable homes to buy and rent and to provide greater diversity of house types for families in different circumstances.
- 2.5 Given the long term nature of the EASEL project, the working group acknowledged that it was the Council's responsibility to ensure that by continuously checking changes in local housing markets, future development will be designed to match people's changing aspirations in the area. This will mean that the project continues to further promote the EASEL area as somewhere people want to live and work by providing the most appropriate mix of tenures to meet demand.
- *Investing in new and existing assets to transform the image and attractiveness of the area, realising the potential of its high quality green spaces.*
- 2.6 It was noted that whilst it would primarily be public sector funding used to achieve this objective, which would be phased in during the duration of the project, the Council was also bidding to external bodies, such as the Access to Nature grant scheme, which is part of the Big Lottery Fund. It was noted that the EASEL Project Team within Regeneration was also working closely with Parks and Countryside in exploring opportunities for external bids for the parks within the area.
- *Creating lively, busy centres for new neighbourhoods with good schools and local services.*
- 2.7 It was acknowledged that to attract new residents into the area will require investment not just in housing but also in learning and training, by improving the neighbourhood environment and by investing in neighbourhood centres and green spaces. The working group noted that the JVCo will have objectives in these areas in order to transform the image and attractiveness of the area and to create lively, busy centres for new neighbourhoods with good schools and local services making the areas places where people want to live and work.
- 2.8 Whilst noting the key role of the JVCo and Planning in trying to attract the necessary investments into the EASEL area, the working group recognised that the current economic climate had a significant influence on this particular objective as it links to the positions of other key partners such as health,

education and retail investors. In view of this, the working group stressed the importance of the Council communicating this to local residents to make it clear that such influences are outside of the Council's control.

- *Solving the underlying social and economic problems of the area focusing on improving attainment and skills, reducing crime and blight and promoting employment and enterprise.*

- 2.9 In terms of leadership on this particular objective, it was noted that the Council would take the lead along with two key external partners: Education Leeds and Job Centre Plus.
- 2.10 It was recognised that a key aspect of the regeneration activity will be to address worklessness and low skills in the EASEL communities to enhance the economic well-being of the EASEL area.
- 2.11 Whilst commitments had been given by Bellway to provide employment and training opportunities to local residents in the EASEL area, including job guarantee apprenticeships, the working group acknowledged the importance of getting people 'job ready' for such work opportunities as employers were not compelled to provide jobs to local people, particularly in view of the current economic climate, and therefore the focus was on continuing negotiations with employers to help achieve this objective.
- 2.12 In relation to job creation issues, the working group recognised the need for the government to be putting in further resources for more intervention work to prepare people for work. In acknowledging that the government had not committed funding for job creation, the working group noted that such funding would come from the Council's capital investment programme.
- 2.13 The working group was informed of the work already being conducted by the Council in addressing this matter, for example, through the worklessness project pilot. Whilst acknowledging that such work is clearly resource intensive, the working group recognised the long term benefits of this investment in terms of raising the aspirations of local people and minimising the need for other service interventions.
- *Capitalising on existing public and private sector investment opportunities in schools, hospitals, and the neighbouring Aire Valley.*
- 2.14 The working group acknowledged that the EASEL programme is the Council's most significant area based regeneration programme commitment to date. In view of this, all available resources, including most importantly mainstream funding, will be maximised and co-ordinated to achieve the outcomes of the Regeneration Investment Programme; alongside the return to the Council from the development process.
- 2.15 It was reported that the JVCo will seek to capitalise on existing public and private sector investment opportunities in schools, hospitals and in the neighbouring Aire Valley Leeds by working with partners to promote

developments which will contribute to the wider EASEL objectives and will complement its own developments. It will also ensure that in planning developments or in promoting investment, that there is ease of movement within and to and from the EASEL Area.

- 2.16 It was also noted that the EASEL Team was in discussion with the Homes and Communities Agency (the organisation through which central government will channel investment in housing and infrastructure) to secure their support for infrastructure and site assembly investment.

#### Governance arrangements for the Joint Venture Company

- 2.17 It was acknowledged that the setting up of a Joint Venture Company (JVCo) with Bellway was to provide the primary delivery vehicle under the Council's EASEL regeneration initiative. This JVCo is to deliver neighbourhood masterplans and subsequent developments across the EASEL area.
- 2.18 The working group was reminded that the governance arrangements for the Joint Venture Company (JVCo) were already being examined by the Council's Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. However, at its March meeting the Scrutiny Board had requested further details of the remit and membership of the EASEL steering group set up by the Executive Board. In view of this, the working group received copies of two Executive Board reports dated April 2007 and November 2008 which set out the overarching governance arrangements for the JVCo, which included details of the EASEL steering group.
- 2.19 In April 2007, the Executive Board agreed the main terms of reference for the EASEL steering group. This steering group, with cross party and independent representation, was approved to act as a principal consultee to give an overview of the JVCo and the regeneration investment programme.
- 2.20 It was noted that the responsibilities of the steering group include: oversight, monitoring and review of the EASEL initiative; receive briefings prior to joint venture company board meetings; receive reports on key projects at development stage; provide an advisory role on emerging issues and provide reports to Executive Board where necessary.
- 2.21 The EASEL steering group will provide, monitor and assess proposals to support Executive Board in its areas of responsibility. The steering group should therefore provide advice and assessment of all key proposals relating to EASEL. Such proposals may originate from the Council, its key partners and stakeholders, from community representatives or from the partnership company.
- 2.22 The steering group will also need to be involved in the business of setting the overarching framework for what the Council wants to deliver in the EASEL area. This will be done partly through the proposed neighbourhood planning programme and partly through the delivering of the investment in the area (by developing sites and through the regeneration spend). The steering group

would then also be responsible for monitoring the performance of the partnership company as it delivers development proposals.

- 2.23 The membership of this steering group includes the Leader(s) of Council and Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing; nomination from the East and North East Homes Leeds board; Chair of Inner East Area Committee; two opposition representatives; and a representative of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
- 2.24 In terms of this membership, the working group queried why local MPs had not been included as it was felt that such representation, both now and in the longer term, could also help to drive forward the programme. It was noted that the membership of the steering group was agreed by the Executive Board.

#### Area Action Plan and Neighbourhood Planning

- 2.25 The working group was informed that following changes to planning legislation, the Unitary Development Plan for Leeds will be replaced by a Local Development Framework. City Development has been responsible for the development of a number of Area Action Plans (AAP) looking at land availability for housing, greenspace, employment and infrastructure.
- 2.26 It was reported that City Development has undertaken a consultation process on the AAP progressing from a series of options to a “Preferred Option” and are in the process of developing the evidence base for the AAP on cross cutting issues such as retail and transport provision prior to preparing the submission version of the plan.
- 2.27 The process through which the broad proposals and areas of potential change identified by the EASEL AAP will be developed in detail is called “Neighbourhood Planning”.
- 2.28 The process will have two elements, a technical exercise through which site development options and local infrastructure proposals will be developed and a community engagement programme to communicate these options to residents to get their views and provide an opportunity to develop the local plan.

#### Consultation with local residents

- 2.29 Whilst acknowledging that communication and consultation issues will be considered in more detail during the course of the Board’s Inquiry, the working group noted the earlier and ongoing communication and consultation work with local residents, as set out in section 5 of the Director’s report. In acknowledging the work carried out, particular importance was placed on holding and attending regular forum meetings and the working group was pleased to note that the EASEL Team have, and will continue to, attend regular local resident group meetings.

- 2.30 The working group noted that the Neighbourhood Planning work is the first key part of the process that will bring all partners to the table. In view of this, importance was placed on ensuring that sites are not planned without adequate community consultation with the aim of reaching a general consensus from local people on such plans.
- 2.31 The working group was informed that City development led on the previous consultation as this was part of the strategic planning process to meet government requirements. However, it was acknowledged that during the consultation process, there had been some misinterpretations of the plans which had led to confusion. The working group was therefore pleased to note that the EASEL Team in Regeneration would be involved in jointly carrying out future consultation processes with City Development to ensure that what is sent out reflects the issues set out as part of the neighbourhood planning process.
- 2.32 In relation to the consultation process, the working group sought clarification of the appointment of the consultation provider for the EASEL project. In response, it was explained that the Council is in the process of tendering for an urban designer for the project and intends to make both of these appointments together.

#### Adopting a one Council approach

- 2.33 The working group emphasised the importance of services not working in individual silos and adopting a 'One Council' approach towards delivering the EASEL project.
- 2.24 It was noted that whilst there are core elements that the Council can manage, the Council is unable to control issues around education and health. In view of this, the working group was informed that the contributions of partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors are being, and will continue to be, deployed through partnership working arrangements with the aim of getting all partners to prioritise the objectives of the EASEL project within their own services.
- 2.35 The working group questioned whether there was a senior officer group overseeing the project process and noted the role of the Programme Board which was established to work up the detail of the plans for the programme.
- 2.36 It was acknowledged that a lot depends on what happens outside of the Council too and that the coordination of these different inputs is very time consuming and needs careful negotiation.
- 2.37 In view of this, the working group questioned whether a deadline had been given to other services and partners. In response it was highlighted a deadline would be firmed up once the urban designers were in place, but that services are aware of what is expected from them and therefore should be anticipating this deadline to be set shortly.

- 2.38 In terms of Member involvement, importance was placed on having open discussions between Members and officers and it was noted that Ward Members were now being consulted regularly on progress with the EASEL project. In order to carry the projects momentum and stability in the longer term, the working group acknowledged the importance of having a cross-party consensus and support for the EASEL project.



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Originator: Stephen Boyle

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**Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**Scrutiny Board: Environment and Neighbourhoods**

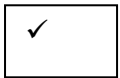
**Date: 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

**Subject: The East and South East Leeds regeneration project**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Gipton and Harehills  
Burmantofts and Richmond Hill  
Killingbeck and Seacroft  
Temple Newsam



Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**Summary**

This report summarises the progress of the East and South East Leeds (EASEL) regeneration project to date. It covers the procurement route and key milestones in the selection of a development partner, the establishment of a delivery vehicle – Leeds EASEL Ltd and the approach to community involvement.

The purpose of this is to provide a position statement which will give context and background information for the Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board to review the progress of the scheme and to help shape its future direction.

## **1 Background**

### **1.1 EASEL Objectives**

1.2 The objectives of the EASEL project were established by the 4<sup>th</sup> April 2007 Executive Board report as:

- Creating affordable, attractive and high quality mixed tenure housing;
- Increasing housing choice for existing residents and attracting new higher income residents to achieve a diverse and sustainable housing market;
- Investing in new and existing assets to transform the image and attractiveness of the area, realising the potential of its high quality green spaces;
- Creating lively, busy centres for new neighbourhoods with good schools and local services;
- Solving the underlying social and economic problems of the area focusing on improving attainment and skills, reducing crime and blight and promoting employment and enterprise;
- Capitalising on existing public and private sector investment opportunities in schools, hospitals, and the neighbouring Aire Valley.

1.3 In order to identify a development partner and potential delivery mechanisms, the regeneration brief was subject to a procurement process which is referred to at section 3.

## **2 EASEL Area**

2.1 The EASEL area covers the communities of Harehills, Gipton, Seacroft, Halton Moor, Osmondthorpe and Richmond Hill.

2.2 The attached map shows the area which is home to approximately 79,000 people and covers 6.6 square miles.

2.3 The area shares its southern boundary with the Aire Valley Leeds (AVL) regeneration area and both projects are managed through a single team – the East Office – as part of the Regeneration Service.

2.4 AVL is a key area for employment generation and the links between employment opportunities and the communities in the EASEL area are an important strand of the activities of the regeneration teams.

## **3 Establishment of the EASEL regeneration area and the procurement of a development partner**

3.1 In January 2004, the Executive Board received its first report on the proposal for the regeneration of the East and South East of Leeds. The Executive Board gave approval to the commencement of a procurement process to secure a private sector partner and an OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) notice was issued in February 2004.

3.2 EASEL is an ambitious and multi faceted project and this bespoke approach was developed to best utilise the assets held by the Council, capture the expertise of the private sector and develop a vehicle which could maximise the generation of resources for the benefit of the area. The project has been in development since 2004 with the first phase achieving planning permission in 2007. Like all the city's large scale projects each stage was carefully developed and reported to Executive Board for approval. The attached timeline summarises the activities and milestones associated with the project and the procurement of a partner developer.

3.3 The project has been designed in two inter-connected phases. Phase 1 of the project was contracted through a Strategic Development Agreement for the disposal

of 8 sites, which is a conditional transaction with Bellway, the private sector developer chosen by the Council. The agreement for this phase was completed on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Subsequent Phases will be delivered through a Joint Venture between the Council and Bellways.

#### **4 Delivery Mechanism**

- 4.1 The Joint Venture between the Council and Bellway has now been established, its role having been specifically approved by Executive Board April 2007 with further details on decision making approved in November 2008.
- 4.2 In addition to the formal partnership between the Council and Bellway there are a range of other important partners whose contribution is key to the operation and success of the project.
- 4.3 East North East Homes (ENEH) is managing the delivery of the cleared sites for development which to date have consisted of properties which would not meet the Government's Decency standard. ENEH will also be managing some of the new housing stock which is coming into Council ownership in the first phase.
- 4.4 Involvement of partners such as NHS Leeds, the Police, Job Centre Plus and others will be taken forward through the new local structures established by Area Management. These partners have been part of the ongoing support for the EASEL project and their contribution is vital to the achievement of the project objectives.
- 4.5 A regular ward Members briefing session was brought into being and this has been meeting regularly since May 2007 to help develop the detailed work streams.
- 4.6 The overarching governance arrangements for the JVCo was expressly approved by Executive Board in April 2007. It was agreed that the council's representatives on the company would be the Directors of City Development and Environment and Neighbourhoods. It was also agreed that a steering group should be established with Member and independent representatives.
- 4.7 The report to Executive Board in November 2008 set out the detailed decision making arrangements to be used in conjunction with the operation of the JVCo.
- 4.8 Corporate Governance and Audit Committee has examined the governance arrangements for the proposed JVCo. They received reports in November 2007, April 2008 and January 2009.

#### **5 Community Consultation**

- 5.1 Detailed local consultation began at the procurement stage where for the first time representative groups (including the ALMO boards, District Partnership and the St James Partnership) were invited to hear the bidders' ideas and proposals for regeneration. The feedback from these events were used by the bidders to inform their final submission and fed into the evaluation framework.
- 5.2 The main route for community consultation since the beginning of the project has been through the established structures associated with Area Committees including attendance at Neighbourhood Forums as well as the Area Committee meetings themselves in addition to seasonal activity such as the galas.
- 5.3 An EASEL newsletter delivered to every house in the area has been produced at key milestones – the start on site of phase 1 and the signing of the Joint Venture Agreement.
- 5.4 An EASEL page was established on the Council's website containing a range of information about the project and contact details for the regeneration team.

5.5 East North East Homes have taken the lead on the delivery of cleared sites and local communication specifically on the approved demolition programme has been via ENEH.

## **6 Generation of the Area Action Plan**

6.1 Following changes to planning legislation, the Unitary Development Plan for Leeds will be replaced by a Local Development Framework. City Development has been responsible for the development of a number of Area Action Plans (AAP) looking at land availability for housing, greenspace, employment and infrastructure.

6.2 City Development has undertaken a consultation process on the AAP progressing from a series of options to a “Preferred Option”. They are in the process of developing the evidence base for the AAP on cross cutting issues such as retail and transport provision prior to preparing the submission version of the plan.

6.3 Area Action Plans for both EASEL and AVL are being developed simultaneously and issues such as transport are being considered across the two areas.

## **7 Neighbourhood Planning**

7.1 The process through which the broad proposals and areas of potential change identified by the EASEL AAP will be developed in detail is called “Neighbourhood Planning”.

7.2 The process will have two elements, a technical exercise through which site development options and local infrastructure proposals will be developed and a community engagement programme to communicate these options to residents to get their views and provide an opportunity to develop the local plan.

7.3 The technical brief is currently being revised with a view to putting this out to tender. The community engagement brief was developed following the work of a small members working group and the approach agreed at the Ward members briefings.

7.4 The community engagement brief was tendered (for the first two Neighbourhood Plans only) to 3 established community organisations – GIPSIL, Groundwork and Re’new and the tender submitted jointly by Groundwork and Re’new was accepted. Any contract will be subject to the establishment of the Joint Venture and the contract would be issued by Bellways.

7.5 Neighbourhood Planning will commence in Seacroft & Halton Moor. Following the completion of the two plans, all aspects of the process – both technical and community facing will be evaluated.

## **8 Conclusion**

8.1 This report has set out the current position on the main strands of activity to deliver the EASEL project.

### **Background Papers:**

#### Executive Board reports

- 21/01/2004 East and south east Leeds regeneration proposals  
East & South East Leeds Regeneration Area: - Selection Procedure For
- 21/07/2004 Preferred Development Partner  
East & South East Leeds Regeneration Area: Selection Procedure For
- 15/11/2004 Preferred Regeneration Partner Further Report
- 29/06/2005 EASEL Regeneration Area Procurement for Preferred Bidder
- 14/12/2005 EASEL: Outcome of the Exclusive Clarification Period with Bellway  
East and South East Leeds Regeneration Area land assembly issues
- 14/12/2005 associated with the phase one development sites

EASEL: Outcome of the Phase 1 Strategic Development Agreement  
05/07/2006 negotiations with Bellway PLC.  
20/09/2006 EASEL Regeneration Project Update  
09/02/2007 East and South East Leeds Regeneration Area  
East And South East Leeds (Easel) Regeneration Area – Outcome of  
04/04/2007 Additional Negotiation Period  
13/06/2007 EASEL AAP preferred options report  
05/11/2008 EASEL Joint Venture Partnership

## Appendix 2a

EASEL project timeline

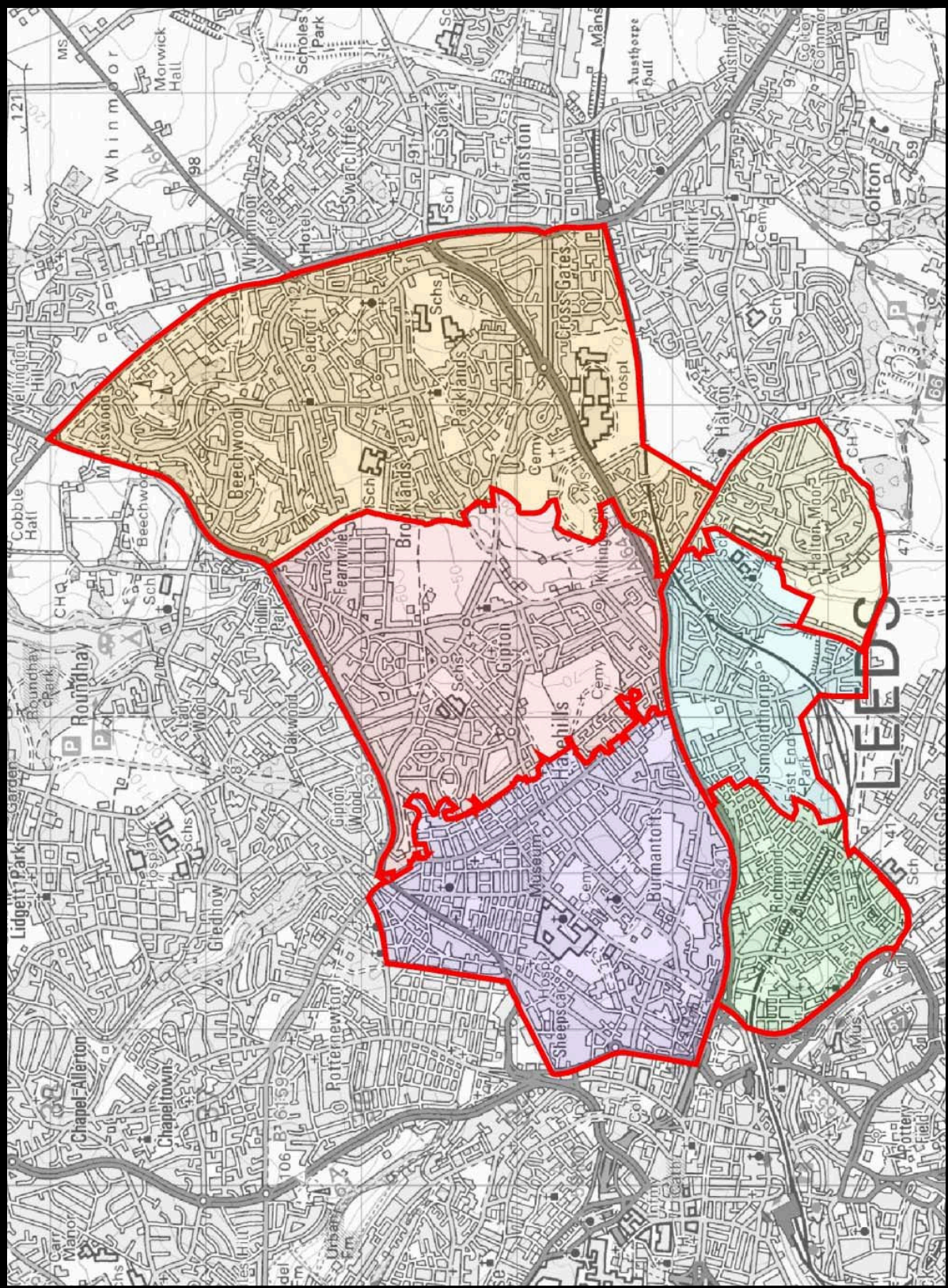
| Date         | Activity  |
|--------------|---|
| January 04   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Board permission given to establish a pathfinder SPV for East Leeds and to commence procurement by placing an OJEU notice (Official Journal of the European Union)</li> <li>• The preparation of a Strategic Vision for the regeneration of East Leeds commenced which included Development Frameworks for Gipton, Harehills, Seacroft and Halton Moor/ East End Park/ Richmond Hill areas of the city.</li> </ul>   |
| March 04     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial stage expressions of interest received (104 enquiries)</li> <li>• A long list of bidders invites outline proposals at stage 1 (list of 10 from &gt;100 expressions of interest)</li> </ul>   |
| May 08       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial outline proposals (8 bids received)</li> </ul>   |
| July 04      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shortlist of development partners is produced (3 bidders interviewed and 2 selected to go through to stage 2)</li> </ul>   |
| November 04  | <p>Executive Board approves :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the process for selecting the preferred regeneration partner (involving Technical, Financial and Commercial, and Legal evaluations)</li> <li>• the establishment of Project Board for moving forward to the contractual phase</li> <li>• the selection of sites as Council assets for investment into phase one of the programme</li> <li>• the 'in principle' use of Compulsory Purchase Orders for the implementation of the programme</li> </ul>  |
| May 05       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations with representative fora and local partnerships take place as part of procurement process</li> </ul>   |
| June 05      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Board update on the outcome of the evaluation process resulted in Bellway being offered a 3 month exclusivity period within which to clarify a number of points from the original bid in order to set out and agree preferred bidder terms (preferred bidder letter).</li> </ul>   |
| December 05  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bellway plc selected as Preferred Bidder and issued with Preferred Bidder Letter</li> <li>• Site assembly continuing and approval to pursue specific CPOs given</li> <li>• Exec Bd approval to negotiate and provisionally agree terms for the disposal of the phase 1 sites</li> </ul>  |
| July 06      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority to issue Initial and Final Demolition Notices given (this is the process which suspends the right to Buy)</li> <li>• Project Board authorised to accept the commercial terms offered by Bellway PLC for the EASEL Phase 1 sites</li> <li>• Negotiations on the Joint Venture arrangements continuing (update on progress provided to Executive Board)</li> </ul>   |
| September 06 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An extension to the Exclusive Negotiation period with Bellway PLC is approved by Executive Board.</li> </ul>   |
| February 07  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headline regeneration programme and required complementary funding agreed in principle by Executive Board.</li> </ul>  |
| April 07     | <p>Executive Board approves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delegation for terms of the disposal of the EASEL phase one sites</li> <li>• appointment of Bellways as the Council's preferred regeneration development partner,</li> <li>• baseline commercial offer from Bellway</li> <li>• that authority be delegated to the EASEL project board to manage the negotiation and agreement of the commercial and legal terms to the benefit of the Council;</li> <li>• that the formal closure of the procurement process for the EASEL regeneration process, as required under regulations, be approved</li> <li>• proposed governance arrangements approved</li> </ul> |









Appendix 2a

| Date        | Activity   |
|-------------|--|
|             |  |
| June 07     | Area Action Plan “Preferred Options” approved.   |
| March 08    | Strategic Development Agreement signed to enable commencement of phase 1 development   |
| November 08 | <p>Executive Board approves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The terms of the Shareholders Agreement for the JVCo and establishment of the company</li> <li>• The first JVCo phase plan of sixteen priority sites (beyond phase 1)</li> <li>• The development by the JVCo of the neighbourhood plans</li> <li>• The business case process for project development to be operated by the JVCo.</li> <li>• Delegation to agree the business plan and budget for the JVCo</li> <li>• the use of entry premium to fund the working capital of the company</li> <li>• the development of an equity loan scheme on the first phase of the EASEL development sites using a commuted sum mechanism.</li> <li>• the nomination of the council’s initial directors to the company (the Directors of City Development and of Environment and Neighbourhoods).</li> </ul> |

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**East and South East Leeds Regeneration Area**

- Gipton** 
- Halton Moor** 
- Harehills** 
- Osmondthorpe** 
- Richmond Hill** 
- Seacroft** 



**LEEDS**  
CITY COUNCIL

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EASEL project timeline

| Date         | Activity  |
|--------------|---|
| January 04   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Board permission given to establish a pathfinder SPV for East Leeds and to commence procurement by placing an OJEU notice (Official Journal of the European Union)</li> <li>The preparation of a Strategic Vision for the regeneration of East Leeds commenced which included Development Frameworks for Gipton, Harehills, Seacroft and Halton Moor/ East End Park/ Richmond Hill areas of the city.</li> </ul>   |
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Originator: A Brogden

Tel: 2474553

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 11 May 2009

Subject: Annual Report 2008/2009

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Electoral Wards Affected: All

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

---

### 1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the draft of the Board's contribution to the Scrutiny Boards' Annual Report.

### 2.0 Introduction

2.1 Members will be aware that the operating protocols for Scrutiny Boards require the publication of an Annual Report to Council. This is the Board's opportunity to contribute to that Annual Report.

### 3.0 Draft Annual Report

3.1 A draft of this Board's proposed submission (appendix 1) will follow and be made available prior to the meeting for the Board's consideration. The draft will include an introduction from the Chair and details of the work undertaken by the Board in this municipal year.

3.2 This year attention will be given to ensuring that each of the Scrutiny Boards submissions follow the same order and layout and whilst the content will not change there may be some changes necessary when the final document is published.

### 4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to approve the Board's contribution to the composite Annual Report.

Background Papers

None

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Originator: A Brogden

Tel: 247 4553

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009

### Subject: Work Programme

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

---

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 A copy of the Board's work programme is attached for members' consideration (appendix 1). As this is the last meeting of the municipal year, the work programme reflects work that has not been possible to complete and therefore will be forwarded into the new municipal year. It also lists those issues identified by Members as areas for Scrutiny but which have not been addressed due to time constraints. Members may wish to refer these matters to the new Board in the next municipal year.

1.2 Also attached is the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 (appendix 2).

## 2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Board is requested to note the current position with regard to the work programme, which will be forwarded to the new Board for the 2009/10 municipal year for consideration

### Background papers

None

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| ITEM                                       | DESCRIPTION   | NOTES  | TYPE OF ITEM |
|--|---|--|--------------|
| <b>Outstanding business at May 2009</b>    |   |  |              |
| <b>EASEL Inquiry</b>                       | To receive evidence in line with sessions 2 and 3 of the Inquiry            | This inquiry is expected to conclude in December 2009. | RP           |
| <b>Inquiry into Older People's Housing</b> | To finalise the report and recommendations arising from the Board's inquiry |  | RP           |

| ITEM  | DESCRIPTION  | NOTES  | TYPE OF ITEM |
|---|--|--|--------------|
| <b>Suggested Areas for Scrutiny Currently Unscheduled</b> |  |  |              |
| <b>Roseville Door Factory</b>                             | To monitor the current position in relation to the Roseville Door Factory                              | This was a referral from the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board in April 2009.   | RFS          |
| <b>Inquiry into Anti-social Behaviour</b>                 |  |  |              |
| <b>Performance of Enforcement</b>                         |  |  |              |
| <b>ALMO inspections</b>                                   | To consider the outcomes of the ALMO inspections   |  |              |
| <b>Future options for Council Housing</b>                 | To monitor developments in relation to future options for Council Housing.                             | This was a referral from the Central and Corporate Functions Scrutiny Board.   | RFS          |
| <b>Progress report on the Golden Triangle Partnership</b> | To receive a progress report on the Golden Triangle Partnership  | This issue had arisen from the earlier Scrutiny Inquiry into Affordable Housing and the Board agreed to continue monitoring progress with the Partnership. | MSR          |
| <b>Progress report in developing 'Housing Solutions'</b>  | To receive an update on progress in developing 'Housing Solutions' and any available performance data. | This had also arisen from the earlier Affordable Housing Scrutiny Inquiry. A recommendation was made for the Board to receive progress reports.            | MSR          |

Key:

CCFA / RFS – Councillor call for action / request for scrutiny

RP – Review of existing policy

DP – Development of new policy

MSR – Monitoring scrutiny recommendations

PM – Performance management

B – Briefings (Including potential areas for scrutiny)

SC – Statutory consultation

CI – Call in

**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL****FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

For the period 1 May 2009 to 31 August 2009

| <b>Key Decisions</b>   | <b>Decision Maker</b>                | <b>Expected Date of Decision</b> | <b>Proposed Consultation</b> | <b>Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker</b>   | <b>Lead Officer</b><br>(To whom representations should be made and email address to send representations to) |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| Contract Award - Gamblethorpe Landfill Gas Engine<br>To grant the award of Interim Gamblethorpe Landfill Gas Engine Contract | Chief Officer Environmental Services | 1/5/09                           | N/A                          | Award of interim supply, installation, operation, maintenance, and removal of landfill gas spark ignition engine and generator. | Chief Officer Environmental Services<br>christophero'brian@leeds.gov.uk                                      |
| Contract Award - Wheeled Refuse Bins<br>To grant the award of a Wheeled Refuse Bins framework contract                       | Chief Officer Environmental Services | 1/5/09                           | n/a                          | Award report for the Supply of Wheeled Refuse Bins Contract   | Chief Officer Environmental Services<br>stephen.holmes@leeds.gov.uk  |

| <b>Key Decisions</b>   | <b>Decision Maker</b>                                      | <b>Expected Date of Decision</b> | <b>Proposed Consultation</b> | <b>Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker</b>                           | <b>Lead Officer</b><br>(To whom representations should be made and email address to send representations to) |
|--|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>Request to enter into a 12 month framework contract with Cascade Homes, Care Solutions and Green Investments (Jump) for the supply and management of temporary accommodation</p> <p>To seek approval to :<br/>Waive CPR 13 High Value Procurements; invoke CPR 31.4 Waiver of Contracts Procedure Rules and to enter into a 12 month framework contract with Cascade Homes, Care Solutions and Green Investments (Jump) for the supply and management of temporary accommodation.</p> | Chief Housing Services Officer                             | 1/5/09                           | n/a                          | Report for Delegated Decision Panel   | Chief Housing Services Officer<br>paul.langford@leeds.gov.uk   |
| <p>2 Branch Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To agree the principle of CPO action</li> <li>• To agree the associated budget allocation</li> </ul>   | Executive Board<br>(Portfolio: Neighbourhoods and Housing) | 13/5/09                          |                              | The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting | Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods<br>michelle.anderson@leeds.gov.uk                                 |

| <b>Key Decisions</b>   | <b>Decision Maker</b>                                      | <b>Expected Date of Decision</b> | <b>Proposed Consultation</b>                               | <b>Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker</b>                           | <b>Lead Officer</b><br>(To whom representations should be made and email address to send representations to) |
|--|--|----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| ALMO annual review 2008-09<br>For information to June Executive Board, not decision.   | Executive Board<br>(Portfolio: Neighbourhoods and Housing) | 17/6/09                          | Previously undertaken                                      | The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting | Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods<br>maureen.boyle@leeds.gov.uk                                     |
| Treatment of kerbside collected food waste<br>Approval of strategy and business case for procurement of food waste processing capacity | Executive Board<br>(Portfolio: Environmental Services)     | 22/7/09                          | Waste Solution Programme Board, Planning, City Development | The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting | Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods<br>andrew.mason@leeds.gov.uk                                      |

## **NOTES**

Key decisions are those executive decisions:

- which result in the authority incurring expenditure or making savings over £250,000 per annum, or
- are likely to have a significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards

### **Executive Board Portfolios**

### **Executive Member**

Central and Corporate

Councillor Richard Brett

Development and Regeneration

Councillor Andrew Carter

Environmental Services

Councillor Steve Smith

Neighbourhoods and Housing

Councillor John Leslie Carter

Leisure

Councillor John Procter

Children's Services

Councillor Stewart Golton

Learning

Councillor Richard Harker

Adult Health and Social Care

Councillor Peter Harrand

Leader of the Labour Group

Councillor Keith Wakefield

Leader of the Morley Borough  
Independent Group

Councillor Robert Finnigan

Advisory Member

Councillor Judith Blake

In cases where Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive Board are not included in the Plan, 5 days notice of the intention to take such decisions will be given by way of the agenda for the Executive Board meeting.