



Housing and Health Committee

Agenda

Part One

Council Chamber - Town Hall

Wednesday, 10 September 2014 at 7.00 pm

Membership (Quorum – 3)

Councillors

Cllrs Carter (Chair), Mrs Davies (Vice-Chair), Baker, Mrs Henwood, Mrs Hones, Mrs Hubbard, Le-Surf, McCheyne, Parker and Tee

Committee Co-ordinator: Claire Hayden (01277 312741)

Additional Information:

Substitutes

The names of substitutes shall be announced at the start of the meeting by the Chair and the substitution shall cease at the end of the meeting.

Substitutes for quasi judicial Committees must be drawn from members who have received training in quasi-judicial decision making. If a casual vacancy occurs on a quasi judicial Committee it will not be filled until the nominated member has been trained.

Rights to attend and speak

Any Member may attend any body to which these Procedure Rules apply.

A Member who is not a member of the committee may speak at the meeting if they have given prior notification by no later than one working day before the meeting to the Chair and advised them of the substance of their proposed contribution.

The member may speak at the Chair's discretion, it being the expectation that a member will be allowed to speak on a ward matter.

Point of Order/Personal explanation/Point of Information

8.3.14 Point of order

A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Chair will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Procedure Rules or the law. The Member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which they consider it has been broken. The ruling of the Chair on the point of order will be final.

8.3.15 Personal explanation

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation must relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate, or outside of the meeting. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

8.3.16 Point of Information or clarification

A point of information or clarification must relate to the matter being debated. If a Member wishes to raise a point of information, he/she must first seek the permission of the Chair. The Member must specify the nature of the information he/she wishes to provide and its importance to the current debate. If the Chair gives his/her permission, the Member will give the additional information succinctly. Points of Information or clarification should be used in exceptional circumstances and should not be used to interrupt other speakers or to make a further speech when he/she has already spoken during the debate. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a point of information or clarification will be final.

Information for Members of the Public

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If you wish to record the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment then please contact the Communications Team before the meeting.

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The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

Access

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Part I

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

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8	Urgent Business An item of business may only be considered where the Chair is of the opinion that, by reason of special circumstances, which shall be specified in the Minutes, the item should be considered as a matter of urgency.		
9	Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public		

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Acting Chief Executive

Town Hall
Brentwood, Essex
02.09.2014



Minutes

Housing and Health Committee 9th July 2014

Membership/Attendance

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| * Cllr Carter (Chair) | Cllr Le-Surf |
| * Cllr Mrs Davies (Vice-Chair) | * Cllr McCheyne |
| * Cllr Baker | * Cllr Parker |
| Cllr Mrs Henwood | Cllr Tee |
| * Cllr Mrs Hones | |
| * Cllr Mrs Hubbard | |

*present

Substitute Present

Cllrs Cloke (for Cllr Mrs Henwood), Kerslake (for Cllr Tee) and Morrissey (for Cllr Le-Surf).

Also present

Cllr Aspinell
Cllr Baker
Cllr Hirst
Cllr Quirk
Cllr Mrs Squirrell

Officers Present

Claire Hayden – Governance and Member Support Officer
David Lawson – Monitoring Officer
Helen Gregory – Acting Head of Housing Services
Keith Carter – Property Manager
Angela Williams - Principal Officer (Housing Needs)
Mark Stanbury - Senior Environmental Health Officer

63. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absences were received from Cllrs Mrs Henwood, Tee and Le-Surf.

64. Minutes of Community Service Committee meeting held on 26.2.2014

The minutes of the Community Service Committee meeting held on 26.2.2014 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

65. Co-option of Tenants Representatives

The report sets out a proposal to co-opt representatives of Tenants Talkback into the Housing and Health Committee for housing related items, in accordance with the Council constitution and with the previously approved Tenants Participation Compact.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to agree:-

- 2.1 Tenants' Talkback be invited to send two representatives to each meeting of the Housing and Health Committee where housing items are to be discussed.
- 2.2 The representative of Tenant's Talkback be co-opted onto the committee for the duration of the consideration of these items, and have the right to speak, but not vote.
- 2.3 The Acting Head of Housing Service be requested to arrange appropriate training of the representatives.

66. Food Safety and Health & Safety Enforcement Service

Members are asked to approve the Food Safety and Health & Safety Service Plan for 2014/2015. These Service Plans identify how the service intends carrying out the proactive and reactive elements of inspections and investigations to ensure the continuing safety of both business employees and the public. It also enclosed measures taken to aid businesses in compliance such as the provision of training and the food hygiene rating scheme.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendation as set out in the report.

Following a full decision, Cllr Morrissey made an amendment to the recommendation.

- 2.2 *That the Authority writes to Government formally expressing its concerns over the reduction of Local Authorities on lower risk commercial properties.*

The amendment was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:

- 2.1 That the Food Safety and Health & Safety Enforcement Service Plans for 2014/2015 be approved by Members.
- 2.2 That the Authority writes to Government formally expressing its concerns over the reduction of Local Authorities on lower risk commercial properties.

67. Performance Information

The report provides Members with proposals to improve performance and seeks comment on additional repairs indicators to be reported.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendation as set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.

68. Presentation by Brentwood Community Print

Members were asked to receive the presentation by Brentwood Community Print. A Community Interest Company with the recovering mental health patients assisting them in building their confidence and skills for returning them to the workplace and full time employment.

Members thanked Mrs Clarke for attending and commended Brentwood Community Print on the work they do within the Borough.

69. Repairs and Maintenance Contracts – Service Improvement & Progress

Members were asked to agree the service improvement and performance management measures set out in the report.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendation as set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.

70. Implementation of new Allocation Policy – Progress Report

The report summaries the current position of the implementation of the Council's Allocation Policy which will be effective from 7th July 2014.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendation as set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:

- 2.1 To receive the report and verbal update on the progress with Allocation Policy implementation.

71. Essex Landlord Accreditation Scheme (ELAS)

The report summaries the Essex Landlords Accreditation Scheme (ELAS) is anew scheme set up by Essex Local Authorities to promote and encourage landlords of privately rented homes to manage their properties to a high standard.

The scheme will operated by Bluewatch (part of the Fire Service) as an impartial organisations; to provide landlords with advice and confidence to discuss housing related issues regarding their properties and tenants. Bluewatch will work closely with all Local Authorities in the scheme, helping to set and achieve the best possible level of management.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendations as set out in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED**.

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the Contents of the briefing report; and agree in principle (subject to Brentwood Legal Team reviewing the ELAS Contract and consultation with residents) to joining the Essex Landlords Accreditation Scheme.
- 2.2 The Chair and/or Vice Chair to accept an invitation to attend the ELAS Launch event on the 25 September 2014 at Kelvedon Park, Essex.

(Cllrs Cloke and Mrs Hones declared a pecuniary interest under the Councils Code of Conduct by virtue being landlords to property within the Borough. Cllrs Cloke and Mrs Hones both left the Chamber and did not participate in discussion or vote).

10 September 2014

Housing & Health Committee

Performance Report

Report of: *Helen Gregory, Head of Housing Services*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Committee receives regular updates on performance. Four key performance indicators were presented to Housing and Health Committee on 9 July 2014.
- 1.2 This report provides early feedback from the workshop sessions held with Managers and frontline staff to improve performance of KPI's; and the first results from the new repairs KPI's.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 For Members to note the contents of the report.

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 There are currently four key performance indicators used to measure the performance of the Housing team. These are:
 - Average re let times
 - % rent collection
 - % rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the authority's rent roll
 - Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- 3.2 The table below displays performance at the 26 August 2014 (mid point Quarter 2)

Key Performance Indicator	Quarterly Target	Q1	Q2 up to 26 August 2014	Comment
Average re let times for LA Housing	23 days	32.67 days	33.5 days	Below Target
% rent Collection (annual target)	99.70%	98.42%	98.47%	Below target
% rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the rent roll	1.95%	1.63%	1.56%	Achieving target
No. of households living in temporary accommodation	29	45	53	Below target

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 KPI Average re-let times – Three KPI improvement workshops have now been completed with Managers and front-line staff. During the workshops staff have conducted a process mapping exercise to ‘map’ the journey of re-letting a property from start to finish. This process has enabled staff to gain a greater understanding of the process; identification of duplications, blockages, pressures and responsibility gaps have been highlighted.

4.2 Throughout this process the importance of prioritising the re-letting of void properties to staff has been reinforced ; the quicker the void property is turned around and ready to let, the quicker a new home is provided to a resident in need and, importantly, income loss is minimised to the Council.

4.3 The following improvements have been identified so far;

- Improve communication – between Lettings/Repairs and Estates teams.
- Re- introduction of weekly voids meeting.
- Installation of voids board in the office.
- Prioritisation of hard to let properties to minimise void loss.
- Ensure viewings are conducted the same week as property becoming void.
- Advise the Contractor of target time for the property to be let to ensure works are progressed on time.
- Train an additional Officer in the Choice Based Letting IT system Locator.
- Work towards developing a performance culture.

4.4 The improvements identified so far, are simple; the basics need to be right; responsibility, communication, prioritisation, teamwork and effective/regular monitoring from Managers.

- 4.5 It should be noted that the performance target agreed is the House Mark top quartile target. The housing team wanted to maintain this ambitious target to aim to be one of the best performers nationally.
- 4.6 KPI % rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the rent roll - A workshop session is planned for September 2014. This KPI is currently achieving top quartile performance; but the Estate Management team is keen to aspire to best practice and is planning to review the rent arrears policies and procedures at the end of the year.
- 4.7 KPI % rent collection – A workshop session is planned for September 2014. This KPI is currently not achieving target. The work that is being undertaken with improving the average re-let time with voids will impact favorably on this KPI by maximising income on the number of properties let.
- 4.8 KPI Number of households living in temporary accommodation- The first of several planned workshops have began with the Homeless Prevention team. The number of households living in temporary accommodation has increased for Q2 to 53; which is an increase up from 45 in Q1.
- 4.9 The immediate priority for the Homeless Prevention team is to prioritise a large backlog of homeless cases waiting to be assessed in accordance with Part VII of the Housing Act 1996; the Homelessness Act 2002 . The backlog of cases is causing a blockage in temporary accommodation.
- 4.10 We expect that the new allocations policy of allowing tenants one month to bid, for suitable available properties living in temporary will generate turnaround/vacancies in temporary accommodation.
- 4.11 Early findings from the KPI workshop have hi-lighted the following:
- Lack of alternative housing options other than Council temporary accommodation i.e. lack of private sector housing.
 - Lack of defined roles/responsibilities within generic Officer roles to process cases.
 - Lack of performance data giving reasons for Homeless applications to help direct the future service provision.
- 4.12 The team will continue to work through the findings to find solutions and new methods of working and report progress to the next committee.
- 4.13 As part of the governments ‘Gold Standard challenge’ we have been invited by Uttlesford Council to conduct a peer review in the autumn; The challenge is a local authority, sector led peer review scheme designed to help local authorities deliver more efficient and cost effective homelessness prevention services.

- 4.14 The challenge follows a 10 step continuous improvement approach that starts with a pledge for local authorities aspiring to 'strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services' and culminates in an application for the Gold Standard Challenge. Although this is not a compulsory requirement, it will provide an opportunity to learn and share best practice with another Local Authority. A future report will be provided to Housing Committee.
- 4.15 As agreed at 9 July 2014 Committee, we have incorporated three additional headline KPI's to help us monitor the new repairs contract.
- 4.16 Please see table below:

New KPI Measures	Quarterly Target	Q2 (July to 26 August 2014)	
Customer Satisfaction - measured by resident responses to phone surveys	95%	Wates	95.39 %
		Oakray	97.06%
Delivery of Urgent Repairs to target – date raised V contractor completion date	99%	Wates	88.05%
		Oakray	86.81%
Appointments kept	100%	Wates	88.61%
		Oakray	97.86%

- 4.17 The initial performance data although not validated yet; demonstrates high levels of Customer Satisfaction levels in meeting the target of 95%. However the target delivering urgent repairs within target of 99% is not being met by either Contractor. A contract meeting is being held on 2 September 2014 with Wates; performance monitoring will be discussed including the number of missed appointments. A verbal update will be provided at Committee.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To inform members of the key performance levels within Housing.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Regular feedback on Performance information is provided at Residents talkback meetings and will also be reported in the Annual Report

7. Reference to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 Improving service delivery will meet the Council's commitment to service improvements and will also enhance the efficiency of the service. Increasing the number of headline PIs regularly published and analysed will improve the openness of governance.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive

Tel & Email: 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 Improvements in each of these headline performance measures will have financial benefits by increasing rental income through rent collection and reducing the period when homes are empty. Fewer households in temporary accommodation will also reduce the cost of this service.

9.0 Legal Implications

Name & Title: Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

- 9.1 None.

10. Background Papers

None

11. Appendices to this report

None

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10 September 2014

Housing & Health Committee

Major Works Programme 2014/15

Report of: *Helen Gregory, Head of Housing Services*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council undertakes major works each year to ensure its homes are in good condition. This report sets out the proposed works for 2014/15.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 For Members to note the major works programme for 2014/15 as set out below in Section 4.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council undertakes major works each year to maintain its stock to a good condition. These works are a combination of planned refurbishments as part of the ongoing decent homes programmes, inevitable component replacements such as gas boilers, electrical wiring and specific schemes to upgrade the fabric of the homes.
- 3.2 The major works are usually funded from the capital programme and the programme is designed to fully utilise the annual allocation while remaining within the budget allocation.
- 3.3 Resident Consultation – As specified below, the works are a mix of improvements to individual homes and upgrades for selected blocks. The contractors are required to specifically liaise with individual residents regarding specifications and agree appointment times for the works. Residents will usually receive at least one month's notice of the works commencing. A resident meeting will be arranged for each scheme where communal works are required.
- 3.4 Leaseholder consultation will take place to meet statutory requirements. Where Wates, Oakray or Precision are undertaking the works, leaseholders will not have the opportunity to nominate a contractor as the

works will form part of the main maintenance contract where the relevant Notices were served as part of the headline contract procurement. Leaseholders will receive notification of the costs in line with statutory requirements. Where works are being separately tendered, the full consultation process will be undertaken with the relevant leaseholders in accordance with Section 20 of the Landlord & Tenant Act (as amended).

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 The schemes in this year's programme are as follows:

4.2 Sheltered Schemes Office adaptations £116,000

We have adapted office accommodation and the manager's flat at both The Gables and St Georges to make better use of the facilities. These works commenced in 2013/14 and were completed earlier this year.

4.3 Decent Homes Upgrades £1,000,000

We survey 20% of our stock every year and carry out works where necessary to upgrade kitchens, bathrooms, and front and rear doors, to maintain homes at the decent standard. A list of streets in this year's programme is attached as Appendix 2. The Priority 1 roads in Blackmore and Doddinghurst will be undertaken in Q3 2014 and Priority 2 roads in Ingatestone and Mountnessing will benefit from works in Q4. The works will be undertaken to homes to expend the budget. It is currently anticipated that works to 75% of the homes will be delivered within the current budget allocation. Any homes not completed this year will be first priority for 2015/16.

4.4 Rewires £350,000

Oakray is undertaking tests of systems for the communal areas as part of the legislative requirement to test communal systems every five years. It is also anticipated that Oakray will commence testing of individual domestic systems in the latter part of the year. The allocation will enable the rewires required identified during testing and during void reinstatement to be undertaken.

4.5 New Boilers £500,000

This allocation is based on historic information on boiler replacement requirements. We do not have a planned programme for replacement but respond to replace systems as they fail. The allocation should enable 150 systems to be replaced.

4.6 Disabled Adaptations £210,000

The allocation will provide wet rooms, stair lifts and similar major adaptations for 30 residents and minor upgrades for a further 50 homes.

- 4.7 Hawthorn Avenue Balconies £400,000
- Nine occupied blocks have balconies providing access to the rear gardens. These balconies are exhibiting serious structural defects. Initially, defective brickwork is being removed and temporarily replaced with scaffolding poles to ensure residents can still access gardens. Tenders are about to be sought. Three balconies will have new metal panels installed in the current financial year. The total cost this year is estimated at £150,000. The remaining six will have the works undertaken in 2015/16 at an estimated cost of £250,000.
- 4.8 Tower House & Courage Court Structural Repairs £30,000
- Both blocks require repairs to brickwork and lintels. Tenders have been received and works should start in November following leaseholder consultation.
- 4.9 Dounsell Court Window Replacement £75,000
- The windows at Dounsell Court are at the end of their life and need to be replaced.
- 4.10 Drake House Water Penetration £20,000
- The upper storeys of the block have suffered from water penetration. Silicon sealant has been injected and drainage systems replaced. Works have been completed.
- 4.11 St George's Court £65,000
- As a result of the adaptations at 4.2 above, accommodation is now available to be converted into additional homes. The scheme is being developed and works are likely to commence in Q4. There will be some commitment carried forward into 2014/15.
- 4.12 Juniper Court Lift £80,000
- The lift at Juniper Court is at the end of its life and needs replacement.
- 4.13 Canterbury Court CCTV £15,000
- The CCTV system at Canterbury Court is in need of upgrading.
- 4.14 Masefield Court CCTV £22,000
- The CCTV system at Masefield Court is in need of upgrading.
- 4.15 Drake House CCTV £12,000

The CCTV system at Drake House is in need of upgrading.

- 4.16 Tollesbury Court & Tendering Court Communal Floor £30,000

The tiled floor surfaces in the entrance areas of both blocks are in need of replacement as tiles are cracking, presenting a trip and slip hazard. The new surface will be an easy clean non slip floor treatment.

- 4.17 Snakes Hill Sewage Treatment Plant £100,000

The treatment plant is struggling to maintain a consistent cleansing performance. The Environment Agency is regularly checking the performance. The replacement of the plant is the solution. A replacement plant has been designed and tenders will be sought later this year.

- 4.18 Water Tanks £50,000

Envirocheck has already identified eight tanks needing replacement. Oakray are undertaking further water quality testing of communal tanks. This will identify any further tanks in need of replacement.

- 4.19 Environmental Works £75,000

Residents are invited to identify schemes to improve the environment around communal blocks. Several schemes have been identified to improve parking arrangements by rationalising bin storage. These are being reviewed and the most beneficial schemes will be progressed.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

The report sets out the programme for the year to inform members of the schemes and the individual and collective funding.

6. Consultation

Most schemes will be delivered using Wates, Oakray and Precision using the rates obtained during the recent procurement process. Separate tenders have been sought for items 4.2, 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9 and will be sought for 4.10 and 4.16 and possibly 4,18 depending on the scheme content. Consultation proposals are set out in 3.3 and 3.4 above.

7. Reference to Corporate Plan

The works within the capital allocation will ensure that the Council's housing stock is maintained in a good condition and resident's receive quality of home/service.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Director of Strategy and Corporate Services.

Tel & Email 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

8.1 The capital allocation for 2013/14 was underspent and £850,000 has been carried forward to be added to the 2014/15 allocation of £2.75m. The total funding available this year is £3.6m.

8.2 The schemes listed above (4.1 to 4.19) have anticipated expenditure of £2.86m this financial year and a further commitment of £290,000 next year, to give a total commitment of £3.15m across the two years. This currently leaves £740,000 (£3.6m - £2.86m) unallocated from the total capital allocation for 2014/15. This funding is being held to potentially supplement the funding for building new homes.

9 Legal Implications

Name & Title: Chris Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services

Tel & Email 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

None

10. Background Papers

None

11. Appendices to this report

1 – Capital Programme 2014/15

2 – Planned Maintenance 2014/15 Street List

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014 /15

APPENDIX 1

Scheme	Total Estimated Cost (£)	Estimated Cost 14/15 (£000)	Estimated Cost Carried forward 13/14 (£000)	Total Estimated Cost (£000)
Sheltered scheme adaptations St Georges & The Gables	116,000	116		116
Decent Homes -upgrades	1,000,000	1000		1000
Rewires	350,000	350		350
New Boilers	500,000	500		500
Disabled Adaptations	210,000	210		210
Hawthorn Balconies	400,000	150	250	400
Tower / Courage	30,000	28	2	30
Drake House water pen	20,000	20		20
St George's - two new flats	65,000	45	20	65
Dounsell Court Window Renewal	75,000	60	15	75
Juniper Lift	80,000	80		80
Canterbury CCTV	15,000	15		15
Masefield CCTV	22,000	22		22
Drake CCTV	12,000	12		12
Tollesbury / Tendering floor	30,000	30		30
Sewage Treatment Plants	100,000	97	3	100
Replacement Water Tanks	50,000	50		50
Environmental Works	75,000	75		75
Total	3,150,000	2,860	290	3,150

PLANNED MAINTENANCE 2014 15 - STREET LIST

Priority 1

BLACKMORE / DODDINGHURST

ALL SAINTS CLOSE
BILLERICAY ROAD
BLACMORE ROAD B/MORE MEAD
BROAD MEADOW
BYRD MEAD
CADOGAN
CHURCH ROAD CHURCH LANE
CHURCH RD KNAVES STOCK HEATH
FOX HATCH
HEARNSHAW
HENRYS TERRACE
JERICHO PLACE
PARK LANE BRENTWOOD ROAD
PETRE CLOSE
PREISTFEILDS
ST LAWRENCE GDNS GREEN LANE
SNAKES HILL
SOAMES MEAD
SPRING POND MEADOW
STOCKS LANE K/HATCH
WYATTS GREEN

Priority 2

INGATESTONE / MOUNTNESSING

BURNTHOUSE
LANE
CHERRY TREES
INGATESTONE
CHURCH CRESCENT/CLOSE
CHURCH ROAD
COURT VEIW
DISNEY CLOSE
EXLEY CLOSE
FREYERNING
LANE
HEYBRIDGE
ROAD
HOPE CLOSE
INGLETON HOUSE
MELLOR CLOSE
MOUNTNEY
CLOSE
ONGAR ROAD
PEMBERTON
AVENUE
STEEN CLOSE
STOCK LANE
STOCK LANE INGATESTONE
THE MEADS, MEADS CLOSE
TRIMBLE CLOSE
WADHAM CLOSE

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10 September 2014

Housing & Health Committee

Introduction to Affordable Housing Strategy

Report of: *Helen Gregory, Head of Housing Services*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council is proposing to commence building new homes. In response to this, it requires the development of an Affordable Housing Strategy to give vision and provide direction to enable affordable housing development to be focused and to maximise the impact of Council resources. The Council will need to consider a range of issues to structure and plan its future affordable housing development priorities.
- 1.2 This report is an introduction to identify areas for consideration and where supporting strategies and polices will be needed to guide the development process. This will ensure that Brentwood can both create and deliver affordable housing development opportunities to meet market demand and housing need.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 **That the Committee authorises the formulation of an Affordable Housing Strategy and supporting documentation as set out in 3.2 & 3.3 below**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council wants to improve the supply of affordable housing in the Borough and wishes to build new units to contribute to this supply. At present the first affordable housing development proposals are for Hallsford Bridge and several potential garage sites (included later on agenda).

- 3.2 To consider these sites further, a feasibility study will need to be completed which will include tenure type, size and mix, It is proposed that an Affordable Housing Strategy and supporting documentation is developed to establish a framework to guide future affordable housing development proposals for Brentwood.
- 3.2 The Affordable Housing Strategy will set out the guidelines for future new building and regeneration initiatives. It will identify:
- Type of homes to be built (through Affordable Housing Needs Assessment and Accommodation Standards)
 - Location of homes to be built - priority areas of the borough
 - Policy on mix of homes - social rent, shared ownership, sub market rent
 - Ownership and management - when the Council will own and manage and when the Council will develop in partnership
 - Regeneration Proposals - areas the Council is considering to upgrade
 - Financial funding options/requirements, appetite for borrowing and risk (see 4.10 to 4.11 below)
- 3.3. The Strategy needs to be supported by:
- Affordable Housing Needs Assessment
 - Asset Management Appraisal – identifying Council sites with development potential
 - Financial Plan/Model to facilitate development - that identifies what the Council can afford year on year and how this may be supplemented
 - Options Appraisal Model - to set out assumed costs, to model the financial impact of choices and to assess the risk of each affordable housing development
 - Procurement Strategy - how consultants, partners, developers/ constructors will be selected
 - Affordable Housing Programme of proposed new build/regeneration initiatives
 - Affordable Housing Specification/Accommodation standards - space, facilities, external areas
- 3.4 Imminent corporate planning decisions affecting the content of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Local Development Plan (LDP) will impact on future social housing development as these documents will provide the overall planning framework and numbers of homes to be built.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 It is suggested that a workshop be held in September with key Members and lead officers; facilitated by an independent housing consultants, Campbell Tickell, to explore, discuss and agree how the strategy should be shaped to address the points in 3.2. There will be key questions for Members to consider that will influence the strategy and with whom the Council may wish to work to achieve its goals.
- 4.2 It is assumed that the Council will be using its HRA sites to provide new homes rather than to primarily generate income
- 4.3 It is likely that a mixed tenure approach would include affordable, Immediate rent and shared ownership. Currently the Housing Department does not manage either of these tenure types. However the Department does have the capacity to manage this type of service in-house or it may wish to work in partnership with a Registered Provider to manage these tenures. Where we are developing in partnership, we will need to consider do we wish to retain the ownership of the asset and seek a management partner or do we wish to transfer the asset; and use the income to promote further general needs affordable housing.
- 4.4 There are other company/governance structures that are used in the social housing sector, such as standalone housing company or joint venture arrangements, to enable the housing provider to limit the right to buy options; secure additional financial resources and/or to deliver specific regeneration solutions. The opportunities and limitations of these will need to be considered when deciding a vehicle to support the Council's goals.
- 4.5 This agenda includes proposals to develop garage sites. The development of these sites will enable debate using these specific examples to explore the impact of different choices.
- 4.6 Officers will identify sites to be considered within the initial Affordable Housing Programme and will refer the initial selections to the November committee for approval..
- 4.7 The development of Affordable Housing Strategy, supporting documentation and the physical schemes will be influenced by both staffing and financial resources.
- 4.8 Staffing - The Affordable Housing Strategy and the supporting documents identified in 3.3; will be prepared over the next 3 to 6 months. This will enable a full 3 to 5 year Strategy and Financial Plan to be in place for the 2015/16 financial year.
- 4.9 Officers will present a further report to the November Committee to identify the resource implications of initiating and sustaining an affordable housing programme. This will be influenced by the discussions at the Member/Officer workshop. In the interim, officers will progress the garage

site schemes and identify other potential opportunities for consideration within the Strategy.

4.9 Finance – The development of new homes needs to be financed. The delivery and range of the Affordable Housing programme will be partly determined by the financial resources that the Council is prepared to invest. The level of investment will be influenced by income and the appetite and capacity to borrow.

4.10 Currently the Council has

a) Council Dwelling Investment Fund of £500,000 set aside from HRA reserves

b) Recycled Capital Grant Fund (income from RTB sales). This currently stands at £1.2m. The Council can use this as a 30% contribution to any new provision. We need to use £466,000 by March 2016 or it will be reclaimed by the HCA. Of this £50,000 must be used by September 2015. We need a scheme(s) valued at £1.56m to be able to spend this recycled grant. This will require £1.1m to be funded by the Council, probably using the Investment Fund above to partly bridge the gap.

4.11 There are two principal sources of funding to meet any shortfall.

a) Borrowing – The Council may have the capacity to borrow to fund the gap. The Council's capacity and willingness to borrow needs to be assessed.

b) Sale of assets – The Council may wish to use part of its HRA land asset to fund the gap. We could sell a whole site or sell/lease part of the completed development.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

The Committee is asked to approve the development of Affordable Housing Strategy to underpin future affordable housing development in Brentwood.

6. Consultation

6.1 We will need to use consultants and contractors or other Registered Providers to assist with the delivery of the schemes. Members may also wish to have external advice on aspects of the strategy and affordable housing options. In the short term we can use other social housing provider frameworks. Brentwood is a member of the South East Consortia which has appropriate consultancy and contractor frameworks. We can undertake a mini tender among the framework contractors as a quick way to maintain probity and to obtain a competitive price from an established framework.

- 6.2 While Brentwood is unique and has its own character, most of the questions we face to develop affordable housing have been experienced by peer social housing providers. Officers will consult with colleagues in neighbouring authorities and other providers who display best practice to identify opportunities for members to share experiences to assist with the evolution of Brentwood's Affordable Housing Strategy.
- 6.3 Brentwood may wish to enter into partnerships with other providers to share experiences and the costs and risks of development.
- 6.4 There are currently three phases to the Affordable Housing Strategy.
- i) Garage sites - The first schemes on the garage sites will be progressed and a report will be submitted to the November Committee to seek approval to a specific option(s). Other site opportunities will also be assessed and brought to members as necessary.
 - ii) Affordable Housing Strategy - Officers will arrange a workshop(s) for Key Members/officers to facilitate discussion of the issues that have been raised above. Progress and headline proposals will be reported to the November Committee for consideration and approval.
 - iii) Supporting policies and processes.- Officers will review the items identified in 3.3 to develop these in support of the Strategy. Progress will be reported to the next committee and specific reports presented for approval where decisions are needed.
- 6.5 Alternative Management/Ownership Options - There are options for the ownership of housing assets (see 4.4 above) which should be explored to identify how these can contribute to the Council's strategic goals. These will be included in future proposals to enable members to consider the benefits and implications.

7. Reference to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 Developing new homes aligns with the Council's plan to provide quality affordable housing to meet housing need.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Director of Strategy and Corporate Services.

Tel & Email 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 The next steps will be to establish the financial capacity of the HRA to support future affordable housing development and to ensure the full utilisation of recycled grant.

- 8.2 There will also need to be clear identification of the implications of any interaction between the General Fund and the HRA where a scheme may involve the movement of assets between them.

9 Legal Implications

Name & Title: Chris Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services

Tel & Email 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

The need to consider the legal and governance issues of all relevant options, including the ability of the Council to retain ownership should the Council desire this, has been recognised at 4.3 and 4.4.

10. Background Papers

None

11. Appendices to this report

None

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Telephone: 01277 312540
E mail: helen.gregory@brentwood.gov.uk

10th September 2014

Housing & Health Committee

Hallsford Bridge

Report of: *John Parling, Strategic Asset Manager*

Wards Affected: *Tipps Cross*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the 17 July 2014 Asset & Enterprise Committee it was resolved “ That in principle the land should be transferred at an appropriate value and by a compliant mechanism to the Housing Revenue Account and to request that an appraisal be prepared and submitted to the next Housing and Health Committee to enable that Committee to make an in principle assessment as to whether affordable housing can be provided”
- 1.2 An architect has been engaged to determine the possible form of development and two potential schemes have been prepared (Appendix A & B)
- 1.3 Further investigations are required into the viability of the development and also the planning issues before a recommendation to the Committee can be concluded.
- 1.4 A further report will be presented to the next Committee which includes more accurate costings, further developed scheme designs, options on tenure and also procurement and potential development partners options

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 **That the investigations into the possible development of the site for residential use are progressed and that a report is presented to the next Housing & Health Committee on 5 November 2014 with recommendations.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The subject land is of 1.11 acres, rectangular in shape and situated at the northern boundary of the borough adjacent to the Ongar Road (not A128) and the Hallsford Bridge Industrial Estate, in close proximity to the Springfields PNEU School.
- 3.2 The site had originally accommodated 8 semi detached residential properties known as Edwards Terrace, now demolished.
- 3.3 Site investigations have revealed the part of the site as formed of made ground at varying depths and there is evidence of Japanese Knotweed.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The Council's selling agents had advised the Council that offers in the region of £450,000 should be expected for employment use. The granting of planning permission for residential use would generate uplift in the value from an employment use. The level of uplift is unknown at the present time.
- 4.2 Members will be aware that affordable housing is supported by the Parish Council and also the Ward members.
- 4.3 A summary of the Retained 'Right to Buy' Receipts for 2013/14 was included in the Capital Programme 2014/15 – 2016/17 report to the 5th March Ordinary Council giving a total value of £1,475,680 of which £235,000 was required to be spent by 30th June 2016

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 There is a need for additional affordable housing in the Brentwood area, and this site which was previously used for housing may be a suitable site for such a need.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The site is allocated as Employment General (E1) in the existing development plan. Brentwood Replacement Local Plan (2005). This reflects changes that have occurred in the 35 years since residential properties were demolished. A planning application for residential use would be contrary to adopted Local Plan Policy. The site is also proposed to be allocated for employment uses in the emerging Local Development Plan (Local Plan 2015 – 2030 Preferred Options for Consultation, July

2013). This is to contribute to the employment need over the 15 year Plan period, which is prioritised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) alongside the requirements to meet housing needs.

- 6.2 Discussions will have to undertaken with Planning to determine whether there are grounds for the site to be reallocated for housing use rather than employment.
- 6.3 The Stondon Massey Parish Council have commented on the fact that the site had contained 6 Council houses and questioned the need for more industry instead of affordable housing. In addition thy shared their concerns that if additional industry was to be provided on the site there would be the inevitable increase in heavy goods traffic through the village.
- 6.4 In addition a Ward member has also indicated that that it would be preferable for “a residential development to replace the affordable houses that were demolished on the site.

7. References to Corporate Plan

The key criteria for the disposal of the freehold to the site are linked directly to the Corporate Plan 2013-16, specifically:

- a) A Prosperous Borough.
- b) Set planning policy that supports discerning economic growth and sustainable development.
- c) Promote a mixed economic base across the Borough, maximizing opportunities in the town centers for retail and a balanced night-time economy.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive.

Tel & Email 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 It was originally anticipated that this asset would generate a capital receipt in the region of £450,000 and this is the value which has been assumed in the financing of the Capital Programme. Any amount received below this value may impact on the Council’s ability to fund its Capital Programme without the need to borrow.
- 8.2 The purchase by the Housing Revenue Account will however, enable retained ‘Right to Buy’ receipts to be expended within their 3 year time frame.

9. Legal Implications

Name & Title: Chris Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services

Tel & Email 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

None

10. Other Implications

(where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

10.1 A habitat survey has not raised any significant issues enabling the intrusive Geo-Environmental ground investigation to proceed. Apart from the made ground and Japanese Knotweed being present the investigations have not identified any other issues.

11. Background Papers (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

- a. 15 July 2014 – Asset & Enterprise Committee
- b. 27 September 2012 – Assets, Infrastructure and Localism Panel
- c. 5th March 2014 Ordinary Council
- d. Development Brief, Hallsford Bridge Industrial Estate

12. Appendices to this report

- Appendix A - Option 1 – Mixed Development
- Appendix B - Option 2 – Apartment Development

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Appendix A

**TRAEER
CLARK**

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client
Brentwood Borough Council

project
**Hallsford Bridge Industrial Estate, Stondon Road
Ongar, Essex, CM5 9RB**

job no.
1359 : 202

drawn
ADS

date
Aug 2014

scale
1:500@A4

rev.
*

Revisions

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Ground Floor Plan

Scale 1:500

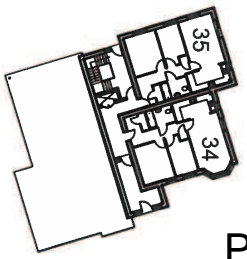
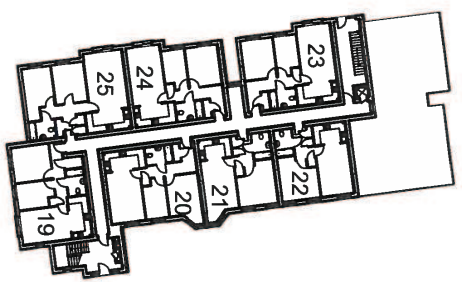
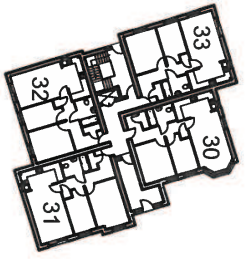
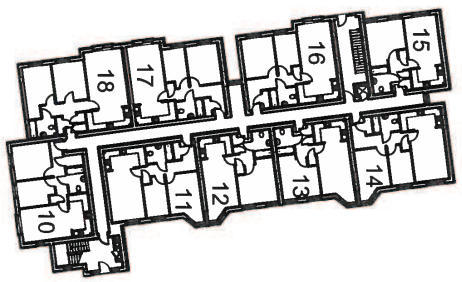
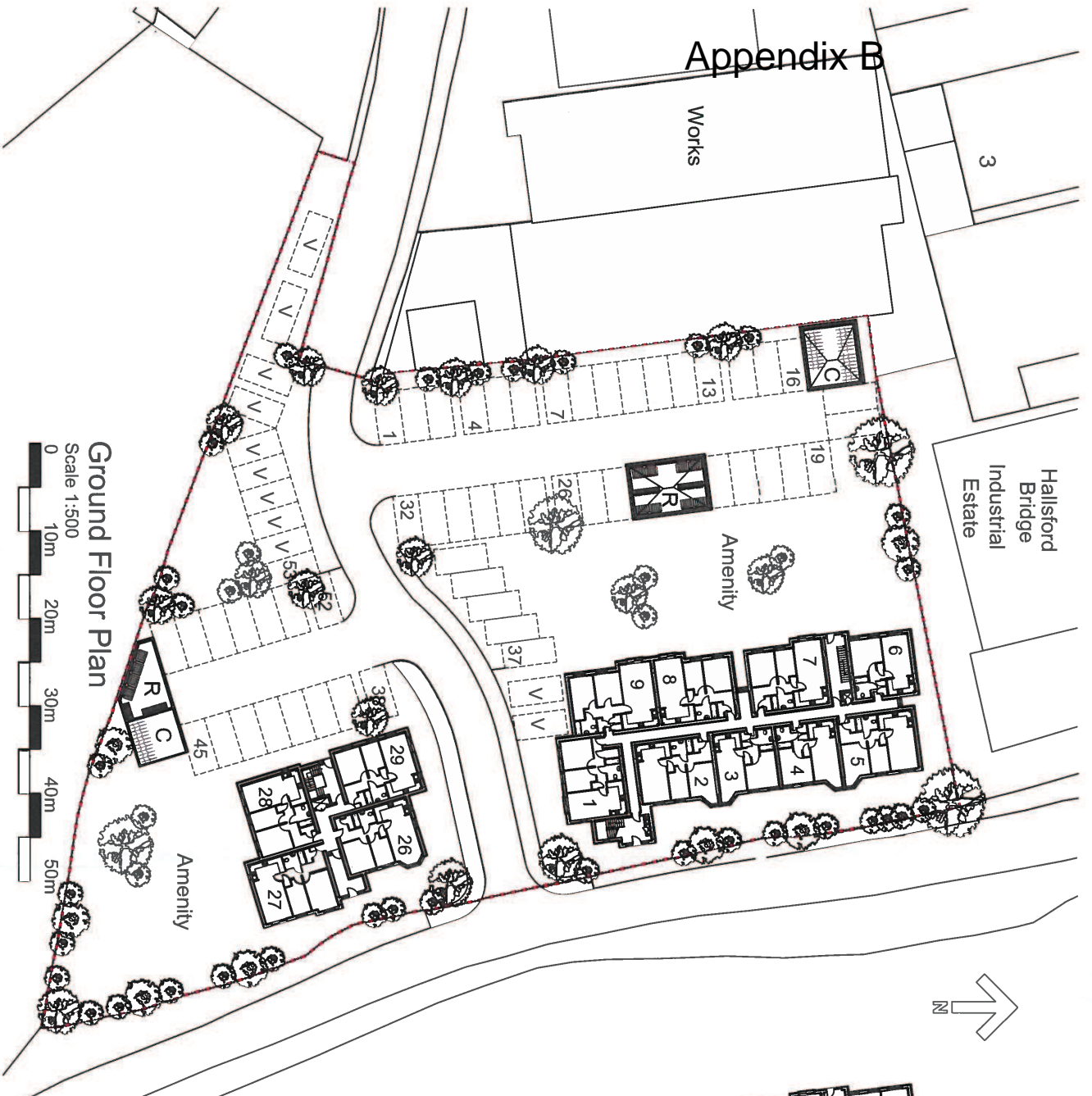


First Floor Plan



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Appendix B



First Floor Plan

Second Floor Plan

Revisions	

client
Brentwood Borough Council
 project
Hallsford Bridge Industrial Estate, Stondon Road
Ongar, Essex, CM5 9RB

title
Feasibility Study - Flats
 scale
 1:500@A4
 date
 Aug 2014
 drawn
 ADS

job no.
1359 : 201
 rev.
 *

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10 September 2014

Housing & Health Committee

Garage Site Redevelopment

Report of: *Helen Gregory, Head of Housing Services*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council owns a range of garage sites around the Borough where some of the garages are not in use due to low demand. As garage sites are under Council ownership they present a potential opportunity for redevelopment, in full or part, for new housing.
- 1.2 Officers will review the usage of sites and identify sites with an immediate development potential. An Architect will be engaged to assess the potential of three or four sites to determine the possible form of development. These will be presented to the November Committee for consideration.
- 1.3 The Committee is requested to agree to further work being undertaken to develop the feasibility and further explore the size and tenure options for the three or four sites.

2. Recommendation(s)

That approval is given to

- a) **undertake feasibility assessments for affordable housing development on garage and car park sites**
- b) **incur fees up to £30,000 funded from this year's HRA capital budget to support (a) above**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council wishes to improve the supply of affordable housing in the Borough and to build new homes to contribute to this supply. The Council has over 1200 garages and over 20% are vacant. This is partly due to lack of demand but also where garages are in poor condition and require significant investment to reinstate them. The investment significantly exceeds the medium term income. Several underused garage sites have been identified as options for potential development.
- 3.2 The current occupation of parking spaces and garages is by tenancy agreement and the right to use can be terminated at no more than one month's notice.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 Scheme Development - Officers will review existing sites to consider

- the number and proportion of vacant garages
- options for re provision of parking on other sites
- suitability of the site for new affordable housing

4.2 Where a site appears to have the potential to provide new housing, an architect will be employed to provide a headline feasibility of the new homes that could be built on the site, taking account of the existing surrounding residential developments and what is likely to be appropriate for the location.

4.3 The outline schemes will be developed and approval for the preferred options will be sought in November.

4.4 As there are no sites that are completely vacant, it is likely that in order for a site to be viable, garages currently in use will be recommended for demolition. Where this is recommended, the options for local reprovision will be included as part of the scheme development proposal. It is also likely that we will not be able to reprovide some spaces and the impact of this for users will be assessed.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

Members are asked to support the development of detailed options to provide affordable housing options on underused garage sites.

6. Consultation

6.1 No consultation has been undertaken to date. Officers will prioritise sites with the highest level of vacant garages; where there are options for

alternative provision. Detailed discussions will need to be undertaken with planning officers to develop the preferred solution for each site.

- 6.2 If the Committee agree that a site offers a viable opportunity for new affordable housing, Ward Members, local residents and garage users will be consulted.
- 6.3 Officers will appoint consultants from existing approved lists and seek competitive quotations/ tenders in line with current standing orders.

7. Reference to Corporate Plan

The provision of new homes will help to address the Council's aims to meet housing demand in the Borough.

8. Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Director of Strategy and Corporate Services.

Tel & Email 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 Detailed costings for any site will be assessed as part of the appraisal process. As the sites are in the HRA there will be no land purchase costs.
- 8.2 As explained in the Affordable Housing Strategy report elsewhere on the agenda, the Council has some funding available from recycled grant and allocated reserves. Once specific proposals and cost estimates have been prepared for potential sites, the funding options will be reviewed and submitted with the scheme assessment to the November Committee.
- 8.3 Consultancy fees of approximately £30,000 will be incurred to develop the schemes in sufficient detail to submit outline planning applications. This can be funded from within the capital allocation for the HRA in 2014/15 as there is currently £740,000 not specifically allocated to schemes. This is provisionally being held for new affordable housing.

9. Legal Implications

Name & Title: Chris Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services

Tel & Email 01277 312712 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

- 9.1 The Council has a legal duty to manage land for the 'benefit, improvement or development' of its area.
- 9.2 The exploration of the options is consistent with this duty.

10. Background Papers

None

11. Appendices to this report

None

Report Author Contact Details:

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E mail: keith.carter@brentwood.gov.uk

Members Interests

Members of the Council must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and the nature of the interest at the beginning of an agenda item and that, on declaring a pecuniary interest, they are required to leave the Chamber.

- **What are pecuniary interests?**

A person's pecuniary interests are their business interests (for example their employment trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which they are associated) and wider financial interests they might have (for example trust funds, investments, and asset including land and property).

- **Do I have any disclosable pecuniary interests?**

You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if you, your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner have a disclosable pecuniary interest set out in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

- **What does having a disclosable pecuniary interest stop me doing?**

If you are present at a meeting of your council or authority, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of your authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any business that is or will be considered at the meeting, you must not :

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business or,
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

- **Other Pecuniary Interests**

Other Pecuniary Interests are also set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and apply only to you as a Member.

If you have an Other Pecuniary Interest in an item of business on the agenda then you must disclose that interest and withdraw from the room while that business is being considered

- **Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Non –pecuniary interests are set out in the Council's Code of Conduct and apply to you as a Member and also to relevant persons where the decision might reasonably be regarded as affecting their wellbeing.

A 'relevant person' is your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner

If you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you are present at a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest whether or not such interest is registered on your Register of Interests or for which you have made a pending notification.

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Housing and Health Committee Terms of Reference

General Powers of Committees

This scheme of delegation sets out the functions of the Council to be discharged by its Committees and Sub- Committees and includes the terms of reference of statutory and non statutory bodies set up by the Council.

Each committee or sub committee will have the following general powers and duties:

- (a) To carry out the duties and powers of the Council within current legislation;
- (b) To comply with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations;
- (c) To operate within the budget allocated to the committee by the Council.
- (d) To guide the Council in setting its policy objectives and priorities including new initiatives, and where appropriate make recommendations to Council
- (e) To develop, approve and monitor the relevant policies and strategies relating to the Terms of Reference of the Committee;
- (f) To secure satisfactory standards of service provision and improvement, including monitoring of contracts, Service Level Agreements and partnership arrangements;
- (g) To consider and approve relevant service plans;
- (h) To determine fees and charges relevant to the Committee;

Housing and Health Committee

- 1) The functions within the remit of the Housing Committee are set out below
 1. Affordable housing
 2. Housing strategy and investment programme
 3. The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
 4. Housing standards, homelessness, homelessness prevention and advice
 5. Housing needs assessment

6. Housing benefit - welfare aspects
 7. Private sector housing and administration of housing grants
 8. Tenancy Management and landlord functions
 9. Environmental Health
 10. Environmental nuisance and pollution controls
 11. Other miscellaneous powers enforced by Environmental Health
 12. Food safety and health and safety
- 2) To make recommendations to Finance and Resources on the setting of rents for Council homes.