



Agenda

Community, Health and Housing Committee

Tuesday, 3 July 2018 at 7.00 pm

Brentwood County High School, Shenfield Common, Seven Arches Road,
Brentwood CM14 4JF

Membership (Quorum – 3)

Cllrs Hossack (Chair), Poppy (Vice-Chair), Bridge, Clarke, Mrs Davies, Mrs Fulcher, McLaren, Ms Sanders and Tierney

Substitute Members

Cllrs Haigh, McCheyne, Naylor, Mrs Pound, Trump and Wiles

Agenda

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Chief Executive

Town Hall
Brentwood, Essex
25.06.2018

Information for Members

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.

Where substitution is permitted, substitutes for quasi judicial/regulatory committees must be drawn from Members who have received training in quasi- judicial/regulatory decision making. If a casual vacancy occurs on a quasi judicial/regulatory committee it will not be filled until the nominated member has been trained.

Rights to Attend and Speak

Any Members may attend any Committee to which these procedure rules apply.

A Member who is not a member of the Committee may speak at the meeting. 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.

Members requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting.

Point of Order/ Personal explanation/ Point of Information

Point of Order

A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Mayor 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 Mayor on the point of order will be final.

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 Mayor on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

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 Mayor. The Member must specify the nature of the information he/she wishes to provide and its importance to the current debate. If the Mayor 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 Mayor on the admissibility of a point of information or clarification will be final.

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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.

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  **Access**

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 **Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point in the Car Park.



Minutes

Community, Health and Housing Committee Monday, 5th March, 2018

Attendance

Cllr Hossack (Chair)	Cllr Mrs Hubbard
Cllr Poppy (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Ms Rowlands
Cllr Clarke	Cllr Ms Sanders
Cllr Cloke	Cllr Wiles
Cllr Mrs Davies	

Apologies

Substitute Present

Also Present

Cllr Kerlake
Cllr Mrs Pound
Cllr Bridge

Officers Present

Kim Anderson	-	Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager
Stuart Anderson	-	Deputy Operations Manager
Claire Mayhew	-	Corporate and Democratic Services Manager
Stuart Morris	-	Housing Options Team Leader
Angela Abbott	-	Interim Head of Housing
Elaine Higgins	-	Principal Environmental Health Officer
Nicola Marsh	-	Housing Manager
Tracey Lilley	-	Enforcement Manager
Lorne Spicer	-	Business Development and PR Manager

284. Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

285. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2017 were approved as a true record.

286. Verbal Update

KPI's Housing

Mrs Marsh gave the Members of the committee a summary of the Housing KIP's.

Rent collections

Rent collection has increased since Quarter 2. Housing Officer have embarked on a numerous arrears campaigns throughout Quarter 3. The appointment of 2 assistance income officers who will focus on lower level arrears to prevent them increasing.

Average re-let time

There has been an increase since Quarter 2, this is due to the new Asbestos Management regime which has been introduced. This adds a minimum of 2 days onto the voids turnaround time plus any additional dates if asbestos is present.

Sheltered Housing re-let have seen a large increase in turnaround times due to a number of less desirable properties being re-let after a long period of time.

Customer Satisfaction

Repairs satisfaction is being monitored closely as there are peaks and drops in the ongoing performances. Issues seem to lie with first time fix.

Urgent repairs

Slight decreases on Quarter 2 from Wates. Officers are working with the contractor to ensure they are delivering 99% target. Closely monitored to make sure the improvements continue.

Oakray continue to deliver Urgent repairs above target. This will be monitored to ensure the performance continues.

Appointments Kept

A sighting decrease on Quarter 3 has been address in progress meetings, this will be monitored.

KPI's Empty Homes

An update on the Empty Homes KPIs was presented to Members and this will continue to be monitored.

Whittington Road – Garage Site update

There had been some delays in progress on this development due to cost issues that have been resolved. A number of further surveys are required to support the planning application which have now been approved for progress.

A meeting was arranged with the architects for later that week to agree timescales for the planning submission. We are anticipating that the planning application will be submitted fairly soon.

Community Safety Team – Anti-Social Behaviour Officer

With the support of Housing Services, a housing officer has been seconded to the Community Safety team to perform the role of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Officer for a six-month period. The purpose was to improve the Council's response to ASB and release remaining housing officers to focus on rent arrears and tenancy management issues whilst improving the service to our residents and improving our case management in relation to ASB cases.

The secondment came into effect from 8th January 2018 and there has been fantastic achievements to date in the first month of the secondment. The highlights are:

- 18 cases dealt with since January 2018.
- A Notice Seeking Possession (NSP) has been served on an address following the execution of a Warrant by Essex Police.
- An NSP has been served and an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) signed by tenant regarding his behaviour. No further complaints have been received in relation to the address.
- Two ABCs signed by residents in relation to a neighbour dispute.
- Injunction obtained with Power of Arrest and Power of Entry against an individual who has been causing serious nuisance to tenants where he was residing with a vulnerable tenant. In addition, the tenant has been safeguarded and a management move is being arranged to provide further safeguards.
- Safeguarding visit made to a vulnerable tenant in partnership with Essex County Fire & Rescue Service. Action plan drafted, and referrals made to appropriate agencies.
- Strategy meeting attended to safeguard a young person and place them on Child Protection Register.

287. Variation of the agenda

The Chair **MOVED** that item 12 - Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order be considered before item 4.

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

288. Town Centre Public Space Protection Order

Following a series of complaints and incidents in and around Brentwood town centre involving anti-social behaviour of several types, the Corporate Enforcement Team had investigated the use of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to assist in controlling activities that are causing concern.

A draft Order had been produced to address evidenced issues in the town centre following liaison with Essex Police, legal advisers and stakeholders in the area proposed to be covered by the Order.

The draft Order covers the main Brentwood town centre area including the High Street and surrounding areas and incorporating roads down to Brentwood rail station.

A summary outline of the report was given to Members by Ms Lilley.

Members of the Committee asked whether other areas around the borough could be considered under an Order.

The Chair, advised Members to endorse the High Street Order first before looking at outlining areas.

Members thanked Ms Lilley and her team for all the work carried out

Vice Chair of Environment and Enforcement, Cllr Bridge was resent praised the team for the recent work undertaken in the Ingatestone Ward.

Cllr Hubbard asked for the apparent signage be displayed, so that people are aware of the Order being in place.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendation in the report.

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

- 1. That Members authorise officers to undertake a public consultation on the proposed draft Public Spaces Protection Order and to report back to a future meeting to consider the results of the formal consultation and to determine whether to implement the Order in the Borough.**

Reasons for Recommendation

To effectively address issues of anti-social behaviour in and around Brentwood Town Centre and reduce the fear of crime. To enable the use of fixed penalties to deal with problems covered by the Order in the area onto Council and Parish Council land in the Borough and to reduce the impact of additional expenditure, particularly on-site clearance.

(Cllr Clarke declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of being a retailer within the area of the Public Spaces Protection Order).

289. Health & Wellbeing Workplan

The report updated Members on the health and wellbeing workplan for Brentwood.

Members of the Committee thanked Ms Higgins for her hard work.

Cllr Poppy, expressed his concerns on the small grant issued to the Dementia Action Alliance and asked if this could be reviewed.

Cllr Mrs Hubbard suggested that voluntary groups dealing with people recovery from addiction could get involved through a rehabilitation programme. Ms Higgins to discuss with Cllr Hubbard going forward.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendation in the report.

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

1. That the progress with the health and wellbeing workplan be noted.

Reasons for Recommendation

At the Community, Health and Housing Committee of 18 September 2017, it was agreed that an update to the workplan be brought to the Committee every six months.

290. Leisure Strategy

The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies as set out in the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19 document. The Council has ageing facilities and needs to ensure that its leisure facilities are not only fit for purpose now but for the future. The Strategy and action plan sets out the vision, what the Council needs to achieve, the challenges it faces and how the priorities and outcomes have been identified. The Leisure Strategy is a large piece of work, so it has been split into workstreams to enable its delivery. The Strategy will cover a period of 10 years, but the supporting action plan will be a live document which will be reviewed and updated regularly to note the progress on the delivery of the Strategy.

A presentation to Members was given by Mrs Anderson.

Members thanked Mrs Anderson for the work carried out.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendations in the report, subject to an additional recommendation to state: -

- 2.3. *That the final Leisure Strategy will brought back to the relative committee for approval after consultation.*

After a full discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED.**

1. **That Members agree to the draft Leisure Strategy and action plan.**
2. **That Members refer the draft Leisure Strategy to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 12 March 2018 for their approval.**
3. **That the final Leisure Strategy will brought back to the relative committee for approval after consultation.**
4. **Subject to approval at Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 12 March 2018 and the required resources and budgets being agreed that delegation is given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Community Health and Housing Committee to appoint a Leisure Development Partner to develop a business case for the improvements to King George's Playing Fields.**

Reasons for the Recommendation

As part of the Council's due diligence in delivering a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and officers need to have a complete picture of the current associated costs, risk profiles of the Borough's Leisure facilities and identify opportunities for income generation.

Comments received from Sport England as part of the Local Development Plan consultation, stated that a Leisure Strategy is required that assesses Council owned sports and leisure facilities in order that the Council can continue to work with partners to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the residents of Brentwood. The strategy should not only consider how the Council can provide services, but also how other partners can. The strategy should also use current sports facility evidence to identify strategic priorities to then inform what will be included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Following this feasibility work, the Council will then be able to determine which projects will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and those funded by planning obligations.

The Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15 also sets out the need to obtain maximise income where possible from its asset portfolio.

(Cllr Ms Rowlands declared a pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of her position as a Trustee for Brentwood Leisure Trust, therefore Cllr Rowlands did not take part in the debate or vote. Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue for his position on being Council Representative on Brentwood Rugby Club and Hartswood Golf Course, both situated at King George's Playing Fields).

291. Warley Playing Fields

As part of the emerging Leisure Strategy a phased approach has been agreed for any work streams identified as part of it. One of these streams is to investigate opportunities at King George's Playing Fields and Warley Playing Fields.

As part of the work around Warley Playing Fields it has been identified that the play area is in need of refurbishment following the removal of a number of items of equipment.

At the 4th December 2017 Community and Housing Committee Members agreed to authorise Officers initiate a refurbishment of the play area at Warley Playing Fields.

A procurement exercise has been concluded and the winning submission is before Members for endorsement so that Officers may proceed with awarding the contract and initiate works.

Mr Anderson presented a summary of the report to Members.

Members thanks Mr Anderson for all the hard work and the speedy delivery of the project.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

1. **Members approve the HAGS SMP refurbishment scheme for Warley Playing Fields as the preferred option and authorise Officers to initiate the refurbishment of the existing play area at Warley Playing Fields pending outcome of Chairs meeting with supplier.**
2. **Members approve remaining monies from the S106 funds to be proportioned towards the provision of any outdoor gym[s].**

Reasons for the Recommendation

To allow for the refurbishment of a degraded and aged play facility at Warley Playing Fields.

To ensure a safe and engaging facility is provided for the expanding local community.

To support the emerging Leisure Strategy ensuring that a pragmatic and proactive approach is taken with regard to leisure facilities in the Borough and

that these facilities are to a high standard and appeal to all members and groups of the community.

292. Larkins Playing Fields

The report considers a request by Brentwood Youth AFC to provide the club with long term tenure at Larkin's Playing Fields, subject to the relevant planning permission being granted and subject to contract with Brentwood Borough Council. In order that Brentwood Youth AFC can secure external funding to improve facilities at Larkin's Plying Fields, external funders such as the Football Association require a commitment from the landowner (Brentwood Borough Council) that will support their improvement plans and provide the club with long-term tenure at Larkin's Playing Fields. It is proposed that the attached letter of intent will be sufficient evidence of the Council's commitment to support improvement to the whole site. As this relates to one of the Council's Assets it is recommended that the report is also referred to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee for their consideration.

A summary outline of the report was given to Members by Mrs Anderson.

Cllr Mrs Davies, requested that parking and the use of the open space still be accessible to the general public.

Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Mrs Vicky Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

- 1. That Members agree to the proposed letter of intent to Brentwood Youth AFC.**
- 2. This report is referred to the Council's Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 12 March for their consideration.**

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council's Draft Leisure Strategy was also before Members tonight and some of the key recommendations within the Strategy is the improvement to leisure facilities across the Borough and working in partnership to deliver the expected outcomes from the Strategy. Comments received from Sport England as part of the Local Development Plan consultation, stated that a Leisure Strategy is required that assesses Council owned sports and leisure facilities in order that the Council can continue to work with partners to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the residents of Brentwood. The strategy should not only consider how the Council can provide services, but also how other partners can. The strategy should also use current sports facility evidence to identify strategic priorities to then inform what will be

included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Following this feasibility work, the Council will then be able to determine which projects will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and those funded by planning obligations.

The Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15 also sets out the need to obtain maximise income where possible from its asset portfolio.

293. Housing Audit Update

This report is intended to update the Community, Health & Housing Committee of the outcome of the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Audit review for Housing Services as part of the Council's approved Audit plans for 2016/17.

The outcome of the 2016/17 internal audit review was reported to the Audit Committee on the 27th September 2017 (Appendix A).

The outcome of the 2017/18 internal audit review was reported to the Audit Committee on the 14th December 2017 (Appendix B).

Both Audit reports will enable the Housing Service to concentrate on specific areas highlighted by both Audit reports to implement the essential service improvements as part of the ongoing transformation programme.

The vice-chair noticed that the date of the Audit Committee stated in 1.3 of the report was incorrect. The date of the meeting was 24th January 2019 this is pointed out to the clerk.

Following a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Poppy **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

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

1. That the Committee receives and notes the progress made in addressing the contents of both Audit reports.
2. That the Committee agree that a further report on progress made on implementing the recommendations is presented to the next Committee.

Reasons for Recommendation

To monitor the progress of work against the highlighted actions recommended arising from the Audit Report and management actions in response to those recommendations.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items

8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

294. Estate Management Strategy

This report sets out the background and recommendation to adopt a formal written Estates Management Strategy ('the Strategy'). The Strategy will allow for a more focussed and transparent approach to service provision.

The Council does not currently have a written and published Strategy and the 2018 internal audit highlighted this as an area for improvement to move towards substantial assurance.

The introduction and implementation of the Strategy will allow for strategic and policy review to ensure efficiency, economy and excellence of service provision as a social landlord.

Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Poppy **SECONDED** the recommendations and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1. That the Committee formally approve Option 1 (to implement the draft 'Estates Management Strategy 2018' (Annex A)).

Reasons for Recommendation

Option 1 is recommended as the most transparent option for the Council and supports the 'Getting our House in Order' transformation programme for Housing Services. It also ensures compliancy with audit report recommendations.

Taking no further action will fail to advance corporate priorities and would be counter to our modernisation approach.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items 8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

295. Aids and Adaptations Policy

The report sets out proposals for a new Aids and Adaptations Policy to be implemented within the Housing Department.

The Policy provides the Council with the ability to manage adaptations within its Housing Stock to ensure that properties already adapted for disabled needs, are utilised before further adaptations are done.

Members welcomed this report but concerns were raised whether this would pro-long the time taken in which adaptations were made.

Members requested that Brentwood Access Group be consulted and encouraged feedback from Tenant Talkback.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Poppy to approve the recommendation to an amendment to state:

2.1 *The Committee is asked to approve Option 2 of the new Aid and Adaptions Policy.*

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

1. The Committee is asked to approve Option 2 of the new Aid and Adaptions Policy.

Reasons for Recommendation

Aids and Adaptation requests are becoming more and more commonplace. The numbers being referred and the cost to implement these are mounting.

There has previously been no Policy outlining how the Council intends to manage Aids and Adaptations. This has meant that there has been very limited grounds for the Council to refuse or provide an alternative to the recommendations put forward by the Occupational Therapist.

This Policy will allow the Council to explore alternative options whilst still demonstrating Value for Money as well as meeting the requirements of the Tenant.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items 8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

296. Termination of Meeting

At 9.00pm in accordance with Rule 10.1 of the Council's procedural rules, Members resolved to continue the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

297. Housing Garage Site Update

At the 5th December 2017 Community, Health & Housing Committee it was resolved unanimously that the Committee authorises Officers to investigate in more detail the following:

- i. Options in relation to the development of the Council's Housing Garage sites including modular housing.
- ii. Options in relation to developing a local assembly plant within the Borough to provide modular housing.

The report provided an update on the options available for the future provision of the Council's Housing Garage Sites following the previous committee.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Cloke to approve the recommendations in the report subject to an additional recommendation to state:

2.4 That this Committee request officers provide clarity as to whether a modular housing project can be progressed at a specified garage site.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

- 1. That the Committee authorises Officers to investigate the options in relation to the development of the Council's Housing Garage sites including the recent progress of a Joint Venture Partnership.**
- 2. That a further report on the options be provided to the next appropriate Community, Health & Housing Committee.**
- 3. That this Committee request officers provide clarity as to whether a modular housing project can be progressed at a specified garage site.**

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable BBC to maintain its responsibilities and fulfil its obligations as a landlord.

A review of all the Council's garage sites will be required to ensure asset management decisions are based on sound information.

It is vital that the Council has up to date information about condition of the HRA stock in order to support its investment decisions each year. The risks in not having this information include the failure to provide adequate resources

to tackle repairs and maintenance that subsequently leads to the need for replacement at a much higher cost.

(Cllr Wiles declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of his spouse being a Council Tenant. Guidance was given by the Monitoring Officer who advises that specifically in relation to items 8,9,10 & 11, that although these generally relate to Housing, the general content of the reports is such that a conflict shall not arise and that I therefore may still stay and debate and vote on these items).

298. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm

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3rd July 2018

Community, Health and Housing Committee

Co-option of Tenants Representatives

Report of: *Angela Williams, Interim Head of Housing*

Wards Affected: *All wards*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report sets out proposals to co-opt representatives of Tenants Talkback into the Community, Health and Housing Committee for housing related items, in accordance with the Council constitution.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **Tenant Talkback be invited to send two representatives to each meeting of the Community, Health and Housing Committee where housing items are to be discussed.**
- 2.2 **The representatives of Tenants 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 Housing Manager be requested to arrange appropriate training of the representatives.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Members will be aware that Tenant Talkback is the group of Council tenants and leaseholders who meet regularly with housing staff and Councillors to discuss various subjects that affect them. This is made up of tenants and leaseholders from different estates and areas in the Borough.
- 3.2 The role of resident involvement in general, and Tenant Talkback's place in it, has been through some changes in recent years, with the longstanding Chair stepping down from this role and the Housing department embarking on a review of the Tenant Talkback structure to ensure this was effective.

- 3.3 As a result of this, it has been agreed that Tenant Talkback will remain as our main consultative panel, gaining feedback from tenants and leaseholders on all policies, procedures and projects that the Housing department are working on.
- 3.4 A new Chair has recently been elected to lead the group, and members are keen to continue their work. A further review is now needed to include any relevant changes to the Tenant Participation Compact and respective constitutions.
- 3.5 The Compact includes the following paragraph:
- Two representatives from the Talkback Group are invited to attend the Community, Health and Housing Committee in a non voting role. They are able to speak on housing related items at the Chair's discretion.*
- 3.6 In the previous operation of the Community, Health and Housing Committee this arrangement operated on an informal basis.
- 3.7 The Council's updated Constitution was adopted at the Annual Council meeting on 15th May 2013 (Minute 11 refers) and further changes have been made subsequently.

4. Context

- 4.1 Following the adoption of the Council's new constitution, the previous informal operation of Tenant Talkback's right to speak at committee needs to be formalised.
- 4.2 The new constitution has anticipated such an arrangement in Part 4.1 of the Constitution (Council Procedure Rules) paragraph 25, which reads:
- 25. Co-option**
Generally a committee, or a sub-committee may co-opt two persons onto the committee. Any persons so co-opted may speak but not vote.
- 4.3 In order to maintain the commitment of the Tenant Participation Compact, it is recommended that Tenant Talkback be invited to send two representatives to each meeting of the Community, Health and Housing Committee where housing related items are to be discussed. The representatives will be able to speak but not vote. It is recommended that their right to speak be on similar basis of other members of the committee.
- 4.4 It is important that Talkback Representatives receive a similar level of training to other committee members to ensure they are confident in the process of the operation of the committee.
- 4.5 It is anticipated that generally Tenant Talkback will send the same individuals to each meeting, which will be helpful to ensure consistency of understanding of the Committee process. However, it is also acknowledged that substitute representatives may also need to be sent.

- 4.6 Consequently, it is recommended that the Housing Manager arrange appropriate training for a number of Tenant Talkback representatives to ensure both the regular delegates and any substitutes have had the benefit of appropriate training.

5. Reference to the Corporate Plan

- 5.1 This supports the Council's priorities for Housing Health and Wellbeing and A Prosperous Borough, and is consistent with the priorities of Housing Health and Wellbeing to provide effective representation of local people's views.

6. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief Finance Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312829/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

- 6.1 There are no financial implications of the recommendations.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Daniel Toohey, Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services

Tel & Email: 01277 312860/daniel.toohey@brentwood.gov.uk

- 6.2 The legal implications are as set out in the body of the report.

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

- 6.3 Equality and diversity implications: The recommendations support effective representation of local people's views, which in turn supports equality of housing opportunities and life chances.

7. Background Papers

None

8. Appendices to this report

None

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3rd July 2018

Community, Health & Housing Committee

Housing Audit Report

Report of: Angela Abbott, Interim Head of Housing

Wards Affected: All

This report is: Public

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is intended to update the Community, Health & Housing Committee of the outcome of the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Audit review for Housing Services as part of the Council's approved Audit plans for 2016/17.
- 1.2 The outcome of the 2016/17 internal audit review was reported to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on the 27th September 2017.
- 1.3 The outcome of the 2017/18 internal audit review was reported to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on the 14th December 2017.
- 1.4 Both Audit reports will enable the Housing Service to concentrate on specific areas highlighted by both Audit reports to implement the essential service improvements as part of the ongoing transformation programme.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee receives and notes the progress made from the 5th March 2018 committee report in addressing the contents of both Audit reports.**
- 2.1 **That the Committee agree that a further report on progress made on implementing the recommendations is presented to the next Committee**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Both Audit reviews were conducted in accordance with the 2017/18 Audit Plan as approved by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

- 3.2 However, as part of the ongoing transformation programme, the Housing Service had already identified gaps in service provision particularly around Repairs & Maintenance. Accordingly, an additional Audit review was specifically requested by Housing to assist and support in identifying gaps or service failures and to provide recommendations for improvement. These areas, primarily centred around contract management, information recording and compliance.

4. **Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

Not applicable

5. **Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 To monitor the progress of work against the highlighted actions recommended arising from the Audit Report and management actions in response to those recommendations.

6. **Consultation**

- 6.1 Not applicable

7. **References to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 Good financial management, risk management and internal control underpin all priorities within the Corporate Plan.

8. **Implications**

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts Interim Chief Finance Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312829 jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 There are no direct financial Implications arising from this report. However any additional resources required, resulting from the audit will be monitored through budget challenge sessions with senior officers as well as usual budget monitoring processes.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Assaf Chaudry, Governance Solicitor
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The purpose of this report is intended to update the Committee of the outcome of the 2016/17 and 201/18 Audit review for Housing Services the recommendation that it seeks are for the purposes of noting . A further

report on progress is due to be presented to the next Committee . In the circumstances there are no legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.

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

8.2 None

9. **Background Papers**

9.1 None

10. **Appendices to this report**

10.1 Appendix A – Audit report and management response
Appendix B – Audit report and management response

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Management update - June 2018

Brentwood Borough Council

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Audit 3. Housing

November 2017

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	
Design	Operational Effectiveness
Limited	Moderate



Draft



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Detailed Findings and Recommendations		I Housing Revenue Account Property
Observations		II Records Management
		III Staff Interviewed
		IV Definitions
		V Terms of Reference




REPORT STATUS	
Auditors:	Angela Mitchell
Dates work performed:	July 2017 to September 2017
Closing Meeting:	1 November 2017
Draft report issued:	
Final report issued:	

DISTRIBUTION LIST	
Angela Abbott	Head of Housing
Stuart Morris	Interim Housing Manager
Nicola Marsh	Housing Manager
Jacqueline Van-Mellaerts	Financial Service Manager (Deputy Section 151 Officer)

Restrictions of use

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our audit and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. The report has been prepared solely for the management of the organisation and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. BDO LLP neither owes nor accepts any duty to any third party whether in contract or in tort and shall not be liable, in respect of any loss, damage or expense which is caused by their reliance on this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL VISION		
Work to ensure our Housing stock is managed so that it delivers comfortable and safe homes for our tenants that are efficient and sustainable		
LEVEL OF ASSURANCE (SEE APPENDIX II FOR DEFINITIONS)		
Design	Limited	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved
Effectiveness	Moderate	Non-compliance with some controls which may place some system objectives at risk
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (SEE APPENDIX II FOR DEFINITIONS)		
High		2
Medium		6
Low		1
Total number of recommendations: 9		

OVERVIEW

Background:

Council Housing stock, as at the 31 March 2017, was: 1,159 flats, 1,320 houses and bungalows, and 7 equity share properties. The Council has recognised an increasing demand for social housing. In 2016/17 the Council spent £5.3m on Housing of which £2.9m was expenditure on repairs and maintenance.

Our review considered the adequacy of arrangements relating to Housing stock (due diligence checks and fraud prevention, debt recovery and compliance checks), Right to Buy (governance, checks on qualifying criteria, valuations and tenant advice) Housing maintenance contractual arrangements and Leaseholder Service Charge accounts (apportionment and billing).

From our review, we noted the following areas of good practice:

- The Housing team provide reports on Housing assets to the Finance Team monthly, and the Finance Team have performed a detailed check of the Finance Asset Register to the properties recorded on the Orchard System, and plan to repeat this check annually
- Rents are determined through calculations applied to source data from the Orchard system on properties, and through application of policies and transitional arrangements using the Rent Model. Invoices for rent due are produced promptly and checked by the Housing team prior to the new year rents becoming due
- Tenants are offered a variety of methods to pay their rent.

However, we also noted the following areas of improvement:

- Housing records are dispersed, many records are maintained in paper form, and records and information management does not accord with best practice guidelines. There is scope to develop the current retention guidelines, introduce records management protocols, review arrangements for storage and retrieval of records, and ensure that staff are aware of the requirements of the Data Protection Act and new General Data Protection Regulations (Finding 1 - high)
- The Council does not have an Estates Management Strategy, and estates inspections had lapsed (Finding 2 - High)
- There is a need to clarify the arrangements for allocation of Council properties between the HRA and General Fund and review current allocations, to provide clarity over roles and responsibilities between the Housing and Assets team, and review the format of asset related records (Finding 3 - Medium)
- Protocols for cyclical and responsive repairs have not been defined (Finding 4 - Medium)
- There is scope to review the Anti Social Behaviour Strategy (ASB) and to link it to the Community Safety and Housing pages on the Council's website. There is also scope to review the format of ASB records (Finding 5 - Medium)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (Continued)

OVERVIEW

Continued:

Areas of improvement - Continued:

- Records of vulnerable tenants and those with enacted Lasting Power of Attorney are not currently easily accessible (Finding 6 - Medium)
- The process of uploading tenant payments made via All Pay should be automated (Finding 7 - Medium)
- Accounts in credit are not subject to regular checks by Housing staff, giving due consideration to fraud risks (Finding 8 - Medium)

Conclusion

We have issued 2 High, 6 Medium and 1 Low priority findings, and have issued an opinion of Limited for the design and Moderate for the effectiveness of the Housing systems, reflecting that whilst there are some areas of good practice, there were also areas of weakness and opportunities for improvement to be developed, such as relating to Estates Management and inspections, records management, asset records, cyclical and responsive repairs, the Anti Social Behaviour strategy and records, records of vulnerable tenants, efficiency of processes relating to receipt of payments, and checks on accounts by Housing staff.

LOOKING FORWARD: SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL'S JOURNEY FROM LIMITED TO SUBSTANTIAL ASSURANCE

<p>Design</p>	<p>Limited</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Add in controls we have recommended regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an estate management strategy, train staff to conduct inspections and prepare checklists to support inspections, and re-introduce estate inspections • Introduce robust information and records management, and review records against defined protocols • Train staff in requirements of the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations • Determine rules for the allocation of Council properties between the HRA and General Fund and check allocations against rules • Define protocols for cyclical and responsive repairs and implement a programmes and inspection regime • Conduct reviews of accounts in credit for which there is a high fraud risk
<p>Effectiveness</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review use of technology to enhance effectiveness of collection, storage and reporting of data, including relating to Housing records and ASBs, records of vulnerable tenants, and automation of processes • Agree working protocols, roles and responsibilities for the Assets and Housing teams • Review storage of asset records to build resilience

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Tenancy records are dispersed or do not include all required information, which inhibits effective tenancy management			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
1.	<p>Housing staff advised that there is no protocol defining the information and data that the Council should be recording or retaining for tenants.</p> <p>A lot of forms and records used by the Housing team are paper based, Housing staff advised that they record everything and retain the information in various places - including paper records in the filing room, on the Housing system, in computer files on separate drives, and various papers within the Housing office. There are no guidelines, and no consistent approach to records and information management, and we were advised that digital records are not maintained as the team rely on paper records.</p> <p>We were advised that records on occasion have included former joint tenant information being retained on the current tenant file, and opinions (such as relating to fraud risk)</p> <p>The Housing team do have a Retention Policy, but the team do not have a complete view of the information they hold, and there has not previously been a review of the data and no systematic disposal in accordance with the Council's Retention policy, although we noted that the team has recently cleared a lot of paper files from the filing room in preparation for all Council staff moving out of the Town Hall for refurbishment works.</p> <p>The Housing Team Retention Policy is brief, and the content is not consistent with the Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities which have been adopted by other Local Authorities (see example at Appendix II). The Information Commissioner has also produced guidelines on Records Management - Appendix II also includes a summary of the relevant guidance.</p> <p>Staff did advise that they are generally able to locate house files, and the Housing system does include a Document Management System. Staff noted that there is an increase in information being provided in pdf form, and could therefore easily be stored in a DMS.</p> <p>During discussions with staff, we were advised that staff had not received training in the requirements of the Data Protection Act, and were also not aware of the implications of the General Data Protection Regulations (which are effective from May 2018)</p> <p>Continued:</p>	High	<p>a) Introduce robust information and records management in accordance with ICO guidance, including development of a records management policy covering retention, security, destruction, and data protection.</p> <p>b) Identify the Housing records to be maintained, and retention periods, and review arrangements for their storage and retrieval - consider use of the Housing DMS or a Corporate alternative supporting customer relationship management. (Refer to Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities and policies adopted by other Local Authorities)</p> <p>c) Provide training and generally raise staff awareness of the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulations. In particular ensure staff do not record opinions, and that records contain appropriate information.</p> <p><i>It may also be appropriate to conduct a more detailed review of the Council's compliance with the DPA and preparedness for GDPR</i></p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Management Response	RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p><u>Update - June 18</u> Orchard DMS system live, new records are held electronically, HPA2 live which is the homelessness module on Locata. Housing register on-line module went live on 4/6/18, documents received in paper form are scanned onto the relevant I.T system and destroyed. All new documentation held is now on-line. A forward plan is currently being drafted to prioritise the review of all existing paper documentation held and the time frame to be transferred to an electronic format and destroyed. All staff have received the mandatory GDPR training and updates/refreshers have been held at individual team meetings by the interim Housing Policy Manager. Information, is being collated centrally as part of a wider Council review. The Orchard I.T system has been configured to automatically destroy electronic information held there the retention period has expired. The Locata system is currently being configured by Locata to ensure GDPR compliancy.</p> <p><u>Update - March 18</u> The DMS system is now live. This will mean that all new paper files can be held electronically and we can now move away from paper held files. A review of all existing paper files will be planned over the coming months, but will require a significant amount of staff resource to implement. It is anticipated that this will take at least 6 months to complete. As part of this review of files we will review our existing retention policy which has been reviewed internally and is awaiting comment Corporately.</p> <p><u>Update</u> All staff have now mandatory GDPR training. We are in the final stages of configuring the DMS system on Orchard which should be live in approximately 4-5 weeks. This will allow us to store all new documents electronically without the need for holding paper records. A review of all existing paper files will be planned over the coming months, but will require a significant amount of staff resource to implement. It is anticipated that this will take at least 6 months to complete. As part of this review of files we will review our existing retention policy The Council’s Digital Services Manager (Lorraine Jones) has a role to create a customer portal, the Housing team will work with the Contact Centre Manager to determine the approach to Housing records storage and retrieval</p>	<p><i>Responsible Officers: AA/SDM</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: August 2018</i></p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Estate management protocols are not defined, or staff do not adhere to them			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
2.	<p>The Housing Team prepared inspection procedures in 2015 (to define how inspections would be carried out) and have previously adopted a rota for estate management inspections (performing inspections on a 6 monthly cycle), but these lapsed and at the time of the audit there had been no inspections since around June 2016. Inspections were expected to recommence around September 2017. Housing staff advised that their visits did initially detect issues, but these diminished as issues were resolved. We were advised that staff conducting inspections were not always fully familiar with which issues required reporting, and therefore non serious matters were repeated on subsequent inspections.</p> <p>When staff previously conducted inspections, the outline status was recorded on a log and a paper based form was completed and passed to the repairs team, Contractors and caretakers. Digital technology offers opportunity for improved efficiency in recording and monitoring resolution of issues identified.</p>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop an Estate Management Strategy and procedure b) Determine Estate Management inspection protocols and carry out inspections accordingly c) Train Housing staff to conduct estate management inspections d) Prepare checklists to support Housing staff conducting inspections (including for first day of tenancy (such as ensuring a working fire alarm) and for ongoing checks e) Consider use of technology to improve recording of issues identified, sharing data as appropriate, and monitoring of resolution f) Develop reporting arrangements for other Council staff already working in the Borough to report estates issues
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
<p>Update - June 18</p> <p>Estate Management Strategy approved at Community, Health & Housing Committee March 18.</p> <p>Estate inspections conducted every 6 weeks, which are reviewed again at the next inspection. The HM and H&S Manager will be considering the use of an alternative I.T solution for estate inspections/monitoring by the use of an app based house mark system and keystone. Presentations for both I.T systems are scheduled.</p> <p>Update - March 18</p> <p>Estate inspections now take place every 6 weeks. A checklist form has been drafted for Officers to use in the short term while an electronic form is created. Estate Inspections will now be a standing item on the Estate Management team meetings on a fortnightly basis to ensure actions highlighted are reviewed and completed.</p> <p>In line in with the recommendation for a Estate management Strategy policy this will be undertaken and submitted to the March 2018 Housing Committee meeting for approval.</p> <p>The team are looking to develop an online form for estates staff to fill in, they will also prepare a procedure manual and will benchmark processes with other Local Authorities</p>		<p>Responsible Officers: AA/SM</p> <p>Implementation Date: April 2018</p>	

Update:

The Estate Management Strategy has been completed and is due to be presented to Committee in March 2018., together with the forward plan for 18/19 Estate Inspections. We are currently considering joining Benchmark which will provide the opportunity to benchmark our processes alongside other Authorities. Benchmark are to provide a presentation on the 1st March 2018. The development of an on-line form is still pending.

Estate inspections now take place every 6 weeks. A checklist form has been drafted for Officers to use in the short term while an electronic form is created. Estate Inspections will now be a standing item on the Estate Management team meetings on a fortnightly basis to ensure actions highlighted are reviewed and completed.

In line in with the recommendation for a Estate management Strategy policy this will be undertaken and submitted to the March 2018 Housing Committee meeting for approval.

The team are looking to develop an online form for estates staff to fill in, they will also prepare a procedure manual and will benchmark processes with other Local Authorities

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Records of Housing stock are incomplete or inaccurate, or are not reconciled to the Housing Asset Register
 RISK: Roles and responsibilities for maintenance of the Housing Asset Register are not clearly defined or not understood by staff
 RISK: Properties within the Housing Asset Register are clearly and accurately allocated to the Housing Revenue Account

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
3.	<p>Information on the Council’s Housing assets is maintained in the following systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing ‘Orchard’ system - this is considered to be the prime record of Housing stock, other registers are verified back to the Orchard system - Finance Housing Asset Register - an exercise was conducted in March 2017 to verify this to the Orchard system records, this check will be conducted on an annual basis. The Finance team also check movements in HRA dwellings for the verification of the statement of accounts - Asset team Argus system - just one member of Council staff is able to access this system, she has periodically checked the HRA properties held on this system to the Housing Orchard system. Assets staff maintain separate lists to manage health and safety checks on other Council owned property. <p>We understand that the respective roles and responsibilities of Housing staff and Assets staff relating to management of Housing assets is not clear to all staff, and therefore the associated protocols are also not clear, this has reduced the opportunity for effective communication and thus the adoption of approaches which adversely impact the functions (for example the teams have identified issues relating to the letting of General Fund properties on secure tenancies, and the property boundaries used in determining valuations).</p> <p>Whilst records are on the whole maintained by the different teams for different purposes, there is potential for efficiency where Assets information can be combined in one system, or in automating the update of relevant records or fields.</p> <p>The Assets team identified that whilst the Housing system records HRA properties let to social tenants, there are other land parcels (such as play sites) which are potentially associated with the HRA, and that there are also some General Fund properties which have been let by the Housing team to social and mental health tenants - so there is some disparity between records. In addition, the Assets team noted that Right to Buy covenants have been stipulated by the Housing team in the past which included requirements for new owners to seek consent from the Council (for example for greenhouses), and when the new owner sells the property the Asset team spend time releasing them from the covenant as there is no legal basis for enforcing it).</p> <p>Continued:</p>	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A working protocol is agreed between the Housing Team and the Asset team to enable an approach reflecting the needs of both teams, and providing clarity on the impact of actions by teams on other areas of Council operations b) Determine the rules of Council land and property assets are to be allocated between the HRA and the General Fund c) Review all Council land and property assets to ensure they are allocated in accordance with (b) d) Review options for maintenance of Asset related records, to determine feasibility of implementing a combined system, or links between systems to enable efficient update of records e) Build resilience by ensuring the Assets system records are capable of being accessed by more than one member of staff. If access issues relate to the system no longer being supported or incompatible with current Council technology, an alternative system should be sought (in line with (d)). f) If records continue to be maintained separately, ensure there is a regular check between the Assets team records and the Housing system g) Until the Council has assurance over the accuracy of records of Right to Buy properties, additional cross checks are made from the Finance records of Right to Buy income or property purchases to the Housing asset records on the Orchard system

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Records of Housing stock are incomplete or inaccurate, or are not reconciled to the Housing Asset Register			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
3. Cont	<p>Continued:</p> <p>The Assets team identified a need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the rules for determining whether land and property assets are allocated to the HRA or General Fund. (A brief outline of Section 74 of the Local Government Housing Act 1989 is attached at Appendix 1) - Assess all Council land and property assets against those rules and allocate accordingly <p>Note also that the 2016/17 Internal Audit report on Housing identified gaps in the information recorded on the Orchard system, including relating to Right to Buy. The Council is in the process of reviewing records and procedures, to provide assurance over the completeness and accuracy of records.</p>	Med	
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
<p>Update - June 18</p> <p>The Asset review is still ongoing.</p> <p>The keystone configuration has been completed, and a data cleansing exercise is ongoing. Further I.T configuration is required, and a staff resource has been identified to carry out this work.</p> <p>March - Update</p> <p>An corporate review of Council owned land or property is already underway which includes HRA assets.</p> <p>Keystone is the Housing Asset Management System for Housing which is currently being developed to ensure all asset data is recorded appropriately, due to the specialised I.T requirements we require Keystone to assist in the configuration which has been requested. We are awaiting the date confirmation.</p> <p>Where any General Fund properties are let through the Housing Team, the HRA Accountant ensures that rental income is credited to the General Fund, and that the cost of any repairs is debited to the HRA</p>		<p><i>Responsible Officers: AA/NM/VP</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: September 2018</i></p>	

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Requirements for cyclical and responsive repairs and maintenance are not defined or not adhered to			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
4.	<p>There are currently no defined protocols for cyclical and responsive repairs. A programmes and inspection regime was previously in place but resulted in overspends, the Council is currently working to balance costs and ensure appropriate scope of works.</p> <p>The Council is currently working with Basildon Council, who are reviewing the status of properties before defining requirements: a stock condition survey has recently been completed, although at the time of the audit not all information had been received from the contractor and therefore limited information had been uploaded to the Housing system, and data that had been received was held on a test database pending data cleansing. The stock condition survey is expected to provide a lifespan for elements of Housing properties, although the reports to enable production of this information had not been prepared and therefore the planned programme of works has not been developed.</p> <p>The Keystone system is a standalone system which includes information on properties and jobs: there is currently only limited interface between Keystone and the Orchard Housing Management system. Contractors carry out responsive repairs under a price per property model, jobs are raised on the Contractors own system (which is separate to the Keystone system). There were previously daily files received from the contractor on works, but these were suspended for the Contractors to make the system updates required by the Council to enable the Council to track progress of jobs and spend, however the timing for completion of this is not clear.</p>	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Define parameters and protocols for cyclical and responsive repairs and replacement, and implement a programmes and inspection regime reflecting these protocols b) Develop system reports to reflect defined protocols c) Ensure remaining Stock Condition Survey information is received and uploaded, and reports produced as defined in (a) d) Agree timetable with contractors to resolve issues relating to links between the Council and Contractor systems to ensure the Council has current information on works completed e) Develop processes for monitoring against protocols for cyclical and responsive repairs
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
<p>Update: June 18</p> <p>Managed repairs service now live. Keystone information is currently being data cleansed and system upgraded to provide future programmes. Interim measures now in place to develop work programmes and appropriate Basildon based staff in place. A number of reviews have been carried out which included, gas, asbestos and fire management. The review for legionella is about to commence. From the reviews carried out to date, these have informed the preparation of work programmes, where compliancy is the immediate priority.</p>		<p><i>Responsible Officers: NM/RB/VP</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: September 2018</i></p>	

Update: March 18

All Stock Condition Survey information has now been received from the Contractor, and the Council is working with Basildon Council to implement records on the Keystone system to enable repairs management.

Housing contracts are currently under review, new arrangements will require links between Council and Contractor systems to be resolved.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Estate management protocols are not defined, or staff do not adhere to them			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
5.	<p>The Council does have an Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) strategy, this was found via a search of the website and was not linked to the Council's Community Safety or Housing website pages, and there was no specific protocol for the Housing Service. The Corporate ASB strategy located was dated 2005, and should therefore be reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate and up to date. We understand the Housing Options Team Leader is developing a Housing specific ASB protocol, with expected implementation October 2018. In the meantime, we understand the Housing team follow the corporate protocol and liaise with the Community Services Team.</p> <p>The Council's Uniform system does include a module for recording ASBs (this module is used by other Local Authorities), and we understand the Uniform is accessible to relevant staff and organisations, although we understand from Housing staff that they have not received training in its use. ASBs are therefore currently recorded manually.</p>	Med	<p>a) Review the corporate ASB strategy to ensure it remains appropriate and up to date, and provides clarity for staff on the protocols for managing ASBs including addressing the source issues such as through Housing Estates Management.</p> <p>b) Link the ASB strategy on the Council's website to the Community Safety and Housing team pages</p> <p>c) Consider use of a system (such as the Uniform system) for the recording of ASBs, and develop linking of ASB and Housing system data to enable reporting on tenancy issues and ASBs to facilitate improved management of the source of issues.</p>
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
<p>Update: June 18</p> <p>All ASB issues that are estate or tenancy related are referred to the ASB Officer (secondment), these are investigated by the ASB Officer jointly with the relevant Housing Officer/manager. This approach has been very successful to-date.</p> <p>Update: March 18</p> <p>No update at present</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>The Council's new Corporate Enforcement Manager, Tracey Lilley, is working towards full implementation of the Uniform system. Housing Services have now seconded an Estate Officer to the Corporate enforcement team to assist in the development of an ASB strategy which will include Housing.</p>		<p>Responsible Officers: NM/TL</p> <p>Implementation Date: September 2018</p>	

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Vulnerable tenants are not identified or the Council is not responsive to their needs			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
6.	<p>User defined codes (UDCs) are input to the Orchard Housing Management system which pop up automatically when a tenant record is opened, examples of use of UDCs include: 2 people to attend, potentially violent, and anti social behaviour. This list of pop ups has evolved, new codes are added following approval of the Housing Manager .</p> <p>The Orchard system is capable of reporting on the accounts to which UDCs are linked, the Housing Manager advised that she has conducted a review of all UDCs applied to accounts to ensure they are appropriate, and she will continue to perform this review on an annual basis.</p> <p>The current list of UDCs does not include any option for recording Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA or PoA), or otherwise vulnerable tenants. We were advised that for these cases there is either a written note in the paper based 'house file' or a 'See Notes' pop up is used on the Housing system, however the Housing team acknowledge that information presented this way is not readily available amongst other notes and records, and would therefore also not be available for staff or contractors visiting the tenant.</p>	Med	<p>a) Add indicators to the Housing Management system to clearly flag vulnerable tenants and those for whom Power of Attorney is enacted.</p> <p>b) Where Power of Attorney has been enacted, correspondence name fields on the Housing system are addressed to XX PoA for YY.</p>
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
<p>Update: June 18</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>DMS system live 2.2.18</p> <p>Discussed with Stuart Morris and Nicola Marsh 1/11/17</p> <p>Agreed - Where identified, UDC's will be placed on Orchard. When the DMS system is live on Orchard paper versions will be recorded electronically as we will no longer retain paper files.</p>		<p><i>Responsible Officers: AA/NM/VP</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: January 2018</i></p>	

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Income is not promptly and accurately allocated to Tenant accounts			
RISK: Income allocated to rent accounts is not reconciled to income systems and the ledger			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
7.	<p>Housing customers are able to pay their rent via a payment card at post offices and other outlets. Each day a member of the Housing team logs in to the All Pay website and downloads the payment files to the Cash Receipting system, and then an overnight payment run inputs the payments into the tenant accounts on the Orchard system.</p> <p>The Systems Accountant advised that the use of bar coded letters for customers would facilitate an automated upload of the payment file, removing the need for manual intervention by Housing staff. The Council's Revenues and Benefits team now successfully use bar coded bills, these allow automation of the upload of payments and no issues with this approach have been identified.</p>	Med	Automate the process of uploading All Pay payments to the cash receipting system.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p>Update: June 18</p> <p>In progress - The daily reconciliations which are part of the daily batch jobs have now been automated which has resulted in a significant time saving. Further work is ongoing over the next few weeks.</p> <p>Update: March 18</p> <p>No update at present</p> <p>This will be reviewed as part of the ongoing development of the Orchard System and liaising with the Finance team.</p>			<p><i>Responsible Officers: NM/AA</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: September 2018</i></p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Accounts in credit are not subject to regular review			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
8.	<p>Reports have been run of accounts in credit, however the last time this was run prior to the audit was in May 2015, although a tailored report was also run in May 2016 which identified accounts which were in credit but where there was also a debit on another related account. A credit report was run and provided to the Housing team during the audit.</p> <p>Accounts in credit are therefore not subject to regular review, the Chartered Institute of Housing has identified that significant levels of credit on a rent account can be a warning sign of potential fraud. Information on tenancy fraud, warning signs and fraud prevention was included in our 2016/17 Report on Housing, high fraud risk tenancies include those where the rent is always paid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several months in advance or where there is significant credit on the rent account - In cash - Where the name on the bank standing order or direct debit does not match with that of the tenant <p>When the Housing team review the accounts in credit report to determine where the credit should be (to enable return to the tenant if appropriate), they enter the details manually on 'Transfer of Credits' forms, supporting documents or details are held in paper files with the forms.</p>	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Housing staff are informed that accounts in credit are a potential indicator of fraud b) Periodic checks are made on credit accounts by Housing staff, giving consideration to fraud risks c) The process for transferring credits is reviewed to identify options for efficiency through automation and streamlining
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
		<p><i>Responsible Officers: NM</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: April 2018</i></p>	

Update: June 18

A & b - complete

C - to be reviewed

Update: March 18

An automated report of accounts in credit are created on a fortnightly basis for review by Income Officers. A referral protocol is to be agreed between Housing and Fraud.

Tenancy fraud training has recently been provided to Housing staff, including fraudulent identity documents, fraud warning signs, fraud processes and explanations of fraud offences, the staff were very engaged with this training

The Housing team are currently in the process of creating EForms, including for the Transfer of Credits, the new process will enable online authorisation.

The Council has recently employed 2 Income Officers who will regularly review accounts in credit as part of their role

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Properties within the Housing Asset Register are clearly and accurately allocated to the Housing Revenue account			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
9.	As part of the processes adopted to maintain consistent records of assets (see also finding 3 above) the Housing Team provide monthly reports on Housing assets to the Finance team. We understand the Housing Officer responsible for producing and sending these reports has resigned, at the time of our review the continuity arrangements for these checks had not been defined.	Low	The Housing team document the regular reports run from the Housing system, identifying the recipient(s), to ensure checks and provision of management information is continued following the departure of the officer currently running these reports
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p>Update: Complete</p> <p>The reports are automated using business objects through Orchard. There is no manual processing requirement from any individual staff member.</p>			<p><i>Responsible Officers: NM</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: January 2018</i></p>

APPENDIX I - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT PROPERTY

The following summarises legislative guidance on the items to be included in the Housing Revenue Account

Local Government and Housing Act 1989 - Section 74

Specifies the major items to be included in the HRA as dwellings and other property, eg. garages, shops etc provided under Part II of the Housing Act 1985

The following are to be included in the HRA:

- Houses and building provided under Part II of the Housing Act 1985 (provision of Housing)
- Land acquired or appropriated for the purposes of that part
- Houses purchased under S192 of that Act
- Dwellings in respect of which a Local Authority has received assistance under Section 1 or 4(2A) of the Housing (Rural Workers) Act 1926
- Any property brought within the corresponding account kept under Part XIII of the Housing Act 1985 for years beginning 1 April 1990
- Land or other buildings as directed by the Secretary of State

(The Act includes further details)

APPENDIX II - RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The following summarises the best practice advice on Records Management as provided by the Information Commissioner Code of Practice on Records Management (to assist Authorities in complying with the Freedom of Information Act), and also includes a link to the Retention Policy adopted by Tower Hamlets Council as an example of application of Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities

Information Commissioner - Code of Practice on Records Management

Part 1: Records Management (Section 29) sets out the 'key elements' of good practice in records management. To meet these good practice recommendations an authority should:

- Have in place organisational arrangements that support records management - this includes the recognition of records management as a core corporate function, the allocation of clearly defines roles and responsibilities, and the provision of appropriate training
- Have in place a records management policy covering information security, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing) policies
- Retain the records needed for business, regulatory, legal and accountability purposes
- Have in place systems that enable records to be stored and retrieved as necessary
- Know what records are held, where they are and ensure that they remain usable
- Ensure that records are stored securely and that access to them is controlled
- Define how long records should be kept for, and dispose of them when no longer needed
- Ensure that records shared with other bodies or held on their behalf are managed in accordance with the code
- Monitor compliance with the code

Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities as adopted by Tower Hamlets Council

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Information-Management/Records-management/Retention-scheduling/DR-Retention-Schedule-2-0.pdf

APPENDIX III - STAFF INTERVIEWED

BDO LLP appreciates the time provided by all the individuals involved in this review and would like to thank them for their assistance and cooperation.

NAME	JOB TITLE
Angela Abbott	Head of Housing
Stuart Morris	Interim Housing Manager
Sharon McBride	Housing Support Team Leader
Nicola Marsh	Housing Manager
Rob Burton	Housing Contracts Manager (secondment from Basildon Council)
Gill Matthews	Housing Administration Assistant
Lauren Kealey	Tenant Participation Coordinator
Michael Hanson	Housing Officer
Vijay Parmar	Housing IT Consultant
Zoe Chittick	Housing Options Officer

NAME	JOB TITLE
Alistair Greer	Principle Accountant (Financial Reporting)
Chris Houghton	Systems Accountant
Phoebe Barnes	HRA Accountant
Jane Mitchell	Payments & Procurement Officer
Russell Clinker	Senior Asset Manager
Adrian Tidbury	Estate and Valuation Surveyor Portfolio Development

APPENDIX IV - DEFINITIONS

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	DESIGN of internal control framework		OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS of internal controls	
	Findings from review	Design Opinion	Findings from review	Effectiveness Opinion
Substantial	Appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.	No, or only minor, exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.
Moderate	In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks reviewed albeit with some that are not fully effective.	Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions.	A small number of exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	Evidence of non compliance with some controls, that may put some of the system objectives at risk.
Limited	A number of significant gaps identified in the procedures and controls in key areas. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved.	A number of reoccurring exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk.
No	For all risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Poor system of internal control.	Due to absence of effective controls and procedures, no reliance can be placed on their operation. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Non compliance and/or compliance with inadequate controls.

Recommendation Significance	
High	A weakness where there is substantial risk of loss, fraud, impropriety, poor value for money, or failure to achieve organisational objectives. Such risk could lead to an adverse impact on the business. Remedial action must be taken urgently.
Medium	A weakness in control which, although not fundamental, relates to shortcomings which expose individual business systems to a less immediate level of threatening risk or poor value for money. Such a risk could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management and requires prompt specific action.
Low	Areas that individually have no significant impact, but where management would benefit from improved controls and/or have the opportunity to achieve greater effectiveness and/or efficiency.

APPENDIX V - TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

The Council's Corporate Plan 2016 to 2019 reflects the prioritisation of Housing within the Borough and includes the following vision relating to Housing Management:

We will work to ensure our Housing stock is managed so that it delivers comfortable and safe homes for our tenants that are efficient and sustainable

The following data is from the Housing revenue Account Income & Expenditure Statement 2015/16 and supporting notes:

- £6,793,000 total expenditure of which £2,048,000 was expenditure on repairs and maintenance
- £11,993,000 Income from dwelling rents, and £484,000 from non-dwelling rents
- £280,000 net rent arrears as at 31 March 2016 (includes provision for doubtful debts)

Council Housing stock, as at the 31 March 2016, was:

- 1,150 flats
- 1,316 houses and bungalows
- 7 equity share properties

The Council has recently revised its Housing Strategy (2017-2020) in response to a changing economic climate and an increasing demand for social housing. The strategy recognises the need for community based solutions, working effectively with other housing, social and health care providers, and to use resources efficiently and effectively to address housing needs

PURPOSE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review is to consider the design and operational effectiveness of the controls in place to manage the risks relating to Housing, and to highlight any areas where the controls might be improved.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The review will consider the adequacy of arrangements relating to management of housing stock, maintenance of the housing asset register and collection and recording of housing rents.

EXCLUSIONS

Our work is limited to the elements defined within the scope of the review and key risks. Our work does not include the following additional concerns raised by BBC staff: verification of properties between the Housing list and Council Asset Register and the tenancy allocations from HRA and General Fund properties and repairs recharging for Brentwood Housing Trust, testing of agreements to compare scope against the Asset Register, Housing team storage of asset related information, exception reporting of Housing asset related issues, upload of information from the Locata system (housing advice, homelessness and prevention) to Orchard (Housing management), and records maintenance and tenancy management for sheltered housing.

APPROACH

Our approach will be to conduct interviews to establish the controls in operation for each area of audit work. We will then seek documentary evidence that these controls are designed as described. We will evaluate these controls to identify whether they adequately address the risks. Any opportunities identified to improve arrangements will be offered for consideration alongside recommendations to resolve any weakness in controls.

APPENDIX VI - TERMS OF REFERENCE

KEY RISKS

Based upon the risk assessment undertaken during the development of the internal audit operational plan, through discussions with management, and our collective audit knowledge and understanding, the key risks associated with the area under review are:

Management of Housing Stock

- Records of housing stock are incomplete or inaccurate, or are not reconciled to the Housing Asset Register
- Requirements for cyclical and responsive repairs and maintenance are not defined, or not adhered to
- Estate management protocols are not defined, or staff do not adhere to them
- Vulnerable tenants are not identified or the Council is not responsive to their needs

Maintenance of the Housing Asset Register

- Roles and responsibilities for maintenance of the Housing Asset register are not clearly defined or not understood by staff
- Properties within the Housing Asset Register are clearly and accurately allocated to the Housing Revenue Account
- The Housing Asset Register is not updated to reflect properties bought or sold by the Council

Collection and Recording of Housing Rents

- Tenants are not invoiced correctly and on a timely basis for rents due
- Income is not promptly and accurately allocated to Tenant accounts
- Income allocated to rent accounts is not reconciled to income systems and the ledger
- Accounts in credit are not subject to regular review

Tenant records

- Tenancy records are dispersed or do not include all required information, which inhibits effective tenancy management

DOCUMENTATION REQUEST

Please provide the following documents in advance of our review (where possible):

- Records of Housing Stock and the Housing Asset Register, and the last reconciliation between these records
- Estate Management strategy, protocols or procedures
- Details of procedures, roles and responsibilities for maintenance of the Housing Asset Register
- Protocols for invoicing tenants, an example invoice and details of payment options offered to tenants
- Details of reconciliations between Housing system, income collection system and general ledger
- Report of tenant accounts in credit

Any documents provided will assist the timely completion of our fieldwork, however we may need to request further documentation and evidence as we progress through the review process.

Access to information/staff

Any unreasonable delay in gaining access to required information or key members of staff will place audit timings at risk and may result in additional fees to you. Any such charges would be notified to you and agreed at the time the issue is identified.

Timing changes and cancellation:

In accepting this Terms of Reference document you are agreeing to the timing of this audit (specified on p.4). We will make every effort to accommodate timing changes or cancellation of the audit however any changes within 3 weeks of the start of the fieldwork may result in fees being charged in respect of the audit. Changes with more than 3 weeks' notice will be accommodated at no charge.

APPENDIX VI - TERMS OF REFERENCE


TIMETABLE

Audit Stage	Date
Commence fieldwork	30 June 2017
Number of audit days planned	20 days
Planned date for closing meeting	w/c 28 August 2017
Planned date for issue of the draft report	w/c 4 September 2017
Planned date for receipt of management responses	w/c 11 September 2017
Planned date for issue of proposed final report	w/c 18 September 2017
Planned Audit Committee date for presentation of report	TBC

KEY CONTACTS

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Angela Mitchell	Senior Auditor	T: 01473 320 748 e: angela.mitchell@bdo.co.uk
Brentwood Borough Council		
John Chance	Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer)	t: 01277 312 542 e: john.chance@brentwood.gov.uk
Angela Williams	Head of Housing	t: 01277 312 568 e: angela.williams@brentwood.gov.uk
Nicola Marsh	Housing Manager	t: 01277 312 981 e: nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk
Stuart Morris	Housing Options Team Leader	t: 01277 312 500 e: stuart.morris@brentwood.gov.uk

SIGN OFF

On behalf of BDO LLP:		On behalf of Brentwood Borough Council:	
Signature:		Signature:	Angela Williams (via email)
Title:	HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT	Title:	HEAD OF HOUSING
Date:	23 June 2016	Date:	7 July 2017

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Management Update - June
2018

Brentwood Borough Council

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Audit 11. Housing

May 2017

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	
Design	Operational Effectiveness
Limited	Limited

Draft



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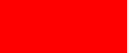


REPORT STATUS	
Auditors:	Angela Mitchell
Dates work performed:	March 2017 to May 2017
Closing Meeting:	6 June 2017
Draft report issued:	8 June 2017
Final report issued:	

DISTRIBUTION LIST	
John Chance	Finance Director (S151 Officer)
Angela Williams	Head of Housing
Stuart Morris	Interim Housing Manager

Restrictions of use

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our audit and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. The report has been prepared solely for the management of the organisation and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. BDO LLP neither owes nor accepts any duty to any third party whether in contract or in tort and shall not be liable, in respect of any loss, damage or expense which is caused by their reliance on this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL VISION		
Work to ensure our Housing stock is managed so that it delivers comfortable and safe homes for our tenants that are efficient and sustainable		
LEVEL OF ASSURANCE (SEE APPENDIX II FOR DEFINITIONS)		
Design	Limited	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved
Effectiveness	Limited	Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (SEE APPENDIX II FOR DEFINITIONS)		
High		3
Medium		7
Low		2
Total number of recommendations: 12		

OVERVIEW

Background:
 Council Housing stock, as at the 31 March 2016, was: 1,159 flats, 1,320 houses and bungalows, and 7 equity share properties, and the Council has recognised an increasing demand for social housing. In 2015/16 the Council spent £5.3m on Housing of which £2.9m was expenditure on repairs and maintenance.
 Our review considered the adequacy of arrangements relating to Housing stock (due diligence checks and fraud prevention, debt recovery and compliance checks), Right to Buy (governance, checks on qualifying criteria, valuations and tenant advice) Housing maintenance contractual arrangements and Leaseholder Service Charge accounts (apportionment and billing).

From our review, we noted the following areas of good practice:

- Pre-tenancy, home seeker and transfer applicant checklists are used to ensure required due diligence checks are made on applicants, and photographs of applicants are obtained as part of the application process and retained with the tenant files
- There is a fraud referral process, with online forms being directed to the Council’s Fraud Officer
- The Housing Team maintain oversight of current tenant arrears, and have made adjustments expected to improve recovery.

However, we also noted the following areas of improvement:

- Fraud risk awareness varied amongst staff. Staff did not make best use of the information available to them to detect potential fraud and the copying of documents provided by tenants was not made with consideration of fraud risks (Finding 1 - High)
- Although Compliance checks were undertaken by the contractor providing remedial works, the Council has not had access to Compliance certificates for the majority of its housing stock. There were no protocols for ensuring the contractor ceased to provide checks on sold properties, or that these checks were recharged for leaseholder properties, and some compliance checks were reported to have not been carried out at all, or performed less frequently than required (Finding 2 - High)
- Contract management has not been effective through the life of the Housing Contracts, and contractors have not complied with key requirements (Finding 3 - High)
- Tenancy checks and audits are not regularly undertaken on all tenants (Finding 4 - Medium)
- Former tenant arrears are not subject to current recovery action, and management information for arrears and aged debts could be improved (Finding 5 - Medium)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (Continued)

OVERVIEW

Continued:

(Areas of improvement):

- There were inconsistencies in records of Right to Buy applications (between a spreadsheet record and the Housing Management system) (Finding 6 - Medium)
- Evidence of appropriate checks on Right to Buy applications did not exist for all applications (Finding 7 - Medium)
- Valuations for Right to Buy sales do not include identity checks on tenants (Finding 8 - Medium)
- Tenancy agreements could not be located for some tenancies, there were discrepancies in the upload of information on charging for leaseholder properties and records did not enable reconciliation of total service charges and allocation of those charges (Finding 9 - Medium)
- Records are not maintained of details of surveys and inspections carried out to review contractor inspection reports and work requirements, or of tests conducted by Council staff and there is no system for ensuring queries are resolved (Finding 10 - Medium)

Conclusion

We have issued 3 High, and 8 Medium priority findings, and have issued an opinion of Limited for both the design and the effectiveness of the Housing systems, reflecting that whilst there are some areas of good practice, there were also areas of weakness and opportunities for improvement to be developed, such as fraud prevention and detection (in various areas), contract management, arrears recovery, leasehold charges and records of inspections and surveys.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Front line staff are not trained to identify fake or forged documents, or fraud warning signs, or they do not refer potential fraud for investigation

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
1.	<p>We consulted front line staff to identify fraud awareness and detection procedures and reviewed the related processes. We identified the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all Housing Officers had received fraud awareness training and whilst officers were aware of some Housing fraud risks and indicators, this understanding was not consistent across all potential Housing frauds Whilst some in tenancy checks are made on tenants, there are no consistent arrangements for in tenancy checks on secure tenants, the only opportunity is at the annual gas service (see also page 6) Whilst tenant photographs are held on files, the requirements of the contractors appointed to undertake annual checks (gas and servicing) do not include fraud tenancy checks and the occupants are not subject to verification against photographs. Some responsive in-tenancy checks are made, although staff do not consistently check against photographs and photographs are not held for all tenants Whilst staff are aware of the need to report fraud to the Fraud Officer, Housing staff advised the Fraud Officer instructed Housing staff to make initial investigations. Staff advised they undertake some investigations themselves and have occasionally sought to observe properties and tenants as part of their investigations. The Council's Fraud officer is trained in investigation protocols which maximise the likelihood of successful outcomes through proper treatment of suspects and retention of evidence Housing staff advise that identity documents provided by tenants or applicants are copied by Reception desk staff. The Reception staff advised that they copy documents but do not verify them, and that tenants regularly bring in photocopies of their documents which are accepted without question. <p>There is a high risk of tenancy fraud. Guidance has been published on measures to detect and prevent such fraud. A summary of the key risks and measures, learning from others and fraud identification is included in Appendices I, II and III.</p>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Training is provided to relevant staff on Housing Fraud risk identification b) Protocols for in-tenancy audit checks on tenants are determined, to include secure tenants c) Photographs are obtained to identify all tenants d) Consideration is given to using photographs held for periodic verification of all tenants. This may require consideration of the scope of contracts and data sharing protocols (see also page 19 regarding Fair Processing Notices) e) The Housing Team and Fraud officer agree protocols for investigation which ensure potential fraud investigations are overseen by a suitably trained person f) Housing staff are reminded of the requirements of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act in relation to surveillance and investigation activity g) Protocols for checking and copying identity documents are established.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
See next page		<p><i>Responsible Officers: Nicola Marsh, Stuart Morris</i> <i>Implementation Date: December 2017</i></p>	

Management Response

June - Update

(B) In progress - There has been a delay in implementing a tenancy audit protocol due to the significant staff resources that would require an annual tenancy audit. However, Interim measures are in place for tenancy checks for tenants that (a) require a transfer (b) amendment to tenancy (c) are in significant credit balances and (d) in rent arrears that require a home visit. A UDC has been created on Orchard to identify when a tenancy audit has been completed and reports can be generated in order to monitor the number of audits that have been carried out.

March - Update

- (a) Complete - Mandatory Fraud Identification risk training was held on the 26th September for all Housing Staff and was circulated to other front-line officers, such as the Contact Centre staff and the Council's Fraud Officer.
- (b) A Housing Audit working group has been created to consider options to implement to a tenancy audit protocol
- (c) Currently, photographs are obtained of all applicants that apply for the Housing and transfer registers & tenants, tenants that apply for mutual exchanges and apply for any other type of amendment to their existing tenancy. The Housing Audit working group will consider options to widen this to include within any regular tenancy audit.
- (d) As B & C
- (e) Complete - Mandatory Preventing and Detecting Housing Fraud training was held 19th September has been arranged for all Housing Staff and will be circulated to other front-line Officers, such as the Contact Centre staff and the Council's Fraud Officer.
- (f) Complete - Staff that are required to undertake investigations as part of their duties have been advised of activities that fall within RIPA and that the Council's Fraud Officer would only have the powers to undertake them. Staff are advised to request management authorisation in advance and refer to the Council's Fraud Officer. This includes the use of electronic data sources.
- (g) The implementation of a protocol around the checking of documentation will be agreed by the Housing Audit working group following both planned training session.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Health and safety checks, such as gas compliance, electrical safety and fire safety, are not carried out as required, or evidence of checks is not maintained

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
2.	<p>There are no written procedures identifying protocols for compliance checks.</p> <p>Compliance checks are undertaken by an appointed contractor. We noted the following relating to the arrangements for Compliance checks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas and electrical checks are made by the same contractor appointed to carry out the gas and electrical remedial works. Although this arrangement facilitates prompt quoting for remedial works by the contractor, it also leads to a risk that remedial work requirements are exaggerated • The contract requires suppliers to maintain portal interfaces with the Council which enable the Council to access information and certificates. However these links have not been provided and consequently the Council does not hold the majority of certificates for either gas or electrical checks on properties. (The Compliance Manager does review records of dates of checks as notified by the contractors, and advised he has been provided with just 88 certificates relating to 2578 properties) • The Compliance Manager maintains records of Compliance checks on a spreadsheet rather than on the Housing management system. We understand that the Housing Management system does have the facility to hold such records (although the Compliance Manager advised he has not received training on this) • The Compliance Manager maintains a spreadsheet record of pending and overdue Compliance checks. He considered that future contracts should require the contractor to notify the Council of any pending or overdue Compliance checks • Our sample check identified that for 2 out of 3 properties sold via the Right to Buy process, the contractor had continued to perform Compliance checks. We understand there is no systematic process for notifying the contractor of sold properties to be removed from the checklist, or ensuring that leaseholders are recharged for checks made <p>Continued:</p>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Written procedures are prepared to define protocols and procedures for Compliance checks b) Contractual arrangements for provision of gas and electrical checks are reviewed to establish independence between provision of checks and remedial works c) In the absence of direct access to contractor systems by the Council, Contractors are required to provide copies of all current gas and electrical safety certificates d) Effective contract management is undertaken to ensure the contractors provide interfaces enabling Council access to systems and certificates as required by the contract (see also page 8) e) The housing management system is used for recording information relating to Compliance checks f) Training is provided as required to ensure officers are able to maximise use of the Housing management system g) Consideration is given to the inclusion of requirements for contractor provision of exception reporting on pending and overdue Compliance checks in future contracts h) The Council determines arrangements for notifying the contractor of any sold properties for which Compliance checks are no longer the Council's responsibility and for charging leaseholders where the Council retains any residual responsibility for these checks

Management Response

June – Update

(A) **In progress** – Following completion of the external review of gas and asbestos, a fire management review has been conducted and a fire management policy is due to be presented to the C,H & H committee on the 3rd July 2018. (B) **In progress** – The external review of our gas compliancy procedures has been completed and was found to be robust and appropriate. The external consultants are confirmed to be appointed for 1 month in-house to carry out further reviews and upskill key staff. (C) **Complete** (D) **Complete** – as March update below (E) **In progress** – The data cleansing exercise is ongoing, further configuration/upgrade to Keystone is required which has been authorised. Staff resource for is being provided under managed repairs service with Basildon BC. (F) **Complete**. (G) **Complete** – as March update below. (H) **Complete**

March - Update:

As previously reported, we have now received the Managed Service Proposal from Basildon BC. This was approved in principle at the Joint Partnership Board and a report is due to be presented at Extraordinary Council for approval on the 21st March 2018. However, we have also made the following progress;

- a. **In progress** – External Compliance Specialist Consultants were engaged to undertake a review of existing protocols and procedures for all compliancy matters. The review of Gas and Asbestos compliancy has been completed and action plans have been prepared in order to address compliancy issues highlighted. Once these reviews have been concluded then arrangements will be made to conduct further compliancy reviews as identified being required.
- b. **In progress** - We have recently employed a member of staff who specialises in M&E and has the relevant experience to ensure that contractual arrangements for provision of gas and electrical checks are reviewed to establish independence between provision of checks and remedial works. Further, we engaged External Compliance Specialist Consultants to carry out a review exercise of our existing provisions. We are currently considering the possibility of engaging them on an ongoing basis to assist longer term in putting in place a robust independent procedure as identified.
- c. **Complete** – Oakray now provide hard copies of electrical & gas certificates
- d. **Pending** – Due to both the Wates and Oakray contract ending in June 2019 an I.T interface is now not a viable option. However, this is a focal point for the new contract and is a key requirement for a new contractor. Both Wates and Oakray are now providing information on a regular basis and on request.
- e. **In progress** - Keystone is the Councils Asset Management system for recording compliance related activity for Housing Assets. Keystone were required to complete a piece of I.T work to the system which has been completed and we now have a data cleansing exercise to be completed.
- f. **Pending** - Training is provided as required to ensure officers are able to maximise use of the Housing management system
- g. **In progress** - We are currently undergoing a procurement exercise in relation to the current Wates & Oakray contract which terminates from June 2019. Requirements for contractor provision of exception reporting on pending and overdue Compliance checks will be included in the procurement/tender documentation
- h. **Complete** – An automated Housing Asset list is issued to both contractors on a monthly basis. In addition the Right to Buy Officer also notifies both Contractors when a property is subject to 'Right to Buy' and then sold.

Previous Response;

We had already identified that there likely were a number of long-standing service issues within the repairs service, which included a lack of contract management, written policies/procedures which had only recently come to light following staffing changes within the repairs service.

We have been proactively addressing these issues in advance of this Audit report. We are in the process of agreeing a managed service provision with Basildon Borough Council.

In addition, Basildon have provided us with a Project Manager on a secondment basis to review the areas of deficiency within the Service and provide recommendations for improvement together with responsibility for the overall for all operational management on a day to day basis.

Changes have been made to the repairs team, which has resulted in the replacement of the compliance manager with a Contracts Administrator, who has a significant experience of working in Local Authorities and managing Contractors.

We have also begun the re-procurement process for the existing Wates/Oakray contract which are due to expire in 2019.

Responsible Officers: Robert Burton, Nicola Marsh

Implementation date: April 2018

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Health and safety checks, such as gas compliance, electrical safety and fire safety, are not carried out as required, or evidence of checks is not maintained

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
2. Cont.	<p>(Continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Compliance Manager advised that fire safety checks should be completed on blocks every year, although his spreadsheet identifies that checks are only required every 2-3 years for some blocks. We understand that the frequency of checks should be determined through a risk assessment of the blocks Asbestos registers should be retained for each property. We tested a sample of 10 properties for evidence of asbestos checks and for these there were no checks recorded for 8 properties and only a partial check for 1 property (Therefore only 1 of the 10 properties tested had evidence of a full asbestos check) The Compliance Manager advised that water risk assessments should be made for every communal tank and block. He stated he was satisfied that checks were made for sheltered accommodation and believed that records were retained in the sheltered schemes. However the Council should clarify the extent of such checks and the storage of records and the requirements for all housing types. <p>If compliance risks are not adequately managed there is a risk that a breach will occur and that the Council will be financially liable for this.</p>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Risk assessments are carried out and recorded to ensure fire safety checks on blocks are scheduled at appropriate intervals j) Asbestos checks are carried out on all properties and records retained of the checks k) The Council ensures that water risk assessments are carried out as required and that records are maintained of these checks for all housing types.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
See next page		<p><i>Responsible Officers: Nicola Marsh, Rob Burton</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: April 2018</i></p>	

June - Update

All compliancy work is being carried out under the Managed Repairs service with Basildon.

(I) **Complete** – Risk assessments are complete and a programme of works are being prepared under 'Safety first'. The fire management Policy is due to be presented to the July C,H&H committee for approval. Rowans have been engaged to undertake all future risk assessments when due for review. (J) **Complete** – As March below and Asbestos risk assessments and work carried out will be conducted across all of the Housing Stock over the next 3 years. (K) **Pending** – As March below and Assessments are due to be carried out on all communal water tanks across the General Needs Housing Stock in June 2018.

March - Update:

- i) **In progress** – Initial risk assessments were carried out on all high risk accommodation, which is to be carried out for all flatted accommodation which has a communal area. Rowans have been engaged as our specialist Fire Risk Consultants to proceed with this work and in addition assist us in developing a Fire Policy.
- j) **In progress** – Asbestos surveys are now carried out on void properties and we have engaged specialist consultants to carry out independent surveys and removal works. Ridge have been engaged to provide assistance to in reviewing our existing processes and policy. The development of Keystone is ongoing to enable us to have a central Asset database to develop an Asbestos register.
- k) **Pending** – Currently, water risk assessments are carried out on all in-house sheltered Accommodation. We will commence a review of the water policy once the more immediate reviews that were required are concluded.

Previous response;

Risk assessments have been carried out on all high rise accommodation which is being rolled out to include all flatted accommodation. We are in the process of agreeing a rolling programme for risk assessments. (j) Currently, asbestos surveys are carried out on void properties only, we are currently reviewing our existing processes to ensure that we can create an asbestos register by implementing the Asset management system (keystone). (k) Water risk assessments are currently carried out on sheltered housing as part of the main Oakray Contract. We are reviewing our existing processes to enable this to be held centrally via the Asset Management System

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: The Housing Stock Condition Survey specification does not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for identifying and reporting stock condition, housing maintenance contracts do not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for agreement of planned and reactive maintenance work to be carried out

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
3.	<p>The Council’s arrangements to manage the Housing Contracts has changed since the commencement of the contracts that we reviewed. The current contract manager arrived after the commencement of the contracts and the handover information about contract management activity provided to him was limited.</p> <p>Our review of the Stock Condition Survey specification confirmed the scope and arrangements were defined, however contract management has not been robust, and whilst performance requirements were defined, there were no penalty clauses for non-compliance. We understand previous Council employees held meetings with the contractor but these were not minuted (later meetings have been so), and that where changes have occurred to contract provision (such as delayed performance), these have not been formally resolved or approved via Variation Orders.</p> <p>The contractor delayed performance of the checks required and provision of evidence of the checks, and at the time of our review had not provided photographs to evidence the checks made in accordance with contractual requirements. The photographic evidence was a significant part of the requirements and their absence or late supply reduced the opportunity for the Council to verify the stock position and would require resources by the Council to reference them to properties. In addition, the contractor was required to perform quality checks of 5% of fieldwork data, but no evidence of these checks was provided.</p> <p>The contractor was required to provide photographic evidence of (amongst other things) any deviation in the information provided by the Council. However the Council provided the contractor with ‘cleansed data’ which removed the ability for the Council to enforce this requirement. We were advised that due to the way the data was provided to the contractor the Commercial Manager would now need to look for differences between the original Council data and the Contractor provided data.</p> <p>Continued:</p>	High	<p>a) Methods used to ensure contractor compliance with contract performance requirements, including completion and submission of information, should be strengthened. Such arrangements should also include penalty clauses for non-compliance</p> <p>b) Effective, robust contract management arrangements are determined for Housing contracts, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention of documentation of contract management activity Contractor performance and provision of performance information in accordance with the contract, including records of agreed action to resolve performance issues Contractor provision of IT interfaces and other contractual requirements in accordance with the contract Where changes in contract provision are agreed by the Council, these are formally approved via the issue of Variation Orders Submission to the housing team of evidence of checks where they are required to be made by the contractor <p>Continued:</p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: The Housing Stock Condition Survey specification does not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for identifying and reporting stock condition, housing maintenance contracts do not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for agreement of planned and reactive maintenance work to be carried out

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
3. Cont.	<p>Continued:</p> <p>We understand that payments have been based on the number of surveys undertaken by the contractor, however the required photographs were not supplied with the surveys (see above), and therefore payments may not have been a true reflection of the value of work carried out.</p> <p>The contractor has not been requested to provide statements of compliance with key contract requirements. The current contract manager considers that whilst existence of the term in the contract provides adequate potential for enforcing the requirements, this should have been dealt with at the pre-contract meeting and that there is little benefit to be gained from pursuing these now. We consider that where the contract requires the contractor to do something, then this should still be pursued by the Council.</p> <p>In addition, Housing staff have identified concerns regarding the Housing contracts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors have not provided the information required by contracts and have not developed fully functioning interfaces to link the contractor and Council systems as required by the contracts. This restricts Council access to information on works, documents and certificates and results in the need for duplication of input by the Council. Whilst the interface is a contractual requirement, contract performance or default measures do not reflect on this element of the service provision and contract management has been inconsistent during the life of the contract One contract makes provision for basket rates to be used for works, with any additional work to be charged according to schedule. We understand the contractor generally prices works according to schedule (which results in higher overall charges) 	High	<p>b) Continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for the contractor to provide evidence of compliance with key contract requirements Contract pricing protocols applied <p>c) Payments to contractors should reflect the extent of provision of service against the agreed contract terms</p> <p>d) Benchmarking of rates and uplifts is undertaken and where appropriate consideration is given to contract options (including negotiation or termination).</p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: The Housing Stock Condition Survey specification does not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for identifying and reporting stock condition, housing maintenance contracts do not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for agreement of planned and reactive maintenance work to be carried out

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
3. Cont.	<p>Continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rates provided by contracts are complex and include significant price uplifts and a high annual price uplift. <p>If contracts are not managed adequately there is a risk of financial loss and inadequate service provision.</p> <p>(See also pages 18 relating to Electrical surveys).</p>	High	
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
See next page		<p><i>Responsible Officers: Rob Burton, Nicola Marsh</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: Ongoing - April 18</i></p>	

Management Response

June – Update: In progress - We now have a managed repairs service with Basildon BC, who have responsibility for all aspects of contract management. Interim arrangements have made until the new Brentwood team are in place who will be employed by Basildon BC anticipated for September 2018. We also have additional staffing resources based at Basildon provided, which include Asset Management, Compliancy Management and I.T resources available.

March - Update:

We engaged Keegans to undertake a review of our existing processes which confirmed there were a number of gaps in our contract management, and particularly in relation to up lift elements within the Contract. We are also considering engaging Keegans on a longer term basis to assist with implementing improved audit mechanisms to manage in particular the Oakray contract, in addition, have now also engaged a member of staff who has significant expertise in this area around M&E.

Previous response;

We had already identified that there likely were a number of long-standing service issues within the repairs service, which included a lack of contract management, written policies/procedures which had only recently come to light following staffing changes within the repairs service.

We have been proactively addressing these issues in advance off this Audit report. We are in the process of agreeing a managed service provision with Basildon Borough Council.

In addition, Basildon have provided us with a Project Manager on a secondment basis to review the areas of deficiency within the Service and provide recommendations for immediate improvement together with responsibility for the overall for all operational management on a day to day basis.

Changes have been made to the repairs team, which has resulted in the replacement of the compliancy manager with a Contracts Administrator, who has a significant experience of working in Local Authorities and managing Contractors.

We have also begun the re-procurement process for the existing Wates/Oakray contract which are due to expire in 2019, which will address all of the recommendations.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Due diligence checks are not made on tenants prior to the commencement of the tenancy, and Due diligence checks are not undertaken periodically during the tenancy, including tenancy audits

Ref	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
4.	<p>The Housing Team have prepared checklists to ensure due diligence checks are made prior to commencement of tenancies. Staff record outcomes of checks made and identify the support needed by the tenant to enable them to maintain their tenancies. New tenants are visited at 6 weeks, 6 months and 9 months into their tenancy.</p> <p>For existing tenants, opportunities for in-tenancy checks arise when Housing staff respond to service requests, complaints, arrears recovery and at the annual gas servicing. There are no tenancy audits or checks regularly undertaken on all tenants.</p> <p>In addition, whilst the Council does hold photographs of tenants, these are not available to the Contractor undertaking the annual gas servicing and tenancy checks are not required by the contract, therefore there is a missed opportunity to ensure only approved tenants are resident in Council social housing.</p> <p>(See also page 4)</p>	Med	<p>a) Pre-tenancy and in-tenancy check policies are established which include protocols to address tenancy fraud risks (covering application, subletting, succession, key selling, right to buy and right to acquire fraud), and which ensure compliance with Data Protection Act requirements</p> <p>b) Policies are communicated to staff, tenants and any delivery partners.</p>
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p>(a) Pre-tenancy checks are already in place and has recently been revised to include additional I.D checks. These new protocols have also been incorporated into other tenancy areas. (b) Existing policies & procedures have been re-drafted and circulated to all staff</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>			<p><i>Responsible Officers: Angela Abbott, Nicola Marsh</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: July 2017</i></p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: debt collection and recovery procedures are inadequate to ensure that delays in receipt of rent payments and loss of income is minimised			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
5.	<p>The Housing Management system enables progression of recovery of current tenant arrears through recommended actions, in accordance with predetermined criteria and procedures, using pro-forma letters to tenants to prompt payment. Regular monitoring of current tenant arrears is undertaken. The Housing team consider current tenant arrears to be at a reasonable level (at 2.21% of rent due at 27 March 2017).</p> <p>Current tenant arrears are analysed geographically by patch and areas within patches, and also by debt type (for example current tenant arrears, temporary accommodation, etc) and KPI data is maintained including for rent collected and rent arrears. The arrears records do not provide a breakdown of the age of debts, or the cases at different key stages of recovery.</p> <p>The recovery of former tenant arrears has not been subject to recent efforts to recover outstanding debts. A former arrangement with a debt collection agency did not result in any significant reduction in former tenant arrears and there is not currently any cross check to Council Taxpayer records which may provide information to support recovery. The Housing Team advised current resources are not sufficient to enable recovery from former tenants, and provided the following arrears summary for former tenant arrears:</p> <p><u>Former Tenant Arrears:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Account (245 accounts) £143,720.58 • Court costs (63 accounts) £ 19,344.24 • Bankruptcy (10 accounts) £ 15,756.47 • Non Secure Former Tenants (172 accounts) £ 65,464.71 • Garage arrears (129 accounts) £ 9,999.80 <p>(The age of these arrears is not identified in current reports).</p> <p>We understand that delays in the processing of benefit claims and changes in circumstances have impacted on recovery of tenant arrears</p>	Med	<p>a) Arrears reporting is developed to include the age of debts, the cases at each key stage of recovery and additional management information is provided accordingly</p> <p>b) Management determine recovery protocols (to recover or write off former tenant arrears). This decision should be supported by additional management information on age of debts and action already taken and consideration could also be given to checks against Council tax records or credit checks to enable tracing of former tenants.</p> <p>c) The impact of delays in processing benefit claims and changes in circumstances is identified and where appropriate raised with the service provider</p>
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
(a) (b) We are currently recruiting for a full time debt recovery officer who will have responsibility for developing and implementing processes around former tenant debts.		<i>Responsible Officers: Nicola Marsh</i>	
COMPLETED - Debt Recovery Officer recruited		<i>Implementation Date: October 2017</i>	

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Governance arrangements, including authorisation routes and clarity of procedures and processes for dealing with Right to Buy applications, are inadequate

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
6.	<p>Right to Buy records are held on the Housing Management system and also on a spreadsheet, however the information recorded on the spreadsheet is unreliable, as our review of the spreadsheet identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gaps in the sequences of Right to Buy application references differences between references recorded on the spreadsheet and the Housing Management System that information on the spreadsheet was incomplete and not up to date. <p>We understand that some of the spreadsheet information is duplicated on the Housing Management system, but that the Housing Management system is capable of recording all required information. The spreadsheet is maintained to enable Housing staff to view the status of applications. Having the access to information on status of Right to Buy applications would be better provided through the Housing Management system. If this requires a review and update of access permissions, this should be done to enable the right staff to have the access they need, rather than by maintaining duplicate and inconsistent information.</p>	Med	<p>a) Right to Buy Information is input to and managed via the Housing Management system, removing the need for duplication of input to a spreadsheet</p> <p>b) Access permissions to the Housing Management system are reviewed to enable appropriate staff to identify the status of applications.</p>
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p>June - Update - As update below</p> <p>(a) (b) Existing RTB procedures are currently being reviewed in accordance with the audit report.</p>			<p><i>Responsible Officers: Nicola Marsh</i></p> <p><i>Implementation October 2017</i></p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Tenancy audits, including checks on identity, residency and tenancy history / qualifying period, are not carried out on applicants to ensure the applicant qualifies for Right to Buy

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
7.	The Officer dealing with Right to Buy applications advised that for applications he receives he initiates checks via the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) and also checks the application against Benefits, Council Tax and Electoral Register records. However the inconsistencies on the spreadsheet records (see page 13) and the inability to locate evidence of some checks suggest that checks may not have been consistently undertaken for previous Right to Buy Applications.	Med	<p>Consideration is given to performing checks on previous Right to Buy applications to verify the applicant's entitlement to the Right to Buy discount.</p> <p>(Any queries arising from these checks should be referred to the Council's Fraud Officer).</p>
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p>Checks in process as recommended. All RTB applications are referred to the Council's Fraud Officer when submitted in order to assist in the prevention of fraudulent applications.</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>			<p><i>Responsible Officers: Angela Abbott, Nicola Marsh</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: October 2017</i></p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Property valuations are not carried out by qualified property surveyors, who have an understanding of tenancy fraud risks, prior to the Right to Buy being agreed

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
8.	<p>The Council appoints a firm of qualified surveyors to value properties and provide full reports of their valuations prior to a Right To Buy sale being agreed. Prior to this, a contracted Surveyor visits properties to record improvements made by the tenant (which are considered as part of the valuation process).</p> <p>The contracted surveyor does receive tenant photographs with the application, and advised he is aware of safeguarding protocols, but he is less familiar with fraud risks, and the appointed firm of surveyors have no contracted responsibility for identifying and reporting potential fraud.</p>	Med	Update the contract with the contracted surveyor visiting the property to record improvements made by the tenant, so that they undertake initial identity checks as part of this visit and report back their findings to the housing team.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p>In progress, currently in the process of appointing external surveyors to carry out RTB property surveys.</p> <p>COMPLETED - The Council has recently appointed external Surveyors/Valuers which will also carry out RTB valuations/surveys</p>			<p><i>Responsible Officers: Nicola Marsh</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: September 2017</i></p>

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Tenants are not billed for leaseholder service charges in accordance with approved protocols			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
9.	<p>Service charges are apportioned across all leasehold properties. For those that have been sold the leaseholder is invoiced and, for those retained by the Council as housing stock, the service charges are taken into account as part of the rent charged to tenants.</p> <p>For a sample of 12 leaseholder agreements, we compared the agreement to a spreadsheet of estimated service charge calculations (maintained by the Leasehold Management Officer) and to the billing details on the Housing Management system.</p> <p>The leaseholder agreements could not be located for 5 of the sample of 12.</p> <p>Whilst in the majority of cases sampled the amount billed to the leaseholder (as identified in the Housing Management system) agreed with the amount determined in the spreadsheet, we did note there were discrepancies in the upload to the Housing Management system where property records referred to more than one block and/or were duplicated in the spreadsheet (in these cases the leaseholders were charged double for estimated repairs). We also reviewed the 2016/17 billed estimated charges for these properties and confirmed the double charging also occurred for 2016/17. Note that at the year end the actual charges are determined and leaseholders either charged or reimbursed accordingly, therefore the initial error in 2016/17 was rectified at the year end.</p> <p>We understand that following the upload to the Housing Management system, adjustments are made on the Housing Management system to reflect special arrangements for the apportionment, therefore the spreadsheet totals will always differ to the Housing Management system totals.</p> <p>We note that the spreadsheet maintained to determine leasehold service charges identifies only those blocks with leasehold properties and does not identify the number of leasehold properties within each of the blocks. As such it does not enable calculation of the total expected income from leaseholders (and therefore cannot be reconciled back to the value of invoices raised for leasehold service charges) reducing its value as a control.</p> <p>Continued:</p>	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Leaseholder agreement storage is reviewed to ensure records including leaseholder agreements are retained for all properties b) Errors in data upload of estimated service charges to the Housing Management system are corrected and tenants reimbursed where overpayments have occurred c) Where adjustments are made to leaseholder service charges, these are identified clearly in all records to ensure transparency and enable reconciliation (see (d) below) d) The spreadsheet maintained to determine apportionment of service charges to be invoiced to leaseholders is extended to include all properties to enable confirmation that tenants and leaseholders recharges are equivalent and that recharges equate to actual costs, and these reconciliations are performed on a regular basis e) Costs relating to responsive repairs which would not be permitted to be recharged to leaseholders are removed from the calculation determining the total to be apportioned across properties f) A policy is maintained to enable determination of appropriate management service charges for apportionment g) Any adjustments required to service charges should be applied promptly to ensure accuracy of records and transparency of charging.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Tenants are not billed for leaseholder service charges in accordance with approved protocols			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
9. Cont.	<p>Continued:</p> <p>Also the above spreadsheet does not include tenanted properties. Including all properties would enable a reconciliation to Finance system records, and enable the Council to be assured that tenants and leaseholders are charged equally (staff acknowledge that at present it was possible they were not charged equally) and would also demonstrate that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Leasehold recharges + Tenant Recharges = actual costs</p> <p>We were advised that the costs of responsive repairs for tenants are included in the calculation of total repairs costs allocated across leaseholder and tenanted properties. This calculation should be reviewed as it may not equate to appropriate apportionment permitted by the leaseholder agreements. We were also advised that at the time of the review, the Leasehold Management officer was aware of an adjustment required to the charges for one block, which he would apply at the year end. Any known adjustments or corrections should be recorded and applied promptly to ensure accuracy and transparency of records and charging.</p> <p>We noted that management service charges have been frozen for 2 years as there was no policy on this, but that a policy has now been prepared for consideration by Committee in June 2017.</p>	Med	
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
		<p><i>Responsible Officers: Nicola Marsh</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: April 2018</i></p>	

MANAGEMENT UPDATE

June – Update

Revised Service charges – Complete

In progress - Leaseholder Module - The old version of the Leaseholder module on Orchard will be de-activated w/b 18th June 2018. Additional upgrading of the system will be included with the work that is currently underway with ICT which will create additional benefits to the module. A new arrears reporting system has been created which is automatically generated, which allows us to quickly highlight arrears cases.

Update:

The Service Charge Policy was presented to committee in September 2017, which was subsequently approved. The actual service charges are in the final stages and are due to be presented as part of the yearly budget setting process. Following the implementation of the DMs system on Orchard which is the Housing management System we are now looking to implement the Leaseholder Module of the system.

Previous response;

We have recently taken a Service Charge Strategy to Housing Committee that highlights the Council's intentions to implement a Service Charge Policy. The Policy itself will be going for final Committee approval In September 2017 with a view to action it at the start of the new financial year 2018/2019. This Policy outlines the items which will be charged to both Tenants and leaseholders.

As part of the final implementation process date the Council will be reviewing its processes on calculating Service Charges to ensure it is done effectively without the need for manual adjustments. We intend to have transparent calculations specific to Tenants and Leaseholders.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Maintenance works are not subject to adequate approval processes to undertake the works, and to sign off completion of the works			
Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
10.	<p>Where Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) surveys are carried out, the Inspection reports are provided by contractors also commissioned to carry out the remedial work identified, therefore the contractor quotes for all works identified on the EICR. This reflects a potential conflict of interest for the contractor. The contents of the EICR are therefore subject to review by the Compliance Manager and Council staff also conduct surveys of premises before commissioning work. The Compliance Manager advised that previously the Council was commissioning all works identified in the EICR and quote, but his review has now significantly reduced the value of orders placed for remedial work.</p> <p>The Compliance Manager advised that whilst he has significant experience in this field and he informally maintains his knowledge of current developments, he does not hold up to date certificates or qualifications which would enable him to carry out EICR inspections. Therefore the Council should consider this situation, as, if challenged, this could affect the Council's liability in the event that an identified fault led to harm following a decision not to rectify it.</p> <p>The Compliance Manager's records of his own inspections are very limited. He keeps rough notes only and there are some checks he advised he undertakes but does not maintain records of (such as alarm testing).</p> <p>The Compliance Manager also advised that where he raises a query (ie items on an EICR and quote have either not been ordered, or assessed as not required), there is no follow up process to ensure queries are resolved.</p>	Med	<p>a) The Council reviews the scope of the Compliance Manager role and essential qualifications required to perform this role</p> <p>b) Clear records are maintained of all surveys and inspections carried out, and these are retained in an accessible form (such as on the Housing Management system)</p> <p>c) Where queries are raised for entries made on an EICR, a process is developed to ensure they are followed up (and either the work or alternative work is commissioned, or the item is recorded as determined to be not required).</p> <p>See also Pages 6 & 7 regarding conflicts of interest.</p>
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
<p>The BBC Contracts Administrator of the electrical contractor reviews all requests for day to day repairs works exceeding the self-authorisation level of £250, checking costs and consideration on whether to authorise the work. With regards to electrical Inspection Condition reports (EICR's), which are undertaken by a qualified engineer. There is currently no programme to undertake these and therefore EICR's are on the main undertaken on void properties and occasionally to occasionally to occupied dwellings and landlords supplies to blocks. The relevant BBC manager questions and challenges all reports and only authorises works that are necessary to proceed. As a general rule, Code 1's (danger present) and C2's (potentially dangerous) and works to smoke and detection proceed, whilst Code 3's (improvement recommended) are considered for action by the BBC contracts administrator.</p>		<p>Responsible Officers: Rob Burton, Nicola Marsh</p> <p>Implementation Date: April 2018</p>	

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Front line staff are not trained to identify fake or forged documents, or fraud warning signs, or they do not refer potential fraud for investigation

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
11.	<p>We noted that whilst the Council has fair processing statements on the website and forms relating to the National Fraud Initiative, other Councils and Housing Associations have more detailed statements. Examples are as follows:</p> <p>www.reading.gov.uk/media/1575/Housing-Services-Fair-Processing-Notice/pdf</p> <p>www.tvha.co.uk/policy/fair-processing-statement/</p> <p>These statements are specific to the administration of social housing and include provision of information to contractors carrying out works to properties, agencies concerned with safeguarding and additional statements on the use of data for prevention and detection of fraud.</p>	Low	Enhance the Fair Processing Notice for matters relevant to the administration of social housing.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE		RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE	
<p>June - Update</p> <p>As below</p> <p>March - Update:</p> <p>The draft 'Fair Processing' statement has been drafted and is awaiting Corporate Approval</p> <p>We will include a fair processing statement for Housing on the website as recommended</p>		<p><i>Responsible Officers: Angela Abbott, Stuart Morris</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: September 2017</i></p>	

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK: Governance arrangements, including authorisation routes, and the clarity of procedures and processes for dealing with Right to Buy applications are inadequate

Ref.	Finding	Sig.	Recommendation
12.	<p>The website instructs people wishing to make a Right to Buy application to contact the Council's Housing Team. When contact is made the Officer prints a letter for the applicant and encloses it with all the advisory notices and application form.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to develop self service arrangements and Web forms to improve efficiency and drive customer focussed channel shift.</p>	Low	Right to buy information and application forms are made available for download via the Council's website. Further efficiency could also be gained through integration between submitted applications and the Housing Management system.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE
<p>Update: COMPLETE</p> <p>The Website page has been updated and a PDF form is available on line for tenants to download online.</p> <p>The Right to buy website page will be updated to include more information for tenants to include FAQ's. We will review our processes to include a link for tenants to apply on-line rather than tenants having to submit a paper copy.</p>			<p><i>Responsible Officers: Angela Abbott, Nicola Marsh</i></p> <p><i>Implementation Date: November 2017</i></p>

OBSERVATIONS

RISK: The Housing Stock Condition Survey specification does not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for identifying and reporting stock condition	
1	There have been some potential anomalies between contractor reporting of service provision and information provided by tenants. We understand that for some properties to which the Contractor advised they were unable to gain access, that residents reported no attempt was made by the contractor. As there was no requirement within the contract to leave a card at no access properties, it is possible that access was attempted without residents being aware.

APPENDIX I - TENANCY FRAUD, WARNING SIGNS & PREVENTION

The following summarises the Regulatory Framework, Tenancy Fraud risks, warning signs and prevention.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK, FRAUD TYPES, WARNING SIGNS & PREVENTION

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK:

Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England 2012

- Includes a direction to registered providers that they should ‘*publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to... tackling tenancy fraud*’

Prevention of Social Housing Bill

- Creates an offence of subletting a social tenancy or parting with possession of a socially rented property.

TYPES OF TENANCY FRAUD:

- **Application / allocation fraud:** false statements made or false documents provided to gain a property, or applying for multiple properties in different locations through different landlords
- **Subletting:** tenant rents out all or part of their property on a long or short term basis to someone on private rental rates. Credit checks may identify links with other social housing properties and social media may identify other living arrangements
- **Key selling:** tenant or employee receives one-off payment to give the keys of a property to someone who is not entitled to live there. Requests for additions to tenancy have been an indicator and residency checks used to identify this issue
- **Right to Buy / Right to Acquire Fraud:** tenant provides false information when applying to buy the house they live in
- **Succession Fraud:** person moves into a property when the legal tenant dies or moves away, but that person does not have the right to move in
- **Business use:** examples of previous indicators included overgrown garden or suspicious pattern of energy use.

TENANCY FRAUD WARNING SIGNS:

- No contact with tenant for period of time
- No repairs raised
- Difficulties gaining access for annual gas servicing
- Households where assignment or succession has been refused
- Credit on rent / significant credit, or rent paid in cash
- Rent paid from account belonging to someone other than the registered tenant
- High arrears on rent
- Antisocial behaviour
- High number of complaints
- Known fraud hotspots.

APPENDIX I - TENANCY FRAUD, WARNING SIGNS & PREVENTION (continued)

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK, FRAUD TYPES, WARNING SIGNS & PREVENTION

FRAUD PREVENTION GENERAL CHECKLIST:

- Policies in bribery, corruption, whistleblowing and a code of ethics, as well as organisational awareness of these
- Fraud risks included in risk register and reviewed regularly. Fraud risks to be considered as part of every new project or activity, and for changes to business processes
- Financial controls for income, purchases, payments, property and investments, as well as monitoring of compliance
- Analyse housing management and financial systems for red flag issues to follow up
- Conduct due diligence on tenants and business partners at start of tenancy and periodically thereafter. Checks with credit reference agencies, other LA's and shared fraud databases
- Vetting procedures for employee appointments and periodic checks in high risk areas (eg finance) or promotions
- Mechanisms for raising concerns / suspicions and promote these widely
- Keep up to date with latest fraud threats, remain vigilant for signs they might be occurring, ensure relevant people told of risks and are trained to deal with them
- Share best practice and lessons.

ADDITIONAL STEPS TO PREVENT / DETECT TENANCY FRAUD:

- Tenancy fraud policy covering subletting, application, succession, key selling, right to buy and right to acquire
 - Where the approach is promoted to tenants, there are much higher numbers of referrals concerning potentially misused properties and even more where there is easy reporting (hotline or online form). Promotion also acts as a deterrent
- Conduct checks on new applicants: applicants complete declarations and sign them, check identity, residency, tenancy history etc
 - Checks can include verifying forms of identification, tenancy history and household circumstances
 - Can also include credit reference check to verify tenancy history or matching data
 - Staff need training focussed on ID verification and identifying forged documents
 - Data sharing - housing providers share information about tenants with external credit referencing agencies, LA's or other housing providers. These can be used to identify where person has provided inconsistent information (eg claiming single person discount to Council Tax department, but claiming overcrowding to obtain social housing to the Housing department)
- Take colour photographs and the signatures of new tenants and review them during the tenancy
- Tenancy audits on annual, risk based or rolling basis to check the authorised tenant is still living at property. Combine these with other planned visits
- Train frontline staff to spot fake and forged documents and other fraud warning signs throughout the tenancy life cycle.

APPENDIX II - LEARNING FROM OTHERS

The following provides some examples of Housing fraud prevention and detection activity carried out by others.

Organisation	Housing Fraud Detection
Peabody Housing Association	Carry out unannounced estate visits to blitz neighbourhoods where there are concerns and carry out intensive tenancy audits. Staff are high profile and wear high vis vests. The exercises generally result in them receiving a greater number of tip offs to follow up than would have otherwise been received.
Manchester Tenancy Fraud Initiative	18 social housing providers set up a shared hotline and publicity campaign resulting in 76 reports, 7 properties recovered immediately and 35 fraud investigations. Collaboration and data sharing supports detection of fraudulent activity.
Hull City Council	Invites applicants whose housing circumstances require verification to an interview to discuss their housing situation. As part of the interview a clear definition of 'misrepresenting circumstances' is read to the applicant, explaining that if the applicant has failed to disclose information or has made false claims on their application they may be denied access to housing and may have committed an offence. Applicants are given the opportunity to amend their statements and this has led to down grading applications and withdrawal of properties on offer.

APPENDIX III - FRAUDULENT DOCUMENT AWARENESS

Finding 1 comments on document copying and checking procedures. The likelihood of fraudulent documents being detected is enhanced with staff knowledge of the potential for fraud to exist, understanding of genuine documents and awareness of how documents may be forged. This appendix provides a summary of key points to consider in assessing the legitimacy of documents provided as part of the checking process.

The following information reflects guidance provided by the National Document Fraud Unit, UK Home Office: guidance on examining identity documents 2015.

1. DOCUMENT FRAUD TYPES

Document abuse may include the following:

- Imposter - this is the most common type of document abuse, the imposter is simply a look-a-like (documents are not altered at all)
- Counterfeit - complete reproduction from scratch to resemble an official document
- Forgery - unlawful alteration of an existing document (eg substituting pages or photographs, or altering details on the document)
- Pseudo / Fantasy documents - documents have no authority and are not officially recognised.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF DOCUMENT ABUSE

Imposter
Verify signature to document.

- Forgery
- Most commonly substituted or altered page is the bio-data page
 - Pages and cover of passport should be in complete alignment and tightly bound, pages should be same size
 - Look for continuity where seals, stamps or laminates appear across photographs
 - Look for damaged paper at data points.

Pseudo / Fantasy documents - see overleaf.

- Counterfeit
- UV light - counterfeit documents often fluoresce (shine more brightly) under UV light. Genuine documents use dull secure paper
 - Watermarks - created during manufacture to vary thickness of the paper resulting in subtle changes in tone. Watermarks do not fluoresce
 - Security fibres - genuine documents may contain fibres randomly across the page which do fluoresce (and will not be in the same position on difference pages)
 - Intaglio ink - printing in areas results in ink having raised and rough feel, and is often used on the inside cover of passports. May also reveal hidden pattern when viewed at an oblique angle
 - Characters - characters in the machine readable zone should contain only these characters in this font
 - Document quality - document should be manufactured to high standard, and contain quality printing.

0123456789
 ABCDEFGHI
 JKLMNOPQR
 STUVWXYZ <

APPENDIX III - FRAUDULENT DOCUMENT AWARENESS (Continued)

3. AWARENESS OF TYPES OF DOCUMENTS WHICH MAY LEGITIMATELY BE SUBMITTED

Identity documents include passports (UK, EU and non-EU), national identity cards, residence documents, driving licences, military identity cards and official identity documents (such as police warrant card). By being familiar with the documents that may be submitted, including their endorsements and restrictions, staff are more likely to recognise documents which do not accord with protocols.

The following link provides a summary and illustrations of the types of document which may be submitted

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/503927/gov_uk_guide_-_including_impostors_270216.pdf

Home office guidance indicates the most common counterfeits are EU documents

4. WHERE TO GO FOR ADDITIONAL ADVICE

If you encounter a suspected false document, contact the Police or your local Immigration Enforcement Office

<https://www.gov.uk/report-immigration-crime>.

UK Government - guidance for employers <https://www.gov.uk/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers>.

Public Register of Authentic travel and identity Documents Online (PRADO) for EU documents <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/prado/en/prado-start-page.html>.

Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure - Good Practice Guide on Pre-Employment Screening, Document Verification http://www.cpni.gov.uk/documents/publications/2007/2007044-gpg_document_verification_guidance.pdf?epslanguage=en-gb.

5. SUMMARY OF BASIC DOCUMENT CHECKS

- Does the document allow the person to live and work in the UK?
- Is the person the rightful holder of the document or an imposter?
- Is the document genuine or a counterfeit?
- Has the document been unlawfully altered or forged?
- Is the document one that exists or a pseudo / fantasy document?

APPENDIX IV - STAFF INTERVIEWED

BDO LLP appreciates the time provided by all the individuals involved in this review and would like to thank them for their assistance and cooperation.

NAME	JOB TITLE
Angela Williams	Head of Housing
Stuart Morris	Interim Housing Manager
Sharon McBride	Housing Support Team Leader
Isabelle Hatton	Housing Officer
Annika Guy	Housing Officer
Zoe Chittick	Housing Options Officer
Michael Hanson	Housing Officer
Donald Young	Compliance Manager
Abi Olowosoyo	Commercial Manager
Vijay Parmar	Housing IT Consultant
Ayotunde Odukoya	Leasehold Management Officer
Phillip Bell	Surveyor

NAME	JOB TITLE
James Cook	Customer Contact Advisor
Georgina Weller	Customer Contact Advisor
Victoria Banerji	Fraud Investigator and HR Officer
Phoebe Barnes	HRA Accountant
Russell Clinker	Senior Asset Manager
Adrian Tidbury	Estate and Valuation Surveyor Portfolio Development

APPENDIX V - DEFINITIONS

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE	DESIGN of internal control framework		OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS of internal controls	
	Findings from review	Design Opinion	Findings from review	Effectiveness Opinion
Substantial	Appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks.	There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives.	No, or only minor, exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	The controls that are in place are being consistently applied.
Moderate	In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks reviewed albeit with some that are not fully effective.	Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions.	A small number of exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls.	Evidence of non compliance with some controls, that may put some of the system objectives at risk.
Limited	A number of significant gaps identified in the procedures and controls in key areas. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved.	A number of reoccurring exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year.	Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk.
No	For all risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Poor system of internal control.	Due to absence of effective controls and procedures, no reliance can be placed on their operation. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework.	Non compliance and/or compliance with inadequate controls.

Recommendation Significance	
High	A weakness where there is substantial risk of loss, fraud, impropriety, poor value for money, or failure to achieve organisational objectives. Such risk could lead to an adverse impact on the business. Remedial action must be taken urgently.
Medium	A weakness in control which, although not fundamental, relates to shortcomings which expose individual business systems to a less immediate level of threatening risk or poor value for money. Such a risk could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management and requires prompt specific action.
Low	Areas that individually have no significant impact, but where management would benefit from improved controls and/or have the opportunity to achieve greater effectiveness and/or efficiency.

APPENDIX VI - TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

The Council's Corporate Plan 2016 to 2019 reflects the prioritisation of Housing within the Borough and includes the following vision relating to Housing Management:

We will work to ensure our Housing stock is managed so that it delivers comfortable and safe homes for our tenants that are efficient and sustainable

The following data is from the Housing revenue Account Income & Expenditure Statement 2015/16 and supporting notes:

- £5,329,000 total expenditure of which £2,925,000 was expenditure on repairs and maintenance
- £12,143,000 Income from dwelling rents, and £546,000 from non-dwelling rents
- £287,000 net rent arrears as at 31 March 2016 (includes provision for doubtful debts)

Council Housing stock, as at the 31 March 2016, was:

- 1,159 flats
- 1,320 houses and bungalows
- 7 equity share properties

The Council has recently revised its Housing Strategy (2017-2020) in response to a changing economic climate and an increasing demand for social housing. The strategy recognises the need for community based solutions, working effectively with other housing, social and health care providers, and to use resources efficiently and effectively to address housing needs

PURPOSE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review is to consider the design and effectiveness of the controls in place around Housing to highlight any areas where the controls might be improved.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The review will consider the adequacy of arrangements relating to Housing stock (due diligence checks and fraud prevention, debt recovery and health and safety checks), Right to Buy (governance, checks on qualifying criteria, valuations and tenant advice) Housing maintenance contractual arrangements, and Leaseholder Service Charge accounts (apportionment and billing).

EXCLUSIONS

Our work is limited to the elements defined within the scope of the review and key risks. Detailed testing will not be undertaken in all areas.

APPROACH

Our approach will be to conduct interviews to establish the controls in operation for each area of audit work. We will then seek documentary evidence that these controls are designed as described. We will evaluate these controls to identify whether they adequately address the risks. Any opportunities identified to improve arrangements will be offered for consideration alongside recommendations to resolve any weakness in controls.

APPENDIX VI - TERMS OF REFERENCE

KEY RISKS

Based upon the risk assessment undertaken during the development of the internal audit operational plan, through discussions with management, and our collective audit knowledge and understanding, the key risks associated with the area under review are:

General arrangements for Housing Stock:

- Due diligence checks are not made on tenants prior to the commencement of the tenancy (covering identity, residency and tenancy history)
- Due diligence checks are not undertaken periodically during the tenancy, including tenancy audits
- Front line staff are not trained to identify fake or forged documents, or fraud warning signs, or they do not refer potential fraud for investigation
- Debt collection and recovery procedures are inadequate to ensure that delays in receipt of rent payments and loss of income is minimised
- Health and safety checks, such as gas compliance, electrical safety and fire safety, are not carried out as required, or evidence of checks is not maintained

Arrangements for Right to Buy:

- Governance arrangements, including authorisation routes and clarity of procedures and processes for dealing with Right to Buy applications, are inadequate
- Tenancy audits, including checks on identity, residency and tenancy history / qualifying period, are not carried out on applicants to ensure the applicant qualifies for Right to Buy
- Property valuations are not carried out by a qualified property surveyors, who have an understanding of tenancy fraud risks, prior to the Right to Buy being agreed
- Tenants are not provided with advice on their responsibilities and risks associated with home ownership, prior to the completion of a Right to Buy application

Housing Maintenance and other contracts:

- The Housing Stock Condition Survey specification does not adequately define the scope of works and arrangements for identifying and reporting stock condition
- Housing Maintenance contracts do not adequately define scope of works and arrangements for agreement of planned and reactive maintenance work to be carried out
- Maintenance works are not subject to adequate approval processes to undertake the works, and to sign off completion of the works

Leaseholder Service Charge Accounts

- Tenancy agreements do not define the protocols for apportionment and billing of Leaseholder service charges to tenants
- Tenants are not billed for leaseholder service charges in accordance with approved protocols

APPENDIX VI - TERMS OF REFERENCE

DOCUMENTATION REQUEST



Please provide the following documents in advance of our review (where possible):

Housing Stock:

- Procedures relating to tenancy due diligence checks made prior to commencement of the tenancy and during the tenancy
- Details of staff training and / or guidance provided on fake document identification and action to take
- Debt collection and recovery procedures
- Aged debt report for housing rents
- Procedures for housing health and safety checks
- Records of housing health and safety checks planned and made, and actions arising from those checks

Right to Buy:

- Details of governance arrangements, authorisations, and procedures and processes for dealing with Right To Buy applications
- Protocols followed for determining eligibility for Right to Buy
- Protocols followed for determining property valuations
- Advice provided to tenants on property ownership

Housing Maintenance Contract:

- The Housing Maintenance contracts including schedules of works
- Details of jobs raised in respect of the contract (planned and reactive)
- Protocols followed for authorising commencement of works and sign off for completion of works
- Example records of property maintenance history

Leaseholder Service Charge Accounts

- Approved protocols for the apportionment of leaseholder service charges

Any documents provided will assist the timely completion of our fieldwork, however we may need to request further documentation and evidence as we progress through the review process.

APPENDIX VI - TERMS OF REFERENCE


TIMETABLE

Audit Stage	Date
Commence fieldwork	3 March 2017
Number of audit days planned	20
Planned date for closing meeting	w/c 17 April 2017
Planned date for issue of the draft report	w/c 1 May 2017
Planned date for receipt of management responses	w/c 15 May 2017
Planned date for issue of proposed final report	w/c 22 May 2017
Planned Audit Committee date for presentation of report	TBA

KEY CONTACTS

BDO LLP	Role	Telephone and/or email
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Andrew Barnes	Audit Manager	t: 01473 320 745 e: andrew.barnes@bdo.co.uk
Angela Mitchell	Senior Auditor	t: 01473 320 748 e: angela.mitchell@bdo.co.uk
Brentwood Borough Council		
Angela Williams	Head of Housing	t: 01277 312 568 e: angela.williams@brentwood.gov.uk
Stuart Morris	Interim Housing Manager	t: e: stuart.morris@brentwood.gov.uk

SIGN OFF

On behalf of BDO LLP:		On behalf of Brentwood Borough Council:	
Signature:		Signature:	
Title:	HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT	Title:	
Date:		Date:	

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3rd July 2018

Community, Health & Housing Committee

Housing Fire Safety Policy

Report of: Angela Abbott, Interim Head of Housing

Wards Affected: All

This report is: Public

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The report sets out the proposals for a new Fire Safety Policy to be implemented within the Housing Department.

1.2 The Policy provides the council with the ability to effectively manage Fire Safety and fire awareness within all its residential blocks.

1.3 The Policy also meets the Council's statutory requirement to have a Fire Safety Policy.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Committee is asked to approve the Housing Services Fire Safety Policy

2.2 Committee is asked to approve the use of Evacuation Notice's for General Needs accommodation and Sheltered Schemes

3. Introduction and Background

3.1 Following the Grenfell Tower Disaster in June 2017, the Council embarked on a review of its Fire Safety within residential blocks.

3.2 Immediately it became apparent that historically there had been no Fire Safety Policy within the Housing Department that clearly outlined the Council's methods of fire prevention and management.

3.3 The Housing department enlisted the services of Rowan's Fire Consultancy who now work closely with the Housing department to ensure that we have a clear action plan to ensure the safety of all our residential blocks.

3.4 As part of the ongoing work by Rowans Fire Consultancy we have written a new Fire Safety Policy.

3.5 The Policy outlines the frequency of Fire Risk Assessments on tower blocks and smaller blocks to ensure that the Council is compliant in storing and acting upon the findings.

3.6 The Policy states the roles and responsibilities of the responsible people and clearly states the point of contact should a fire occur.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 As it is a Statutory requirement for the Council to have a Fire Safety Policy, failure to have one does not exclude anyone from the responsibilities of their employed position.

4.2 Failure to have the Policy may result in a more in-depth investigation into the Council's fire management procedures to see if there are any other shortfalls should a fire occur.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 It is a statutory requirement for the Council to have a Fire Safety Policy. Failure to have one will leave the Council in a vulnerable position should a fire occur.

6. Consultation

6.1 Tenant Talkback, a panel of both Tenants and Leaseholders, has been consulted on the proposed Policy.

6.2 No changes were suggested, and they welcomed the implementation of the policy.

7. References to Corporate Plan

7.1 Good financial management, risk management and internal control underpin all priorities within the Corporate Plan.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts – Interim Chief Finance Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312829 jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no direct financial implication arising from this report. However, failure to have the appropriate fire safety policy could result in additional financial pressures.

9. Legal Implications

Name & Title: Assaf Chaudry, Governance Solicitor

Tel & Email: 01277 3125 00 assaf.chaudry@brentwood.gov.uk

The introduction of this policy will assist the Council in managing and discharging its statutory duties in the capacity of a landlord. The failure to comply with these duties could result in formal prosecution being brought against the Council, the adoption of this policy will ensure that such risks can be mitigated. There are no other legal implication arising from the recommendation within this report.

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

Health & Safety implications

Name & Title: David Wellings, Health & Safety Officers

Tel & email: 01277 312500 david.wellings@brentwood.gov.uk .

The Housing Fire Safety Policy 2018 should be adopted to enact the requirements of the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005 and enable the Council to adhere to its statutory duties.

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 None

12. Appendices to this report

- 12.1. Appendix A – Fire Policy 2018
- 12.2. Appendix B – Evacuation Notice General Needs
- 12.3. Appendix C - Evacuation Notice Sheltered Accommodation
- 12.4. Appendix D – Evacuation Procedure for Sheltered Schemes

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Nicola Marsh, Housing Manager

Telephone: 01277 312981

Email: nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk

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Housing Fire Safety Policy 2018-2020

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Appendix 1 – Sheltered Housing evacuation plan

Appendix 2 – General needs tower blocks and low-rise properties evacuation plan

1. Definition of Terms

- 1.1 In this policy, 'tenants' and 'leaseholders' are those who have signed the tenancy or agreement. They will usually be responsible for the actions of the occupants in their homes.
- 1.2 Where the term 'residents' is used, this refers not only to tenants and leaseholders, but also to all occupants of a tenant's or leaseholder's household.
- 1.3 'Leaseholder' for this policy includes leaseholders and shared owners. The Lease agreement will always take precedent over this policy unless there is an over-riding legal or regulatory requirement.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 As owners and managers of homes, we have a duty of care to ensure that residents and visitors can use the relevant buildings and facilities safely. This extends to taking all reasonable steps to mitigate any risks associated with fire in domestic properties.
- 2.2 Keeping residents safe from harm is paramount. There is legislation and regulation relevant to fire safety which we will comply with **under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**. Our wider organisational commitment to health and safety is set out in the Council's Health & Safety Policy.
- 2.3 If premises have been designed and built in line with modern building regulations and are being used in line with those regulations, structural fire precautions should be acceptable. However, a fire risk assessment must still be carried out and all fire precautions and maintenance routines continued, as set out in the policy, procedures and guidance which we comply with.
- 2.4 We acknowledge and accept our responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to ensure that our buildings are safe to live in, are assessed for fire risk and are properly managed to the highest standards. Guidance information published by Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), (Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services) (LACORS) and the Local Government Association (LGA) shall be taken as adopted standards.

Policy Aims and Objectives

- Provide clear lines of responsibility within Brentwood Borough Council for the management of fire safety
- Specify individual responsibilities in the management of fire safety
- Clarify the approach of Fire Risk Assessments
- Clarify the method of reviewing and monitoring fire safety compliance

3. Governance

3.1 The Landlord, as owner of the premises, is responsible for compliance with all statutory health and safety requirements regarding fire. This landlord *responsibility* cannot be delegated and rests with the Local Authority.

3.2 This is because under legislation, the legal person or entity that has control of the premises for the purposes of a business or undertaking (such as social housing) is responsible for fire safety. In law they are known as the **Responsible Person**.

3.3 Specifically, we will ensure;

- Clearly defined managerial responsibilities for fire safety exist within the Authority
- That nominated persons have the necessary skills and training to undertake their duties competently.
- The provision of compulsory training for all employees, relevant to their fire safety duties.
- The provision of adequate fire warning systems means of escape and fire-fighting equipment (together with good housekeeping practices) to minimise the risk of fire.
- That all fire safety equipment and systems are tested in accordance with statutory and EN standards.
- That sufficient records are kept and audited at appropriate intervals.
- That a system is in place for assessing structural, fire protection and management of needs in premises, determining fire safety priorities, and that funds are allocated for the completion of any such works identified.

4. Hierarchy of Control

The Council recognises its responsibility to implement in full its duties in respect of the fire safety of its estate and to ensure that all its employees understand their role regarding fire prevention and fire safety management.

Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) - Overall responsibility for all Health & Safety Matters

Head of Housing (Duty Holder) as corporate landlord shall act as a deputy to the Chief Executive and, as such, shall ensure the following;

- That the Fire Safety Policy is implemented in buildings under the control of the Housing Service.
- The appointment of nominated persons in those buildings to carry out the statutory fire safety checks/tests and the recordings of all such actions in the Fire Safety Logbook.
- That nominated persons undertake any training deemed necessary to ensure they are competent to carry out their duties regarding fire safety.
- The correct implementation and monitoring of the fire safety management system for those buildings, including the Fire Risk Assessments and Fire Action Plans.
- The appointment of duty holders and nominated persons in each building and to ensure that staff know and understand their duties in relation to fire safety.
- That Housing staff are trained and competent to carry out their duties regarding fire safety.

Property Services Manager

- Implement the fire safety management system and ensure its effectiveness.
- Advise on the implementation of fire safety legislation and other guidance relevant to premises and building management.
- Ensure that notices and advice issued by the Fire Brigade are complied with in a timely manner.
- Ensure that staff under their control are adequately trained and competent to carry out their duties regarding fire safety.
- Co-ordinate such work with the Scheme Managers/Caretakers or other authorised person
- Liaise with the Fire Brigade on repair and maintenance matters relevant to fire safety.
- Seek advice from the Specialist Fire Risk Assessor or other competent persons.

- Receive reports from contractors and consultants and report the significant findings of such to relevant persons.
- Advise on the implementation of fire safety legislation and other guidance relevant to premises and building maintenance issues.
- Co-ordinate the maintenance of the fire safety logbooks for all relevant buildings.

Housing Manager

- Ensure that staff under their control are trained and competent to carry out their duties regarding fire safety.

Housing Support Manager/Team Leader

- Monitor the statutory fire safety checks, tests and logbooks on a 3 monthly basis and report deviations to the Property Manager.
- Ensure that staff under their control are trained and competent to carry out their duties regarding fire safety.

Housing Support Officers (Sheltered Housing)

- Ensure that fire safety devices and systems are in place and that all the statutory safety checks are carried out and recorded in the Fire Safety Logbook.
- Carry out fire safety checks and tests and record the results in the Fire Safety Logbook on a weekly basis and ensure that any deviations are dealt with in the appropriate manner.

Estate Officer

- Monitor the communal areas for fire safety issues and inform the Housing Manager of any arising issues.

Specialist Fire Risk Assessor

- Carry out periodic fire safety checks on all communal areas. Ensure that all fire safety devices and equipment is in place and is fully operational, carry out statutory tests within the communal areas and record information in the fire safety log book.
- Report faults with fire safety equipment to the Property Manager. Report cases of non-compliance to the Property Manager.

5. Our Fire Safety Commitments, *we will ensure*

- We are compliant with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO). This includes carrying out updating and regularly reviewing fire risk assessments of all relevant accommodation we own, to identify the risks to which residents are exposed and take appropriate measures to minimise the risk to life and property from fire. This also includes the creation and implementation of management plans.
- We have positive working relationships with the local fire authority, including complying with any orders they issue in writing and seeking advice as to the severity of the risks identified. It is recommended that the nominated person should meet with the local fire authority representative when required.
- General safety precautions are taken, including carrying out planned and reactive programmes of work in all our properties.
- We give effect to appropriate arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of fire prevention and protective measures, including (where appropriate) property specific evacuation plans, taking account of the needs of residents including those with disabilities.
- We have accurate record-keeping which means we will share with the local fire authority, as appropriate.
- All shared and sheltered housing properties and all communal areas are appropriately equipped with fire protection equipment and emergency lighting, fire doors, and safety signs, as advised by the fire risk assessment.
- Evacuation plans are tested by carrying out a practice evacuation annually in sheltered housing and when the evacuation plan is changed.
- All staff receive training appropriate to their duties under the RRFSO and those with delegated responsibility for fire safety receive training on their roles and responsibilities.

6. General Fire Precautions

These are the measures identified in the Fire Safety Order to reduce the risk of fire in premises by;

- All dwellings (excluding Leasehold dwellings) will have mains operated fire detection systems (smoke detectors) installed as part of planned improvement programmes, void improvement works or cyclical maintenance contracts such as electrical testing.
- Where it is deemed appropriate in the recommendations of a site-specific Fire Risk Assessment, communal areas will also be fitted with mains operated fire detection systems.
- Maintenance of these systems will be carried out annually or in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Where works are refused by the resident, we will treat the situation sensitively but will be clear that the works must be completed to ensure the health and safety and others in the property.
- All residential properties (including mutual exchanges) will receive;
 - An annual gas and heating installations safety check, thereby reducing the risk of fire from gas faults (in accordance with Gas Safety Policy)
 - A ten-yearly electrical safety test in general needs accommodation and 5 yearly electrical safety tests in sheltered schemes, thereby reducing the risk of fire from faulty electrical systems.
 - Where a property is re-let, there will be an additional gas safety check and electrical safety test.
- We will respond appropriately to meet the needs of residents who inform us they have a disability such as a hearing impairment and install appropriate equipment to ensure they are alerted in the event of a fire.
- In all residential properties where portable electrical appliances (such as microwaves, fridges, freezers, vacuum cleaners or toasters) are provided, regular checks and testing will be carried out in line with the Portable Appliance Testing procedure.

- In all residential properties where furniture is provided, whether in common areas or as part of furnished license agreement, furniture will be fire retardant in compliance with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988.

7. 'Application to premises'

This does not apply to:

- Domestic premises e.g. any dwellings in which the Council lets including Sheltered schemes individual units, **but** all communal areas in sheltered schemes and flat blocks remain subject to assessment and consider the effects of its immediate areas e.g. oxygen cylinders or mobility scooters stored in accommodation.
- Fields, woods or other land forming part of an agricultural or forestry undertaking is exempt however, the buildings within these areas, including garages and storage areas must be still assessed and consideration made to the environment they are located in.

Your key information sources for this topic are: -

- Fire safety risk assessment: means of escape for disabled people
- Making your premises safe from fire
- Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist
- Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation
- Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats

8. Fire Risk Assessment

8.1 The RRFSSO replaces all previous legislation about fire safety, which includes a requirement for fire risk assessments to be carried out on relevant properties.

8.2 Written fire risk assessments will be provided for all accommodation owned by us including;

- All sheltered accommodation, and
- Common parts of other buildings

8.3 The Fire Risk Assessment is carried out by an external consultancy and shall consist of the following elements, all of which must be of specific relevance to the building to which the assessment refers:

- Identification of fire hazards

- Identification of those at risk, especially young, elderly, disabled, visitors
 - Consideration of current controls including – fire detection and warning
Systems: means of escape; means of fighting fire; maintenance
And
Testing procedures; information, instruction and training for staff etc.
 - Evaluation of risk posed, and further control measures needed, if appropriate.
 - Recording of findings
 - Preparation and implementation of an action plan based on the risk rating and prioritisation, if appropriate
 - Review and revision arrangements
- 8.4 The RRFSO is not prescriptive and does not define how often fire risk assessments should be reviewed. However, as a minimum, we will review fire risk assessments **no matter what the risk category is:**
- Annually.
 - Following a fire, near miss or threat of arson.
 - Following any changes which may impact upon fire risks (for example, a resident becomes disabled or a new disabled resident joins a scheme).
 - Whenever there has been any structural or material changes to the building or its use.
- 8.5 The above circumstances may prompt a new fire risk assessment not just a review.
- 8.6 We will also carry out reviews or renewals of fire risk assessments as outlined in the table below.
- 8.7 The risk assessment is undertaken by a Specialist Fire Risk assessor on a risk-based approach. Within housing, two premises categories have been identified.

Group type	Example of property type	Review of existing FRA	New FRA
Group 1 (High Risk)	Sheltered, HMO and any block over four storeys in height	Annual	Every 2 years
Group 2 (Low/Medium risk)	Older low-rise blocks of no more than three storeys above ground and older than 20 years or modern, low-rise block of no more than three storeys above ground built within the last 20 years	Every 2 years as there are regular inspections	Every 4 years

8.7 If in a review the responsible person finds a significant change they must inform the Specialist Fire Risk Assessor immediately so that a full fire risk assessment visit can be programmed.

8.8 Where major building work is carried out on a premise, this constitutes a significant change.

8.9 Each fire risk assessment and review must be concluded with an action plan to correct any issues identified from the risk assessment/review.

9. Fire Action Plan

The Fire Action Plan shall consist of the following elements, *all of which must be of specific relevance to the building to which the plan refers;*

- A hierarchy of control, showing the duties and responsibilities of named/nominated persons involved in the fire safety management of the building.
- Written instruction for nominated staff so that they are made aware of their duties regarding fire safety, together with the practical implementation of such.
- Emergency procedures to be following in the case of a fire including;
 - Sounding of the alarm
 - Notification of the Fire Brigade
 - Instruction to occupants on procedures to be followed when the fire alarm sounds

Instruction to occupants on procedures to be followed when the 'Stay Put' policy is applicable for the designated building or premises; or

Advice from the Fire and Rescue Service (Fire Brigade) or emergency situation means evacuation is necessary

- Arrangements for the removal and control of fire hazards identified by the Fire Risk Assessment process including;
The operation, maintenance, inspection and testing of facilities within the building provided for the safety of staff, public and others.
- Arrangements for the holding of fire drills
- Procedures for reporting incidents of fire, arson and false alarms
- Procedures to assist the Fire Brigade with access into the building and to identify the location of a fire within the building
- A diagrammatic plan of the building (with supplementary notes), showing the following, where applicable;
 - a) The name and address of the building
 - b) The name, address and contact details for the owner of the building
 - c) The name, location and contact details of any tenants occupying the building
 - d) The buildings location in relation to nearby streets and buildings etc
 - e) A vertical projection of the building, showing its principal dimensions and the number of floors above and below ground level
 - f) The maximum number of persons normally occupying the building at any one time
 - g) A horizontal projection of each floor, showing its principal dimensions
 - h) The maximum number of persons normally occupying each floor at any one time
 - i) The location of all fire escapes, fire exits, stairways, elevating devices, main corridors and other means of exit
 - j) The location of all fire protection equipment
 - k) The location of the main electric power switches for the lighting system, elevating devices, principal heating, ventilation and air-conditioning equipment and other electrical equipment

- l) The names, locations and contact details etc of those persons nominated with fire safety management duties under the plan
- m) Evacuation of the building, including special provision for the disabled

10. Risk Grading

- 10.1 As set out above, some properties have a greater risk than others, and the risk assessment programme will take this into account.
- 10.2 However, occupancy and building use are also essential factors which need to be considered in the risk grading of a property. These include but are not limited to:
- 10.3 Where one or more of these factors is identified in any of the above properties, or another factor is identified which affects the risk of the building, it may be necessary to upgrade the risk level or downgrade the cause. Should the Fire Risk Assessor think this is necessary, this should be considered when making the decision.

11. Stay Put Policy

- 11.1 A Stay Put policy is a policy that is implemented in certain premises where the evacuation of residents may pose a high risk during a fire. Therefore, the risk assessment process may allow for these residents to 'stay put' in their rooms/homes in the early stages of firefighting operations.
- 11.2 A Stay Put policy may be introduced at a locality providing that a full fire risk assessment has been completed on the building (and in certain properties, individual premises within that building) and that the author of the fire risk assessment is satisfied that a Stay Put policy can be introduced. This must be stated in writing in the fire risk assessment.
- 11.3 Where the author of the fire risk assessment states that a Stay Put policy can be introduced, providing that certain remedial works identified in the report are implemented, then a Stay Put policy must not be introduced until those remedial works are fully completed to the satisfaction of the fire risk assessor or other competent person. However, in consultation with and the direction of the fire authority, a Stay Put policy can be retained or introduced in exceptional circumstances.
- 11.4 Any property with out a Stay Put policy will be evacuated by the fire brigade if required due to those exceptional circumstances at the time of the event.

- 11.5 In some cases where a Stay Put policy has been recommended at a block, but it is difficult to decide whether it should be implemented, the final decision should be by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Head of Housing and those who have the professional and local knowledge of the property, including the fire risk assessor and individual Managers or officers.
- 11.6 Where a Stay Put policy has been introduced, this must be communicated clearly with the residents and their representatives to ensure they comply with this advice in the event of an emergency.

12. Risk assessment storage & database

- 12.1 All fire risk assessments must be stored on the relevant Housing Management database as soon as practicable after the assessment is made or reviewed.
- The onsite fire log must be maintained for the following items:
 - Fire risk assessment/review documentation
 - Fire alarm log (maintenance, testing & false alarm recording)
 - Fire-fighting equipment (maintenance & testing)
 - Premises Wiring Certificate
 - Emergency Lighting & Testing
 - Premises Gas Installations Certificate
 - Name of Responsible Person for the site
 - Training attended and by who
 - Evacuation plan
- 12.2 Where there is no on-site log, this information must be stored in an accessible location and/or electronically for viewing by Fire Risk Assessors and the Fire Authority.

13. Inspection Regime – excluding building services

- 13.1 To safeguard all persons on a premise it is essential that all equipment and devices that are provided are fully maintained and tested according to the manufacturer's instructions. This is generally a contracted annual service visit from the suppliers of the firefighting equipment, fire detection/alarm systems and emergency lighting systems. In addition to the servicing visits, the Responsible Person must arrange regular inspections to ensure the equipment and devices are in good working order.
- 13.2 Weekly housing checks must be carried out in all sheltered schemes and include;

- Fire routes are clear
- Emergency lighting indicator checked
- Fire extinguisher in place (where applicable)
- Fire alarm panel *
- Fire alarm test
- Smoke detector test
- Smoke control systems i.e. Automatic Opening Ventilation (AOVs) where installed

* Daily checks for fault lights should be carried out

13.3 Monthly housing checks must be carried out in all sheltered housing schemes and general needs premises where they are installed;

- Emergency lighting flick test
- Fire door assemblies secure and in working order

14. Provision of Training and Information

14.1 All employees, as identified as appropriate must be provided with suitable Fire Awareness training on a three-year rolling basis. Where employees are responsible for premises, such as those with responsibility for the management of Sheltered Housing Schemes, additional Fire marshal/Fire Extinguisher training must be provided.

14.2 The Responsible Person must provide employees, contractors or other person working in or on a premise with comprehensible and relevant information for;

- The risks to them identified by the risk assessment
- The preventive and protective measures
- The emergency / evacuation procedures; and
- The risks from other parties using the same premises

14.3 The above information must be provided to all persons and consideration given to any needs that people may have, for example; Hearing impairment, visual impairment, learning difficulties and those that English is not their first language.

14.4 This information also needs to be provided to contractors, either providing information cards can do this when they sign into a premise or by a verbal induction to the premise.

14.5 Where a child (some not over compulsory school age) is to be employed (this is generally a work experience student) the above must be communicated to the parent/guardian of the child. Close supervision

must be given always, and they will be advised of the Fire Evacuation procedure.

15. Resident Responsibilities

- 15.1 We will publicise the importance of fire safety to all residents, regardless of tenure, but generally, the responsibility for safety in individual private domestic properties that are not sheltered housing falls on the individual, rather than the Council, including carrying out regular tests of their individual fire detection system (smoke alarms).
- 15.2 We are responsible for fire safety in sheltered housing properties, and for communal areas in all tenures. However, sheltered residents must ensure they behave responsibly and follow all the below points that other residents are expected to.
- 15.3 The actions of residents may affect the fire safety of a building. Some residents will have stored oxygen in their properties for medical reasons. Oxygen aids combustion, therefore sources of heat or open flames in the vicinity should be minimised. It is the responsibility of the tenant or leaseholder to inform us of the presence of oxygen equipment in their property.
- 15.4 Where we are aware that oxygen is stored at the property and where a tenant or leaseholder has not already done so, we will notify the fire authority of the presence of stored oxygen. Where appropriate, stickers or signs posting a warning against smoking or other high-risk activities in the area can be used.
- 15.5 Residents' goods left in communal areas can be a source of ignition and support combustion, as well as potentially blocking escape routes. For this reason, storage of goods in communal areas is not allowed without our express permission and we will take action to remove items that are left in them.
- 15.6 Barbeques (including gas barbeques) are 'open fires' and in, accordance with Fire Brigade advice, are not permitted in any of our properties including any balcony areas, which are extensions of properties. Barbeques pose an unacceptable fire risk when used on balconies because they can easily burn out of control and cause combustible materials in the area to ignite, which can spread inside the property. Using a barbeque in an enclosed space will also pose a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

- 15.7 Tenants and Leaseholders should not fit metal security gates to their homes without seeking permission from the Council first. As gates of this type can often hinder entry to and exit from the premises for purposes of evacuation and fire-fighting, permission will not normally be given for these to be fitted.
- 15.8 Where tenants and leaseholders have already fitted metal security gates, and these have been identified as an unacceptable fire risk in the fire risk assessment, we will request for them to be removed. If necessary, we will act in line with the tenancy agreement/lease to ensure they are removed.
- 15.9 We will not permit exceptions to the application of the above policy and where a tenant or leaseholder refuses to comply, will consider taking enforcement action in line with the tenancy agreement/lease.

16. Audit, Compliance and Review

- 16.1 Because this is such a high-risk area, we will carry out an external audit every two years as a minimum. We monitor and test compliance with procedures.
- 16.2 We will manage compliance and keep accurate records.
- 16.3 The Property Manager has responsibility to ensure that contractors are compliant with all the relevant health and safety legislation.
- 16.4 Annual reviews of contractor health and safety procedures as well as regular review of the contractor compliance and performance will be carried out.
- 16.5 This policy is reviewed biennially, validated externally and updated whenever legislation or regulation changes.
- 16.6 We will retain written records of the risk assessment for at least five years or until one year after a new assessment has been completed and any fire precautions put in place to address the risks identified.
- 16.7 We expect all our contractors to behave and operate in line with our Contractor Code of Conduct.
- 16.8 Quality of works undertaken by contractors are generally assessed by;
- Assessment of a percentage of works by a suitably experienced and qualified officer
 - Self-assessment and quality assurance by the contractor
 - Resident feedback and satisfaction surveys

- 16.9 The Responsible Person carries out monitoring of all health & safety including fire arrangements. This monitoring will be part of an overall audit of health & safety systems and any actions required from the audit will be prioritised on a risk basis.
- 16.10 The various fire training will be fully administered by the Estates Management Service and attendance to courses will be monitored to ensure the relevant persons are refreshed every three years.

17. Diversity and Inclusion

We have adopted equality, diversity and inclusion as core values and place all our policies in the context of the following objectives;

- 17.1 ensuring that all our residents and staff are treated with dignity and respect
- 17.2 ensuring that the opportunities we provide for learning, personal development and employment are made available on a non-discriminatory basis.
- 17.3 providing a safe, supportive and welcoming environment for staff, residents and visitors
- 17.4 We seek to be a genuinely inclusive organisation and our aim is to integrate equality and diversity in all aspects of day-to-day activity.

a) Supporting documents

Premise evacuation plans

Appendix 1 - All sheltered housing premises have an evacuation plan and procedure based on the template, which includes a list of all Assembly points.

Appendix 2 - All general needs tower blocks and low rise general needs blocks have an evacuation plan and procedure based on the template, which includes assembly points for the Tower blocks.

Low rise general needs blocks do not require assembly points.

****Any Evacuation Plan or Stay Put Policy must be appropriate to individual premises.***

Appendix one

Template Sheltered Housing evacuation plan

If not connected to an alarm receiving centre, the text in the document should be as follows:

This scheme has a **STAY PUT POLICY** in the event of a fire. The building has been built to protect you if a fire breaks out. The important thing to remember is that **IF THE FIRE STARTS IN YOUR HOME, IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN GET OUT OF IT**. The flat should contain a fire up to 60 minutes, with the fire doors and concrete walls resisting before spreading into the common parts of the building.

Do not wait until a fire happens. Read these instructions and find out the best way for you to get out of your home and also out of the building if a fire started somewhere else. There may be more than one way out. If you and all the other people in the building, follow these rules you will all be much safer and less likely to be injured in a fire.

AT ALL TIMES

- Do not store anything in the hall or corridor of your flat, especially anything that will burn easily.
- Do not block access roads to the scheme.
- Use the fixed heating system fitted in your home. Do not use any form of radiant heater there, especially one with either a flame (gas or paraffin) or a radiant element (electric bar fire).

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS IN YOUR HOME

- The fire alarm is connected to the alarm receiving centre and the Warden.
- If the fire alarm sounds in your flat, there may be a fire in your flat.
- The Warden needs to identify if it is a real fire or a false alarm.
- If it is a false alarm, keep your front door closed and open other doors and windows to vent your flat. The Warden will contact you and reset the alarm.
- If the fire is in your flat, leave your flat along with everybody else who is in there and close the door behind you **IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**.
- Do not stay behind to try and put the fire out.
- If you are able, leave the flat and make your way to the assembly point which is (Location name), **WITHOUT USING THE LIFTS**.
- The Warden or Alarm Centre operator will call the Fire and Rescue Service.

- The Warden or Alarm Centre support officer will find you at the assembly point or in the building and give further guidance as necessary.

IF YOU SEE OR HEAR THE ALARM AND ARE NOT IN YOUR FLAT

- It will usually be safe for you to stay where you are unless you are near a fire.
- If you can see or smell smoke, move away in the opposite direction.
- If you feel in danger, leave by the nearest fire exit to outside and go to the assembly point which is **(location name), WITHOUT USING THE LIFTS.**
- The Warden or Alarm Centre support officer will find you at the assembly point or in the building and give further guidance as necessary.

IF YOU ARE IN YOUR FLAT AND HEAR THE ALARM ELSEWHERE

- It will usually be safe for you to stay in your own home.
- **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE TO INVESTIGATE AS THIS COULD PUT YOUR LIFE IN DANGER.**
- Keep all windows and doors shut.
- If you become concerned, pull the Alarm chord and either the Warden or the Alarm Centre operator will inform you of the situation.
- If you see or smell smoke in your flat or start to feel the temperature rising, evacuate to the assembly point which is **(location name), IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.**

Assembly point locations for sheltered schemes

Property	Postcode	Assembly point
Chichester House	CM14 4TD	Car park entrance across the road from the main entrance
Victoria Court	CM15 5EX	By the car park entrance on Victoria Road
The Gables	CM13 3AX	To the front of the property on Essex Way
Juniper Court	CM13 2EL	To the front of the main entrance in the car park
Ingleton House	CM4 9DY	In the Car Park by the pond
St Georges Court	CM14 4YF	Across the road from the main entrance
Quennell Way	CM13 2RS	Across the road from whichever block is on fire

Appendix two

Template for general needs tower blocks and low-rise properties evacuation plan:

This building has a **STAY PUT POLICY** in the event of a fire. The building has been built to protect you if a fire breaks out. The important thing to remember is that **IF THE FIRE STARTS IN YOUR HOME, IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN GET OUT OF IT**. The property should contain a fire up to 60 minutes, with the fire doors and concrete walls resisting before spreading into the common parts of the building or other properties.

AT ALL TIMES

- Make sure that the smoke alarms in your home are working.
- Make sure that door closer units are working
- Do not store anything in your hall or corridor, especially anything that will burn easily.
- Use the fixed heating system fitted in your home. Do not use any form of radiant heater there, especially one with either a flame (gas or paraffin) or a radiant element (electric bar fire).
- Do not store chemicals or flammable things in the cupboard(s) where your gas and electricity meters are fitted.
- Do not block access roads to the building.

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS IN YOUR HOME

- If you are in the room where the fire is, leave straight away, together with anybody else, then close the door.
- **DO NOT STAY BEHIND TO TRY AND PUT THE FIRE OUT.**
- Tell everybody else in your home about the fire and get everybody to leave. Close the front door and leave the building.
- Do not use a balcony unless it is part of the escape route from the building.
- **CALL THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE.**

IF YOU SEE OR HEAR OF A FIRE IN ANOTHER PART OF THE BUILDING

- It will usually be safe for you to stay in your own home.
- Please do not leave to investigate as this could put your life in danger.
- Keep all windows and doors shut.

CALLING THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Fire and Rescue Service should always be called to a fire, even if it only seems a small fire. This should be done straight away on 999 or 112. Give clear instruction to the operator and do not end the phone call until they have repeated your address back to you.

When the Fire and Rescue Service arrive, they will take charge of the situation and tell you what to do to be safe.

Assembly point locations for high rise blocks of flats

Property	Postcode	Assembly point
Mayflower House	CM13 3BG	The front of the building between the car park entrances
Drake House	CM14 4TG	The entrance to the lower car park near Sir Francis Way
Masefield Court	CM14 5EF	The layby the other side of the children's play area
Gibraltar House	CM13 3AZ	The grassed area near the car park by the junction of The Drive and Essex Way

Appendix B

Template Sheltered Housing evacuation plan

If not connected to an alarm receiving centre, the text in the document should be as follows:

This scheme has a **STAY PUT POLICY** in the event of a fire. The building has been built to protect you if a fire breaks out. The important thing to remember is that **IF THE FIRE STARTS IN YOUR HOME, IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN GET OUT OF IT**. The flat should contain a fire up to 60 minutes, with the fire doors and concrete walls resisting before spreading into the common parts of the building.

Do not wait until a fire happens. Read these instructions and find out the best way for you to get out of your home and also out of the building if a fire started somewhere else. There may be more than one way out. If you and all the other people in the building, follow these rules you will all be much safer and less likely to be injured in a fire.

AT ALL TIMES

- Do not store anything in the hall or corridor of your flat, especially anything that will burn easily.
- Do not block access roads to the scheme.
- Use the fixed heating system fitted in your home. Do not use any form of radiant heater there, especially one with either a flame (gas or paraffin) or a radiant element (electric bar fire).

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS IN YOUR HOME

- The fire alarm is connected to the alarm receiving centre and the Housing Support Officer.
- If the fire alarm sounds in your flat, there may be a fire in your flat.
- The Housing Support Officer needs to identify if it is a real fire or a false alarm.
- If it is a false alarm, keep your front door closed and open other doors and windows to vent your flat. The Housing Support Officer will contact you and reset the alarm.
- If the fire is in your flat, leave your flat along with everybody else who is in there and close the door behind you **IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**.
- Do not stay behind to try and put the fire out.
- If you are able, leave the flat and make your way to the assembly point which is (Location name), **WITHOUT USING THE LIFTS**.
- The Housing Support Officer or Alarm Centre operator will call the Fire and Rescue Service.
- The Housing Support Officer or Alarm Centre support officer will find you at the assembly point or in the building and give further guidance as necessary.

IF YOU SEE OR HEAR THE ALARM AND ARE NOT IN YOUR FLAT

- It will usually be safe for you to stay where you are unless you are near a fire.
- If you can see or smell smoke, move away in the opposite direction.
- If you feel in danger, leave by the nearest fire exit to outside and go to the assembly point which is **(location name), WITHOUT USING THE LIFTS.**
- The Housing Support Officer or Alarm Centre support officer will find you at the assembly point or in the building and give further guidance as necessary.

IF YOU ARE IN YOUR FLAT AND HEAR THE ALARM ELSEWHERE

- It will usually be safe for you to stay in your own home.
- **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE TO INVESTIGATE AS THIS COULD PUT YOUR LIFE IN DANGER.**
- Keep all windows and doors shut.
- If you become concerned, pull the Alarm cord and either the Housing Support Officer or the Alarm Centre operator will inform you of the situation.
- If you see or smell smoke in your flat or start to feel the temperature rising, evacuate to the assembly point which is **(location name), IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.**

Assembly point locations for In-House sheltered schemes

Property	Postcode	Assembly point
Chichester House	CM14 4TD	Car park entrance across the road from the main entrance
Victoria Court	CM15 5EX	By the car park entrance on Victoria Road
The Gables	CM13 3AX	To the front of the property on Essex Way
Juniper Court	CM13 2EL	To the front of the main entrance in the car park
Ingleton House	CM4 9DY	In the Car Park by the pond
St Georges Court	CM14 4YF	Across the road from the main entrance
Quennell Way	CM13 2RS	Across the road from whichever block is on fire

Appendix C

Template for general needs tower blocks and low-rise properties evacuation plan:

This building has a **STAY PUT POLICY** in the event of a fire. The building has been built to protect you if a fire breaks out. The important thing to remember is that **IF THE FIRE STARTS IN YOUR HOME, IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN GET OUT OF IT**. The property should contain a fire up to 60 minutes, with the fire doors and concrete walls resisting before spreading into the common parts of the building or other properties.

AT ALL TIMES

- Make sure that the smoke alarms in your home are working.
- Do not store anything in your hall or corridor, especially anything that will burn easily.
- Use the fixed heating system fitted in your home. Do not use any form of radiant heater there, especially one with either a flame (gas or paraffin) or a radiant element (electric bar fire).
- Do not store chemicals or flammable things in the cupboard(s) where your gas and electricity meters are fitted.
- Do not block access roads to the building.

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS IN YOUR HOME

- If you are in the room where the fire is, leave straight away, together with anybody else, then close the door.
- **DO NOT STAY BEHIND TO TRY AND PUT THE FIRE OUT.**
- Tell everybody else in your home about the fire and get everybody to leave. Close the front door and leave the building.
- Do not use a balcony unless it is part of the escape route from the building.
- **CALL THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE.**

IF YOU SEE OR HEAR OF A FIRE IN ANOTHER PART OF THE BUILDING

- It will usually be safe for you to stay in your own home.
- Please do not leave to investigate as this could put your life in danger.
- Keep all windows and doors shut.

CALLING THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Fire and Rescue Service should always be called to a fire, even if it only seems a small fire. This should be done straight away on 999 or 112. Give clear instruction to the operator and do not end the phone call until they have repeated your address back to you.

When the Fire and Rescue Service arrive, they will take charge of the situation and tell you what to do to be safe.

Assembly point locations for high rise blocks of flats

Property	Postcode	Assembly point
Mayflower House	CM13 3BG	The front of the building between the car park entrances
Drake House	CM14 4TG	The entrance to the lower car park near Sir Francis Way
Masefield Court	CM14 5EF	The layby the other side of the children's play area
Gibraltar House	CM13 3AZ	The grassed area near the car park by the junction of The Drive and Essex Way

Item	Reason for Change	Version	Author	Date

Last Review Date:

Next Review Date:

Scope	All General Stock & Sheltered Housing Tenants and Leaseholders
Effective Date	XX XXX 2018 (Approved by Committee)
Review Date	
Signed Off	
Author	Interim Head of Housing – Mrs Angela Abbott
Strategy Owner	Housing Services
Legislation	Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989, 1993 and 2010).
Consultation	

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Fire Evacuation Notice for XXXXXXXXX Appendix D

This scheme has a **STAY PUT POLICY** in the event of a fire. The building has been built to protect you if a fire breaks out. The important thing to remember is that **IF THE FIRE STARTS IN YOUR HOME, IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN GET OUT OF IT**. The flat should contain a fire up to 60 minutes, with the fire doors and concrete walls resisting before spreading into the common parts of the building.

Do not wait until a fire happens. Read these instructions and find out the best way for you to get out of your home and also out of the building if a fire started somewhere else. There may be more than one way out. If you and all the other people in the building follow these rules you will all be much safer and less likely to be injured in a fire.

AT ALL TIMES

- Do not store anything in the hall or corridor of your flat, especially anything that will burn easily.
- Do not block access roads to the scheme.
- Use the fixed heating system fitted in your home. Do not use any form of radiant heater there, especially one with either a flame (gas or paraffin) or a radiant element (electric bar fire).

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS IN YOUR HOME

- The fire alarm is connected to the alarm receiving centre and the Housing Support Officer.
- If the fire alarm sounds in your flat, there may be a fire in your flat.
- The Housing Support Officer needs to identify if it is a real fire or a false alarm.
- If it is a false alarm, keep your front door closed and open other doors and windows to vent your flat. The Housing Support Officer will contact you and reset the alarm.
- If the fire is in your flat, leave your flat along with everybody else who is in there and close the door behind you **IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**.
- Do not stay behind to try and put the fire out.
- If you are able, leave the flat and make your way to the assembly point which is **XXXXX, WITHOUT USING THE LIFTS**.
- The Housing Support Officer or Alarm Centre operator will call the Fire and Rescue Service.
- The Housing Support Officer or Alarm Centre support officer will find you at the assembly point or in the building and give further guidance as necessary.

IF YOU SEE OR HEAR THE ALARM AND ARE NOT IN YOUR FLAT

- It will usually be safe for you to stay where you are unless you are near a fire.
- If you can see or smell smoke, move away in the opposite direction.
- If you feel in danger, leave by the nearest fire exit to outside and go to the assembly point which is **XXXXXXX, WITHOUT USING THE LIFTS**.
- The Housing Support Officer or Alarm Centre support officer will find you at the assembly point or in the building and give further guidance as necessary.

IF YOU ARE IN YOUR FLAT AND HEAR THE ALARM ELSEWHERE

- It will usually be safe for you to stay in your own home.
- **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE TO INVESTIGATE AS THIS COULD PUT YOUR LIFE IN DANGER.**
- Keep all windows and doors shut.
- If you become concerned, pull the Alarm chord and either the Housing Support Officer or the Alarm Centre operator will inform you of the situation.
- If you see or smell smoke in your flat or start to feel the temperature rising, evacuate to the assembly point which is **XXXXXXX, IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**.

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3rd July 2018

Community, Health & Housing Committee

Housing Garage Sites Report 2018

Report of: *Angela Abbott, Interim Head of Housing*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Housing Services is currently reviewing usage of Council-owned Housing Revenue Account ('HRA') garage sites across the entire estate. The review is focussing on anti-social behaviour hotspots ('ASB') and garage account arrears.
- 1.2 This report sets out the background and recommendation for Committee to direct a formal scoping exercise in relation to the above. A formal exercise will allow for a more focussed, systemic and transparent approach to service provision and revenue protection.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Housing Services undertakes a formal scoping exercise for a full report to be submitted to the next Community, Health and Housing Committee.**
- 2.2 That the Committee formally notes the statistical headline data relating to garage sites (Appendix A).**

3. Introduction and Background

A recent informal review of garage sites has principally focussed on a desktop analysis of occupancy rates and void loss (see Appendix A). The key purpose has been to identify sites which may be developed according to a new strategic approach for asset management. The primary methodology has focussed on garage sites in terms of:

- Size (of each combined site)

- Occupancy (i.e. active tenancies)
- Anti-social behaviour activity (in immediate and proximate geographical areas)

The informal review has provided additional opportunities to identify ASB, allowing it to be tackled through existing mechanisms. Such ASB includes but is not limited to: fly-tipping, nuisance youths and fires. Further development of ASB-prevention and relief mechanisms are still required however.

The overall number of HRA garages in the Borough are 1103, of which 301 have been 'void' (empty) during 2018. This reflects an approximate 27% void rate across the garage estate. Projected annual loss of income pertaining to void garages for 2018-19 (based on Quarter 1 figures) will be in excess of £149,556.00.

72 garages with active tenancies (6% of the estate) have a minimum of two-weeks arrears. Even low-level arrears collection requires additional focus to protect the revenue stream, and as such prove less economically viable.

An additional 76 garages (6% of the estate) have historically been utilised by Housing Services and other Council departments ('indirect use'). For example, for the interim storage of former-tenant possessions following eviction. Such usage has not effectively been reviewed for a considerable time, particularly in terms of cost-efficiency. It also reflects a higher headline occupancy rate, which is not reflective of public demand.

Individual garages are currently being inspected to determine whether they are required for ongoing indirect use. If it is assessed that they are not then, dependant on the site, a decision will need to be made whether they can be returned to active use or de-commissioned.

Some sites across the garage estate are in a poor state of repair and are deemed not fit for purpose to store a modern car, given the increase in average dimensions of modern vehicles. It is believed, although not yet fully evidenced, that the majority of current tenancies are for storage and not parking; which has extended implications for local parking in terms of current provision and future development potential.

A costing exercise was previously conducted to consider an average refurbishment or replacement cost (see table below). It was determined that it would not be economically viable to build new garages unless there is a significant level of demand. Whilst the repair of the garages would be at a lesser cost, either option would result in the requirement to significantly increase rental charges across the entire garage estate.

To build new garages (per garage)	Cost	Weekly amount based on 5-year plan	Total weekly rent for Council Tenants until 31 st March 2018	Total weekly rent for non-Council Tenants until 31 st March 2018
Cost to build new	14400			
Provisional Cost Sum for demolition and site preparation	4000			
Total	18400	£71	£79.23	£82.07
Refurbishment of existing garages (per garage)				
Asbestos survey & removal	2600			
Provisional Cost sum for concrete repairs	750			
Drainage	500			
New roof	1530			
PC sum for Surface/Boundary treatment	1500			
Total	6880	£26	£34.23	£37.07

Issues, Options and Analysis of Options:

Effective management of the garage estates is required for current and future residents of the Borough, including both tenants and private home owners.

Historically the garage estate has not been a key focus and has now created both problems and opportunities for service provision.

Problems as identified above principally concern ASB and revenue loss.

Opportunities include the improvement of the garage estates for all concerned, focussing on maximising what can be done with each individual site.

Options for developing the garage sites may include development for construction of new dwellings. Further and in the alternative differing parking options, including parking bays, and an effective increase in parking provision may be possible.

Some sites could be developed into housing through utilising a variety of construction methods. Such methods may include standard or non-standard housing. For example, modular housing (where contextually appropriate) could be tested as part of wider corporate development management.

Prior to the above being considered a formal exercise would start to highlight key issues and concerns yet allow for more detailed analysis and focus.

Option 1: Implementation of a formal scoping exercise:

Implementing the exercise will allow for:

- Transparency, particularly for customers
- Tailored-service provision
- Economic focus
- Future affordable housing and development enablement

Option 2: Non-Implementation of formal scoping exercise:

Non-implementation will potentially:

- Fail to advance Corporate priorities
- provision
- Fail to provide a strategic approach to ASB within the garage estates
- Maintain an inefficient system of void-loss and fail to adequately protect revenue streams/asset-management.

Reasons for Recommendation:

Option 1 is recommended as the most transparent for the Council and fully supports existing ASB and income-protection strategies. It will allow for a more detailed assessment of how garage sites can be utilised to maximise opportunities for asset development, parking and housing across the Borough.

The scoping exercise will feed into current specific site developments, as well as the wider corporate asset work being undertaken as part of the wholly-owned company (Seven Arches Investments Limited) and Joint Venture Partnership.

Taking no further action will fail to advance corporate priorities and would be counter to our modernisation programme.

Consultation

None.

References to Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan aims to:

- To deliver safe and comfortable homes which are efficient and sustainable.
- Manage our stock to recognise the limited resources available and supporting those in greatest need.

- Review the future delivery of housing services to provide the best outcomes for Brentwood residents.
- Work with partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and ensure that Brentwood is a safe place to live.
- Consider how Council assets can be utilised to promote sustainable development in the Borough.
- Maximise Council assets to deliver corporate objectives and ensure community benefit.

Through implementing cost-efficient garage estate management, and by adopting a more rigorous and strategic approach, each of the aims listed above can be achieved.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief finance Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312829 / Jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

Financial implications have been set out in the body of the report. By implementing a formal scoping exercise, this will identify potential issues and address in more detail the areas of revenue loss, which could enforce the commercial activity the Council is undertaking.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Assaf Chaudry, Governance Solicitor

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / assaf.chaudry@brentwood.gov.uk

The purpose of this report is to undertake a formal scoping exercise in relation to reviewing usage of Council-owned Housing Revenue Account garage sites across the entire estate. Other than the need to ensure that any scoping exercise is undertaken in accordance with the Council's standing orders there are no other legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.

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

None.

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

None.

Appendices to this report

Appendix A - Garage Site Statistical Information

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Mrs Angela Abbott, Interim Head of Housing
Telephone: 01277 312500
E-mail: angela.abbott@brentwood.gov.uk

Garage Site Totals - Annex A

Ward	Number of garages (multiple sites)			No. with rent arrears			Rented by					Reported ASB issues
	Overall	Occupied	Void	Overall	2-7 weeks	8 weeks +	BBC	Leaseholder	Commercial	Tenant	Non-Tenant	
								£9.93	£12.07	£8.48	£11.40	
Pilgrims Hatch												
Albany Road	56	39	17	8	3	5	11	5	0	13	10	
Broomwood Gardens	4	3	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	
Canterbury Court	9	6	3	2	0	2	1	2	1	3	0	
Cornwall Road	20	15	5	0	0	0	3	0	0	5	7	Yes
Danes Way	33	20	13	1	0	1	9	0	0	2	9	
Dounsell Court	15	9	6	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	1	
Gloucester Road	24	18	6	0	0	0	2	0	0	10	6	
Harewood Road	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	
Kensington Road	5	5	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	
King Georges Road	5	5	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	
Larchwood Gardens	9	7	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	4	Yes
Marlborough Road	7	4	3	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	2	Yes
Sandringham Road	9	7	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	3	
Hutton East												
Fairview Avenue	32	22	10	2	0	2	0	0	1	5	16	
Willingale Close	26	8	18	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	6	
Hutton North												
Birkbeck Road	24	12	12	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	9	
Harrison Close	12	11	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	7	
Hawksmoor Green	38	22	16	1	1	0	4	0	0	6	12	
Rayleigh Road	5	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	
Tollesbury Court	2	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	
Whittington Road	130	81	49	11	2	9	8	5	0	31	37	Yes

Appendix A

Hutton Central												
Brookfield Close	47	35	12	3	0	3	6	0	0	16	13	
Burns Way	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	
Hutton Drive	13	11	2	2	0	2	0	1	1	4	5	
Quennell Way	15	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	10	
Wainwright Avenue	22	20	2	3	1	2	2	0	1	8	9	
Doddinghurst												
All Saints Close	14	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	Yes
Warley												
Ashbeam Close	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	
Britannia Road	11	10	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	4	
The Keys	16	14	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	6	5	
Essex Way	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	
Evelyn Walk	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	
Gibraltar Close	9	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	
Greenfields Close	8	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	
Hampden Crescent	11	10	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	6	
Heseltine House	9	6	3	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	
Pompadour Close	17	12	5	2	1	1	0	1	0	6	5	
Wilmot Green	15	14	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	9	5	
Brentwood West												
Masefield Court	8	8	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	4	
Victoria Road	51	45	6	0	0	0	7	3	0	15	20	
Brentwood North												
Burland Road	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	

Calcott Close	18	12	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	10	
Copperfield Gardens	14	12	2	2	0	2	0	1	0	6	5	
Farrow House	14	11	3	1	1	0	0	4	0	3	4	
Greenshaw	20	11	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	
Highwood Close	17	14	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	6	5	
Mayfield Gardens	16	14	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	3	11	
Brentwood West												
Chichester House	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	
Railway Square	26	19	7	6	1	5	5	2	0	6	6	
Sir Francis Way	14	12	2	1	0	1	1	2	0	6	3	
Tower Hill	15	13	2	1	0	1	1	5	1	1	5	
Brentwood South												
Cherry Avenue	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hawthorn Avenue	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
Juniper Court	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Lime Avenue	13	10	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	6	Yes
Maple Close	28	12	16	1	1	0	4	1	0	4	3	Yes
Orchard Avenue	9	8	1	1	0	1	0	2	1	2	3	
Blackmore												
Blackmore Mead	9	7	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	5	
St Lawrence Gardens	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	
Kelvedon Hatch												
Broad meadow	4	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	
Fox Hatch	14	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	9	
Stocks Lane	6	2	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	

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Ingatestone												
Burnthouse Lane	6	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	
Exley Close	2	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	
Meads Close	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	
Pemberton Avenue	20	18	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	11	
Stock Lane	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	
The Hoppet	9	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	
The Meads	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	
Trimble Close	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	
Wadham Close	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	
Mountbessing												
Church Crescent	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Hope Close	16	4	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	
Stondon Massey												
Henrys Terrace	5	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Ingrave & Herongate												
Hernshaw	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	
Priests Field	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
West Horndon												
Petre Close	10	10	0	4	0	4	0	0	0	5	5	
	1103	800	303									

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3rd July 2018

Community, Health and Housing Committee

Community Safety Partnership Plan 18-19

Report of: Tracey Lilley, General Manager for Corporate Enforcement

Wards Affected: All wards

This report is: Public

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of Responsible Authorities as outlined in the Crime & Disorder Act 1988 which includes the Council as a key partner.

1.2 Each year the partnership has a statutory duty to carry out a Strategic Intelligence Assessment which reviews existing priorities and identifies any new or emerging priorities that the partnership should focus on.

1.3 All partners agree the Strategic Priorities and sets out in their Partnership Plan (see Appendix A) how the partnership will work together over the next twelve months to tackle crime and disorder and achieve its priorities.

The CSPs Strategic Priorities for 2018/19 are:

- Protecting People
- Protecting Property
- Protecting the Community
- Protecting the Future

1.4 A set of action plans have been developed which underpins delivery of the above priorities and sets out how the partnership will work together to stimulate activity across the Borough, focusing on those activities that add value as a result of being delivered in partnership.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members to endorse and support the work of the CSP through the Partnership Plan

3 Introduction and Background

3.1 Under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 CSP's are required to work together in formulating and implementing strategies to tackle local crime and disorder in the area and to have in place a Partnership Plan setting out their priorities on an annual basis.

3.2 As a Responsible Authority the Council plays a pivotal role in the partnership. We provide management of the partnership including the CSP budget. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that consideration is given to the Council's corporate objectives.

4 Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 The Partnership Plan takes forward the priorities identified by residents and data from the strategic intelligence assessment and sets out what activities the partnership will undertake in order to achieve against its agreed priorities. This plan also has regard to the police fire and crime objectives set out in the Police Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCC) Police and Crime Plan and is shared with the PFCC.

4.2 There is also opportunity for the partnership to bid for additional funding to the Police and Crime Commissioner and other funding streams. This for example can support some early intervention work as and when required should issues emerge through the course of the year.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 The Council is one of the key partners within the CSP and it is vital that this is supported by Members to ensure that it remains effective in tackling local crime and disorder issues and that affect our most vulnerable residents are supported.

6 References to Corporate Plan

6.1 The Partnership Plan sits under three strands of the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19:

- **Environment and Housing Management** – to enable communities to take a more active role in delivering a cleaner and safer environment.
- **Community and Health** - to encourage thriving and engaged communities; to work with partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and ensure Brentwood is a safe place to live.

- **Planning & Licensing** - to provide advice, support and enforcement to ensure Brentwood is a safe place to live.

7 Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellearts, Interim Chief Finance Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312 829
jacqueline.vanmellearts@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.1 The current level of support for the CSP is met within existing Council budgets within the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 – 2020/21.

8.0 Legal Implications

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the Council as a responsible authority is under a statutory duty together with other responsible authorities to formulate and implement a strategy for reducing crime and disorder, combating drug, alcohol and other substance misuse in its area and for reducing re-offending in its area.

Name & Title: Surinder Atkar, Legal Services
Tel & Email: 01277 312 500 surinder.atkar@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 The Council are statutory partners of the CSP as outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 8.2 Delegated Member responsible for community safety sits on the CSP and is currently the Vice Chair.

9.0 Appendices to this report

Appendix A - CSP Partnership Plan 18-19

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Tracey Lilley

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COMMUNITY
SAFETY
PARTNERSHIP
PLAN

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safer  brentwood
www.saferbrentwood.com

WELCOME to SAFER BRENTWOOD

Safer Brentwood is the local statutory Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for Brentwood. The purpose of the Partnership is to provide a strategic and collaborative approach to addressing local crime & disorder within the borough by reducing the levels of disorder including crime, anti-social behaviour, the misuse of drugs and reducing reoffending.

THE BACKGROUND

Under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are required to work together in formulating and implementing strategies to tackle local crime and disorder, misuse of drugs, reduce reoffending in the area and to have in place a partnership plan setting out their priorities.

To ensure that the partnership is proactive and well informed the partnership carries out an annual Strategic Intelligence Assessment to review existing priorities and identify any new or emerging priorities that the partnership should focus on.

The Partnership Plan takes forward the priorities identified by residents and data from the Strategic Intelligence Assessment and sets out how the partnership will work together over the next twelve months in order to tackle these priorities.

This plan also has regard to objectives set out in the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCC) Police and Crime Plan, and will be shared with the PFCC.

The partnership is made up of both statutory and community organisations. Listed below are the six statutory partners that Brentwood works with.

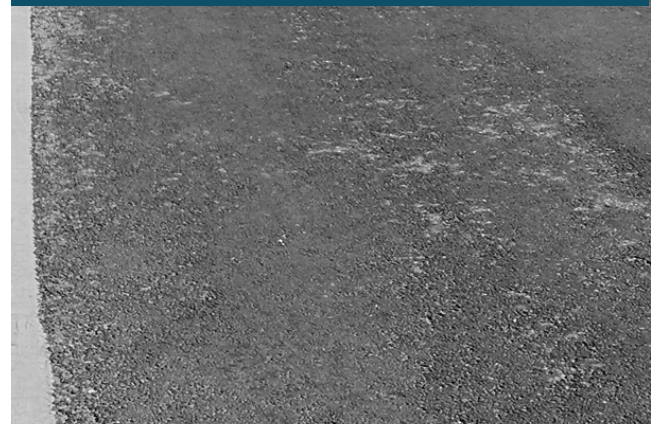
- ✓ **Brentwood Borough Council**
- ✓ **Essex Police**
- ✓ **Essex County Fire & Rescue**
- ✓ **Essex CRC**
- ✓ **Probation Services**
- ✓ **Health**

Just as important as the statutory partners that we work with, are the non-statutory partners such as Neighbourhood Watch, Crimestoppers, Federation for Small Businesses, local resident groups, Parish Councils, schools, volunteers and more. Without these partners we wouldn't be able to work so well as a partnership.



THE PARTNERSHIP PROMISE

We are committed to delivering local solutions to local problems that have been identified by local people.



The CSP is currently chaired by Cllr Chris Hossack and Essex Police, Chief Inspector Lewis Basford is Vice Chair. Each year the CSP are required to prepare a Strategic Intelligence Assessment to review existing priorities and identify any new or emerging priorities that the partnership should focus on.

OUR PROFILE

The borough of Brentwood is situated in the South West of Essex and is a pleasant, busy town conveniently situated with routes into London, the surrounding countryside and villages. Brentwood has a good mix of shops, schools, businesses and recreational facilities. The borough is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, with the heart of the town only minutes away from pleasant woods, commons and rights of way. Apart from its urban heart, the borough of Brentwood has about 3,000 acres (about 1,215 hectares) of woodland, three country parks, a large amount of farmland and a number of very attractive villages within its borders, yet it is only 18 miles from London. Road and rail connections are excellent with the M25, A12 and A127 trunk roads within the borough and convenient, fast rail links with London and East Anglia. Stansted, City and Southend airports are all 30 to 40 minutes drive away, with Heathrow and Gatwick airports not much more.

Below is an overview of some key issues impacting the borough.

EDUCATION

- High percentage of children who are ready for school.
- The proportion who achieve a good level of development at age 5 is above the average but there is a gap for those eligible for free school meals.
- Higher than average proportion achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C.
- Highest proportion attending a good or outstanding school.
- Lower than average persistent secondary absenteeism.
- More pupils than average aspire to go to university.

TRANSPORT

- Short average travel time by public transport or walking to reach key services.
- Below average percentage of residents who are satisfied with local bus service but more are satisfied with local transport information.
- Access to a car is essential for people out of work and not able to use public transport or walk to an employment centre. 15% may miss out on work opportunities unless they have access to a car.

LIFESTYLE

- Reducing smoking and adult obesity, plus increasing the level of physical activity, are all areas for improvement.
- Interventions need to reach high risk groups to reduce the number of preventable health conditions and service demand.
- Hospital admissions due to alcohol related conditions are better than the England average.
- Decrease in number of adults in substance misuse treatment.

PEOPLE AND PLACE

- An ageing population is increasing demand on services.
- No deprived areas with poor health and unemployment.
- Average population density.
- Below average rate of crime and more residents feel safe.
- Lower than average waste recycling levels.

HOUSING

- Low proportion of social tenants, with higher than average number of residents owning their homes.
- Large rise in house prices.
- Lowest number on the housing waiting list and average rate in temporary accommodation.
- Below average rate of homeless households.
- Ageing population will impact on the availability of health services, housing and care homes.

Information taken from Essex Local Authority Portraits. A product of the Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
Please visit www.essexinsight.org.uk for more detailed information.

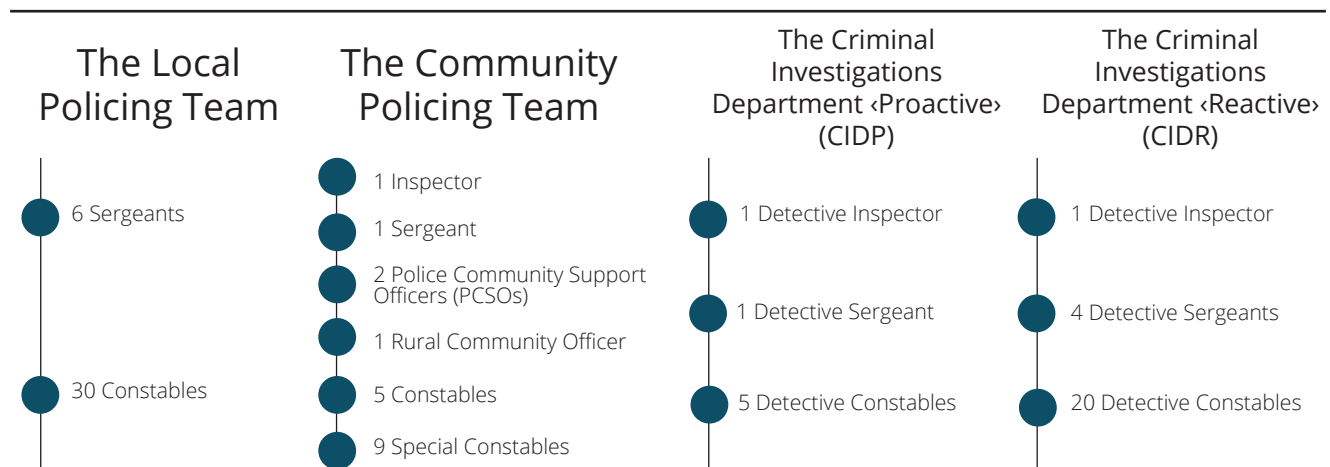


POLICING STRUCTURE

The borough of Brentwood forms part of Essex Police West Local Policing Area (LPA), which includes the districts of Epping Forest, Harlow and Thurrock. The Borough accounts for 22% of the area and 17% of the population of the LPA.

Since November 2017 Essex Police moved into the Town Hall to their new base. This has further improved communication and partnership work with the Council. The Community Safety Team and newly appointed Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Officer now have access to the police station and have further developed their working relationships with local officers. Arrangements have also been made for the Council's fraud officers to use the facilities to carry out interviews under caution.

Essex Police's new base hosts the Community Policing Team (CPT), Local Policing Team (LPT), Criminal Investigations Department 'Proactive' (CIDP) and Criminal Investigations Department 'Reactive' (CIDR). Please see below some examples of how the teams are structured in Brentwood (please note that some of the roles cover out of borough areas as well)



THE POLICE & CRIME PLAN 2016-20

The Police and Crime Plan sets out the policing priorities for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The plan brings together police, partners and the public of Essex to build safe and secure communities. The Community Safety priorities for Brentwood reflect on those set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2016-20.

- More local, visible and accessible policing
- Crack down on anti-social behaviour
- Breaking the cycle of domestic abuse
- Reverse the trend in serious violence
- Tackle gangs and organised crime
- Protecting children and vulnerable people
- Improve safety on our roads

OUR TEAM



**COUNCILLOR
CHRIS HOSSACK**

Councillor Hossack has been a Brentwood Borough councillor for 15 years serving Hutton East.

He is currently Chair of Brentwood's Community Health and Housing Committee as well as Chair of the Community Safety Partnership, and Brentwood's Member representative sits on the Essex Policing and Fire Panel.



**COMMUNITY
SAFETY TEAM**

The Community Safety Team delivers a key role in co-ordinating the Community Safety Partnership, providing expertise in the development, implementation and monitoring of initiatives to help keep people safe who live, work and socialise in the Brentwood.

There are 4 members of the Community Safety Team in Brentwood.



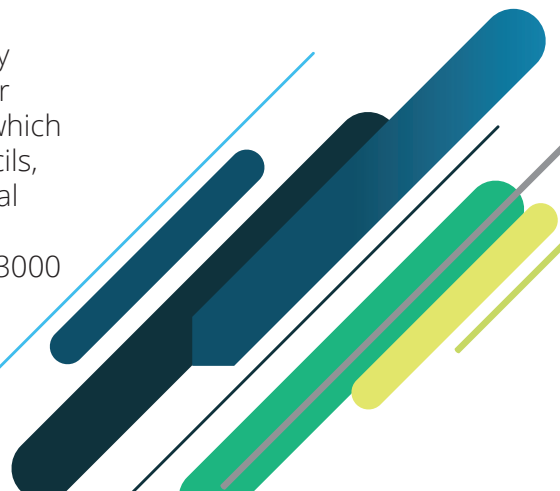
**DISTRICT COMMANDER
LEWIS BASFORD**

Chief Inspector Lewis Basford joined Essex Police in 2006 and is now the District Commander for Brentwood and Epping Forest Community Policing Team.

Lewis is Vice Chair of Brentwood's Community Safety Partnership and is an integral part of the partnership and driving its priorities forward.

OUR COMMITMENT

Safer Brentwood is all about partnership working. The CSP believe strongly that communication with communities is key. There is a very active social media programme including the use of Twitter with over 450 followers, a dedicated website and a quarterly CSP Newsletter which is posted on our website and distributed to Members, Parish Councils, local businesses through the Federation of Small Business (FSB), local community groups, schools (who then forward the newsletter on to parents) and more. It is estimated that the newsletter reaches over 3000 readers.



Our Partnership Focus for 2018-19



Protecting People

Domestic Abuse
Exploitation
Modern Slavery & Trafficking
Misuse of Drugs

Protecting Property

Burglary
Theft From Vehicles
Theft of Vehicles
Criminal Damage

Protecting The Community

Road Safety
Anti-Social Behaviour
Environmental Crime
Flytipping

Protecting The Future

Crime Prevention
Young People
Safer Brentwood Roadshows
Advice & Guidance

"I have been a part of Safer Brentwood over the years and it is a great example of the importance of partnership working. I am pleased to see that Brentwood's Community Safety Partnership has chosen these key priority areas. It encompasses everything the partnership needs to do in order to focus on present issues whilst keeping an eye to the future challenges that our community may face"

COUNCILLOR CHRIS HOSSACK

safer  brentwood

www.saferbrentwood.com

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 17/18

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Each year is a busy year for the partnership. One particular area which is important to us is community engagement. The partnership has continued to deliver a vast number of community engagement events across the borough and wider Essex covering many topics.

The partnership deliver over 60 engagement events a year which includes regular sessions in the local libraries, community hospital, and community halls.

These engagement sessions are delivered primarily by Peter Salmon, Brentwood's Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) co-ordinator and the aim is to provide crime prevention advice and give residents the opportunities to express their views on community safety issues.



Peter Salmon has been an integral part of Safer Brentwood and in helping to keep Brentwood Safe. Peter has won a number of awards for his continued contribution to the community.

60+

Engagement Days

471

Twitter Followers

10

Themed Events



SCHOOL PROJECTS

Every year the partnership helps to fund and run projects with local schools. We work closely with the schools to identify key issues effecting young people and seek to commission appropriate projects and initiatives. The list below is just a small example of some of the projects we delivered last year.



- ✓ Firebreak x2
- ✓ Life Choices
- ✓ The Two Johns
- ✓ Chelsea's Choice
- ✓ Gangs Awareness Assembly
- ✓ Drug Talks
- ✓ Parent Awareness Sessions
- ✓ Power of Love



LIFE CHOICES

Brentwood Borough Council in partnership with Essex Police and many others have committed to explore new and innovative ways in order to tackle issues in our communities, particularly those affecting young people.

As a part of this commitment Safer Brentwood have commissioned a pilot project called Life Choices aimed at young people who could be at risk from a variety of issues

Life Choices is a 12 week course that covers a variety of topics such as gangs, drugs, grooming, online safety, knife crime, mental health and help prepare the young people for the future.

Images taken from Safer Brentwood funded projects during the year 18/17



FIREBREAK

Firebreak is a week-long course where young people gain a sense of discipline. They get to work together as a team and are encouraged to keep safe from crime and anti-social behaviour both in and out of school.

During the week-long course, the young people get a chance to learn and practice different fire drills, first aid and team building.

They also get the chance to go to Grays Fire Station to use the training facilities and use the breathing apparatus.

At the end of the week they get to show what they have learnt to their teachers and families. They also receive an AQA qualification that they can use when applying for college or a job.



CHELSEA'S CHOICE

Chelsea's Choice is a hard-hitting Applied Theatre Production by Alter Ego that has proven highly successful in raising awareness around the issues surrounding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The play, which has now been seen by hundreds of professionals and over 800,000 young people throughout the UK, is followed by an actor facilitated post-show talk exploring the issues raised.

Chelsea's Choice held 6 performances around Child Sexual Exploitation in Brentwood Schools, the performance is a hard-hitting drama show based on a true story. Over 1,000 young people aged 12-16 benefited from the performance across the Borough. In addition, 25 professionals from the Brentwood area attended the professional's performance to upskill their knowledge around CSE.

CCTV & Body Worn Surveillance

Council **CCTV** Control have become a key member of the partnership and have worked extremely hard to support activity undertaken by the Council and Essex Police. A police Airwave radio is permanently located in the CCTV control room so that operators have direct access to Essex Police.

Recently the Council has developed a partnership with Thurrock Council which has resulted in an additional 10 mobile cameras being provided for deployment to hotspot areas throughout the borough. The CCTV manager has worked closely with Safer Brentwood to identify all public areas under Council control with elevated instances of ASB, and where possible arranged to have columns in these areas made ready for rapid deployment of CCTV.

Body Worn Cameras - The partnership funded the purchase of six body worn cameras to improve evidence gathering, and to offer an added protection for officers carrying out their duties. The necessary hardware and software have been installed in our CCTV control room to securely store and maintain footage from the body worn cameras. It was agreed to both store and maintain the equipment within the Council's secure control room environment to comply with data protection and code of practice requirements.

The partnership has also strengthened our working relationship with Baytree Security in the Town Centre, and as a result 1 body worn cameras has been provided to security staff which has already had positive results with a reduction in incidents. Staff have also reported that the cameras have presented an opportunity for them to engage with members of public.

Community Safety Accreditation Scheme

The Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) is a nationally accredited initiative promoted by the Home Office and National Police Chief's Council which accredits staff of organisations with limited policing powers to help keep the Borough safer. The aim is that organisations whose staff contribute to community safety will be given the tools to undertake their roles more effectively. By giving these targeted powers, an accredited person is better equipped to deal with issues such as anti-social behaviour, disorder and nuisance, with the potential to address certain issues on the spot without the involvement of police.

Six council staff have undergone training from Essex Police and received accreditation on Wednesday 23 May. They were presented with certificates and identity cards by Chief Inspector Lewis Basford, District Commander for Epping Forest and Brentwood with more staff receiving training in June.

These staff can now exercise powers appropriate to their roles and will allow them to tackle graffiti, litter, abandoned cars and anti-social behaviour.

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is comprised of the following statutory partners.



PROTECTING PEOPLE		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	BUDGET
To safeguard victims of Domestic Abuse (DA) and burglary from repeat incidents, by identifying high risk victims and assessing their need for added security devices	Crime Prevention tactical advisor (CPTA) will visit all high risk victims of domestic abuse and burglary and carry out a full home safety inspection providing additional security when required. Additional security measures will also be made available to all those who work with victims in Brentwood. This will enable an increased number of victims to be safeguarded from incidents of DA	£800
To raise awareness of domestic abuse, child abuse, and elder abuse across the borough and to encourage reporting	To deliver various activities throughout Domestic Abuse Week focusing on raising awareness of DA	£100
To protect the most vulnerable and elderly residents from becoming victims of crimes including scams and burglary, and promote internet and fire safety to name a few.	To enhance and continue delivery of the following successful projects: Door Chain Project - Which includes additional security for those most in need Safer Brentwood Roadshows - To expand and grow the number of roadshows across the borough Carbon Monoxide - To educate the most vulnerable about the dangers of Carbon Monoxide through the distribution of CO detectors Keep Safe - Continue to promote Keep Safe both borough and county wide	£500 Door Chain & Roadshows £1,200(Keep Safe Budget BBC)
To protect young people from harm and raise awareness of issues affecting young people	Delivery of key projects in local secondary schools in relation to: Prevent, grooming, sexual exploitation, healthy relationships, drugs and alcohol and online safety. Promote use of Crimestoppers fearless program within schools	£5,000
Integrated Offender Management (IOM)	To ensure that the offenders who cause most damage and harm locally are managed through a co-ordinated approach - a joint initiative between Essex Police and Essex Community Rehabilitation Company. Restorative justice can also be used in conjunction with IOM, particularly focusing on burglary	Existing Resources
To deliver themed community engagement events	Domestic Abuse Awareness Personal Safety Awareness Senior Safety Awareness Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Cyber Crime and Internet Safety Awareness	£500
To support victims of Hate Crime	To support and promote the local Hate and Incident Reporting Centres (HIRCs) To raise awareness of Hate Crime and support and signpost victims to relevant services To provide training for Hate Crime Ambassadors	£250
To provide advice and support to victims of crime	To work with NHW and Victim Support to continue to produce a victims pack which will be distributed through Victim Support	Existing Resources

PROTECTING PROPERTY		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	BUDGET
Target prolific burglary offenders	Using intelligence led policing to target those committing offences in the borough, including cross border offenders Enforcement of curfews and Court Orders	Existing Resources
Reduce dwelling burglaries	Continue to distribute Operation Insight to partners and Council Officers Identify vulnerable areas through intelligence led policing Strategic deployment of all available resources, including Community Safety Partners and the wider community Super cocooning at premises which have been identified as vulnerable	Existing Resources
Supporting the most vulnerable victims of burglary	CPTA to carry out visits to repeat or vulnerable victims and to provide crime prevention advice and support To ensure appropriate cases are referred to Restorative Justice to assist with reducing the fear or crime	Existing Resources
To deliver themed community engagement events	Property Protection Bicycle Safety & Protection Vehicle Theft	£500
Reduce theft of vehicles and the theft from vehicles	Continue to target areas where Operation Millenium burglaries are prevalent Promote the use of signal stoppers to help prevent keyless car thefts	£1,000



PROTECTING THE FUTURE		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	BUDGET
To improve and enhance our communication channels including Safer Brentwood website and social media	Continue to promote the saferbrentwood twitter and website Review and improve the CSP Newsletter to include a community page for issues that affect the local community Extend the distribution of the CSP Newsletter to include residents, businesses, community groups and schools To support Essex Police in holding monthly community meetings across the borough To support and attend the Local Independant Advisory Group (IAG)	Existing Resources
To engage with all residents including young people and loal businesses	To support ECC Youth Service in consulting with young people on issues effecting them and their community safety concerns To refresh the CSP Community Safety Questionnaire Using new methods to actively engage with local businesses through existing partnerships To provide advice and support to local businesses on key issued affecting them such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Fraud, Cyber, Organised and Retail Crime	Existing Resources
Encourage partners, local communitis and organisations to become ambassadors for Crimestoppers	Raise awareness of Crimestoppers anonymous reporting services Increase reporting of crime Promote the use of intelligence sharing with Essex Police Promote Crimestoppers Ambassadors program in order to target the following: - Individuals - Community Groups - Hotspot Areas	Existing Resources
To continue to promote and support increased focus on Neighbourhood Watch	To hold regular advice sessions in all three libraries plus Brentwood Community Hospital among other locations To continue to promote Essex Community Messaging (ECM) Expand distribution of monthly crime prevention notices	£1,000
To protect young victims of crime and reduce the risk of offending by young people	To support the delivery of the following projects: - Firebreak - A one week course which targets young people who are at risk of offending or involved in ASB - Restorative Justice - To continue to refer cases to reduce reoffending and victims vulnerability - Life Choices - A 12 week course for young people that covers a variety of topics such as gangs, drugs, grooming, online safety, knife crime, mental health and help prepare the young people for the future	£4,000 Firebreak £3,000 Life Choices
To deliver themed community engagement events	Crime Prevention Drink and Drug Driving Awareness Road Safety	£1,000
Reducing opportunities for urban street gang activity	Continue to support local schools and to work collaboratively to ensure appropriate information is shared To continue to work with schools and provide bespoke projects Collaborate the installation of a knife amnesty bin at the Town Hall/Police Station	£2,000

PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	BUDGET
Continue to work with communities on road safety issues	Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) to provide education and awareness to young people To make best use of partners social media to promote messages and raise awareness Continue to grow the Speedwatch family in Brentwood To help tackle dangerous parking in hotspot areas	Existing Resources
Continue to proactively tackle ASB in the Borough	To continue to work with partners through Community Safety Tasking (CST) Managing hotspot areas through robust partnership working and using all available legislation to achieve a positive outcome To work with the West LPA Op Raptor Team around the emergence of gangs and those vulnerable to gang association To work with Restorative Justice and Community Justice Panels	Existing Resources
To target those responsible for Environmental Crime	To proactively tackle fly tipping across the borough and to use all tools available to bring those who are accountable to justice (using warning letters, CPNs, FPNs, court action etc) Joint unlicensed waste carrier patrols between Essex Police and Council in conjunction with other planned activity To use community payback offenders to work on projects as a way of repaying back to the community To deploy CCTV to hotspit areas across the borough To increase communications with Parish Councils and local groups to identify hotspot areas and reduce the incidents of flytipping Increase publicity to keep communities informed and deter potential perpetrators To consider referrals to Restorative Justice when appropriate	Existing Resources
To deliver themed community engagement events	Speedwatch Essex Community Messaging (ECM) Hate Crime Awareness Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Environmental Crime	£1000







CONTACTS

Our Partnership Promise

We are committed to delivering local solutions to local problems that have been identified by local people.

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twitter.com/saferbrentwood

 Town Hall
Brentwood
CM15 8AY

3 July 2018

Community Health and Housing Committee

Leisure Strategy

Report of: *Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager*

Wards Affected: *All Brentwood Borough Wards*

This report is: *Public report*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1.** The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies as set out in the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19 document. The Council has ageing facilities and needs to ensure that its leisure facilities are not only fit for purpose now but for the future. The Strategy and action plan sets out the vision, what the Council needs to achieve, the challenges it faces and how the priorities and outcomes have been identified. The Leisure Strategy is a large piece of work, so it has been split into workstreams to enable its delivery. The Strategy will cover a period of 10 years, but the supporting action plan will be a live document which will be reviewed and updated regularly to note the progress on the delivery of the Strategy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members agree the Leisure Strategy and action plan at Appendix A and;**
- 2.2 That Members refer the Leisure Strategy to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 18 September 2018 for their consideration.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1.** The Leisure Strategy provides a comprehensive overview of the opportunities and challenges to the Council's leisure development and operational partners. A number of assessments have been undertaken which have been used to identify the priorities in relation to the Council's leisure facilities including key assessment documents, local profiles for Brentwood and the priorities and expected outcomes from Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Department of Health, Sport England, National Governing Bodies of Sport, together with Active Essex, Brentwood Health

and Wellbeing Board and the Brentwood and Basildon Clinical Commissioning Group.

- 3.2.** The national context is seeing increased activity levels as a golden thread that can support a healthy community- physically, mentally and economically.
- 3.3.** Providing the right mix of facilities and evidenced based programming is key to delivering the priorities and outcomes for the Leisure Strategy so that there is support for residents and visitors from the cradle to the grave.
- 3.4.** One of the key challenges for the Council is its current financial situation together with a portfolio of ageing facilities which is not sustainable.
- 3.5.** The Council needs to decide where to prioritise investment, how improvement to facilities can be funded and ensuring that the right operators are in place to deliver the right programme of activities to support the needs of the Borough's residents.
- 3.6.** The Council may have to make some tough decisions on some of its facilities where some will need to be consolidated and identify those that could benefit from investment and improvement.
- 3.7.** The Council commissioned a Value for Money review and Options Appraisal of the its leisure facilities in 2016 which included the Brentwood Centre, the community halls, Hartswood Golf Course and the Council's play areas. The subsequent report and recommendations was circulated to all Members in June 2017.
- 3.8.** The Council also commissioned an assessment of its Play Pitches and non-Play Pitches provision which is due to be finalized in June 2018.
- 3.9.** It was agreed at the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 20 June 2017 (min. ref. 42) that the Leisure Strategy work will be split into three separate phases to allow officers and Members to thoroughly explore the options available to them, and that a Leisure Strategy Working Group (LSWG) would be established to scrutinize any of the work and report back to the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee with recommendations and that these recommendations would be referred on to the Community Health and Housing Committee or other relevant committee as appropriate.
- 3.10.** Phase 1 would include King George's Playing Fields, Warley Playing Fields. Phase 2 would include the Council's Play areas and Phase 3 would include options for the Brentwood Centre and the longer term strategic view of the Council's Leisure facilities.

- 3.11.** A separate piece of work has been undertaken with 4Global which looked at the play pitch and non-play pitch provision across the Borough and this report is due to be finalised in June 2018.
- 3.12.** Members attended two Leisure Development presentations in November 2017 which highlighted some of the advantages of working with a Leisure Development Partner when developing the Council's Leisure Strategy and the future vision for its leisure facilities.
- 3.13.** At the Council's Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee on 21 November the Leisure Strategy Working Group recommendations (min ref 168) were agreed by Committee and submitted to Community, Health and Housing Committee on 4 December 2017 for their consideration. The recommendations were for officers to facilitate a workshop with industry experts and Members to drive the outcomes and principles of the Council's Leisure Strategy. Following on from the workshop session, it was recommended that officers liaise with industry experts to develop the Leisure Strategy for Brentwood to enable the Council to deliver the outcomes, agree the short-term priorities and longer-term objectives. That officers and Members explore the potential of a parallel procurement process when developing the Leisure Strategy subject to the Council's procurement procedures.
- 3.14.** It was also recommended at the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee on the 21 November 2017 that a slight revision to the Terms of Reference be implemented to remove 'phases and replace with workstreams' to enable greater flexibility when delivering the strategy (min ref 168).
- 3.15.** Workshops with industry experts, Members and Officers took place in January to assist and inform the framework of the Leisure Strategy within the parameters of the Council's current financial constraints. This will enable the Council to be clear about how it can deliver the desired outcomes, prioritise areas for investment and identify any areas that could be rationalized to reduce Council expenditure.
- 3.16.** It is important that the Leisure Strategy aligns with the priorities for Sport England and National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGBs) which could realise significant external funding contributions which will have an impact on the Council's financial capacity to deliver realistic improvements to the Council's leisure facilities.

- 3.17.** The action plan is a live document which will be regularly reviewed and updated to note the progress against the outcomes. It was agreed in principle at the workshops with Members that the priority area of focus will be King George's Playing Fields.
- 3.18.** The draft Strategy was agreed at Community Health and Housing Committee and the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee in March 2018. The draft strategy was circulated to stakeholders for comment and feedback and the responses are set out in Appendix **B** of the report. Changes are highlighted in red in the final version of the Leisure Strategy in Appendix **A**.
- 3.19.** The agreed budgets and resources were made available and it was also recommended that delegated authority would be given to the Chief Executive and the Chair of Community Health and Housing Committee to appoint a Leisure Development Partner to develop a business case for King George's Playing Fields.
- 3.20.** Alliance Leisure Services have now been appointed and good progress is being made to develop a sustainable business plan for King George's Playing Fields. A report will be presented to a future Community Health and Housing Committee for consideration.
- 3.21.** The Leisure Strategy and its development is intrinsically linked to the Council's Local Development Plan and the Asset Management Strategy objectives, so in the delivery of the Council's Leisure Strategy, Members will need to keep those strategies in mind.
- 3.22.** A specific web page will be set up for the Leisure Strategy and progress against the action plan, so that the public are aware of the progress being made.
- 3.23.** The final version of the Leisure Strategy and action plan is before Members tonight for consideration. This will also be referred to the Council's Policy Project and Resources Committee in September 2018 for their consideration.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1.** The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies as set out in the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19 document. To deliver a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and Officers need to have a complete picture of the costs of the current provision, how it measures in value for money terms, the future options available to them, together with any risk profiles associated with its leisure facilities.
- 4.2.** The Leisure Strategy Working Group identified that without a Leisure Strategy in place the Council has no clear path on how it will deliver its desired outcomes or identify the priorities that will support delivery.
- 4.3.** The key decision for Brentwood Borough Council is how to best provide the level of leisure provision for both current and future Brentwood residents, bearing in mind that it has existing but ageing facilities and that the Council will also be faced with ongoing budgetary and development growth pressures.
- 4.4.** The Leisure Strategy sets out:
- a) The overall vision;
 - b) What the Council needs to achieve;
 - c) How the Council has identified the priorities;
 - d) The existing provision;
 - e) The key issues facing the Council;
 - f) How the Council will deliver the strategy;
 - g) Workstreams and priorities
 - h) Who can deliver the strategy, and;
 - i) Action plan which set out the priority areas and actions to achieve the desired outcomes
- 4.5.** The Leisure Strategy and Action Plan is attached in Appendix **A** for Member consideration.
- 4.6.** Amendments to the draft strategy are highlighted in the final strategy in red and a summary of the comments are attached in Appendix **B**
- 4.7.** As the content of the strategy also deals with proposed improvements to Council assets, future resources and budgets will need to be identified and agreed as progress is made in the delivery of the strategy, so it is recommended these will be referred to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee at the appropriate time for members consideration.

- 4.8. It was recommended that to progress improvements in King George's Playing Fields, that a Leisure Development Partner is appointed to develop a sustainable business case for the planned improvements.
- 4.9. Alliance Leisure Services were appointed to undertake this piece of work and the completed business case will identify options, the amount of investment required, external funding options and the commercial viability that could provide an income to the Council. Any proposed development plans will come back to the relevant committee for Member consideration.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 As part of the Council's due diligence in delivering a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and officers need to have a complete picture of the current associated costs, risk profiles of the Borough's Leisure facilities and identify opportunities for income generation.
- 5.2 Comments received from Sport England as part of the Local Development Plan consultation, stated that a Leisure Strategy is required that assesses Council owned sports and leisure facilities in order that the Council can continue to work with partners to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the residents of Brentwood. The strategy should not only consider how the Council can provide services, but also how other partners can. The strategy should also use current sports facility evidence to identify strategic priorities to then inform what will be included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Following this feasibility work, the Council will then be able to determine which projects will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and those funded by planning obligations.
- 5.3 The Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15 also sets out the need to obtain maximise income where possible from its asset portfolio.

6. References to Council Priorities

The Leisure Strategy sits under two main strands of the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19: Environment and Housing Management to develop a Leisure Strategy to provide strong and sustainable leisure facilities for residents and businesses; and Community and Health - to work with community and voluntary organisations to develop the priorities for community development. There are also strong links for the priorities of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017, the Local Development Plan, Active Brentwood/Essex and the Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief Financial Officer

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- 7.1 One of the key drivers for the Leisure Strategy is to reduce the Council's current revenue and capital costs on its leisure facilities and ensure that they are affordable, sustainable and fit for purpose to meet future requirements.

The Council needs to ensure that all costs and income are identified and agreed at all stages of the delivery of the Leisure Strategy and that the appropriate procurement processes are adhered to.

There will be associated costs for the development of the business plan for King George's Playing Fields which will be funded from the Council's reserves subject to Member approval regarding the 2017/18 Provisional Outturn and our year end Earmarked Reserve Position.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Surinder Atkar, Legal Services

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 surinder.atkar@brentwood.gov.uk

Councils have legal duties for promoting wellbeing, both to individuals (Care Act 2014) and to the population across their areas (Local Government Act 2000). Intrinsic in this are new public health duties for improving the health of their populations including "giving information, providing services or facilities to promote healthy living and providing incentives to live more healthily" (Department of Health 2012). There is a strong legislative framework within which local authorities should invest in provision of sport, leisure, physical activity and open space services and infrastructure although many leisure services and facilities are discretionary functions.

8. Appendices

Appendix A - Leisure Strategy and Action Plan

Appendix B – Consultation feedback

Background documents:

Local Development Plan

National Planning Policy framework

Fields in Trust - Guidance for Outdoor sport Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard

PLC report
4Global report
Sport England
Leisure Strategy summary report

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BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Leisure Strategy 2018-2028

Built for today fit for tomorrow

Contents

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a) National Context		b) Play Pitch Strategy	
c) County Context		d) Built Facilities Assessment	
e) Brentwood Context		12. Background documents and links	
f) What does the local profile for Brentwood tell us?		a) Sport England Strategies	
5. Existing provision in Brentwood		b) Public Health England – Brentwood Borough Health Profile	
6. Key issues facing the Council		c) Essex Health and Wellbeing Board Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy	
7. How we will deliver a successful Strategy?		d) Active Essex Strategy 2017-21- 1,000,000 People Active	
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e) Health and Wellbeing			
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8. Who can deliver the Strategy?			

1. Foreword

The Borough of Brentwood is fortunate to have plenty of leisure opportunities and there is something for everyone. Maintaining and developing the wide range of facilities is important to ensure that Brentwood remains a great place to live, work and visit.

The Leisure Strategy sets out the vision, strategic priorities and key indicators that the Council will focus on over the next few years. The Leisure Strategy is closely aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-19, the Local Development Plan, the Asset Management Strategy and the Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy and supports government, county and local priorities which improve the health and wellbeing of the population.

There has never been a more important time to use sport and physical activity to create a fitter and healthier population when we are tackling growing levels of obesity and diabetes, mental health problems and other conditions associated with a growing culture of inactivity. This is especially the case with technology and young people as well as the ageing population.

The challenge facing Brentwood is clear - the Council needs to reduce its expenditure, it has a number of ageing leisure facilities, the borough age profile is changing, with the number of people over 65 expected to increase by around a third. Increasing participation in sport and physical activity is key to supporting the health and wellbeing priorities.

The Council needs to ensure that it has a clear strategic vision for the future of its leisure facilities, so that resources are applied effectively. This will ensure that local people enjoy high quality sustainable leisure facilities that suit their lifestyle and maintain and improve the quality of their lives.



The Council cannot achieve all the desired outcomes alone and will work with partner organisations to continue to offer varied activity programmes for all ages, supported by a focused sports development function, which will contribute to the health of our community and the prosperity of the Borough.

Cllr Louise McKinlay, Leader Brentwood Borough Council

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2. Introduction

The Government and Sport England recognise the importance of sport and physical activity has on the health and wellbeing of the population and have five key outcomes that they want to achieve.

- Physical Wellbeing - Increase the percentage of people that are physically active and decrease in those that are physically inactive;
- Mental Wellbeing - Improve subjective wellbeing of participants;
- Individual development – Increased levels of perceived self-motivation to change their behaviour;
- Social and community development - Increase levels of social trust in communities
- Economic Development – Value of sport to the UK economy.

Public Health England's Strategy 2014, Everybody Active, Every Day also looks at the importance of improving the general awareness of the benefits of regular physical activity.

The Council, its partners and the recommendations from assessments have helped to identify the priorities for Brentwood in relation to its leisure facilities. In addition, local health profiles for Brentwood and the priorities and expected outcomes identified from Sport England, National Governing Bodies for Sport, Active Essex, Health and Wellbeing Board (Essex and Brentwood) and Brentwood and Basildon Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Council alone cannot deliver all of the outcomes of this strategy and will need to work in partnership with other organisations to promote the health and wellbeing objectives to support all of our local communities. Therefore, many priorities and expected outcomes within this strategy will also compliment other partners' objectives.

The Strategy has not been developed in isolation and is closely aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan (2016-19), the Local Development Plan, the Asset Management Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Board priorities.

The Leisure Strategy’s action plan is a live document and an annual update will be presented to the Council’s relevant committee to look at the progress of the strategy against the recommendations and expected outcomes. The Leisure Strategy will be reviewed in **2027**

DRAFT

3. What we need to achieve?

The Council needs to ensure that its sport and leisure facilities will be sustainable in the future and broaden their impact on improving community health. The strategy focus is on its leisure facilities being high quality, accessible, affordable and sustainable in the future. It also needs to ensure that the facilities are the right mix to meet the future needs of our residents within the constraints of Councils financial situation. It needs to encourage the community to increase their participation levels especially amongst target groups such as young people and well as the ageing population, which in turn will improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. **To do this the Council will need to provide not only a leadership role, but also a facilitator role and in some areas provide direct delivery of strategic priorities.**

A successful strategy also requires a whole-system approach which will includes:

- Policy – local laws, governance, regulations and codes of practice
- Physical environment – Built facilities, open spaces, transport links
- Organisations and institutions – schools, health care, businesses, faith organisations, charities, clubs
- Social environment – Individual relationships, families, support groups, social networks
- Individuals – Individual attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, needs, behaviours

The Council needs to reduce its expenditure, and as the provision of sport and leisure is a non-statutory service, it would like to get to the point where any leisure provision is at a minimum a nil cost to the Council. If a surplus income is obtained from its facilities, then this income is used to support those elements of leisure that will still remain a cost to the Council. Due to these budgetary constraints the Council needs to identify and prioritise the areas of investment and its longer-term objectives that

will drive the expected outcomes. These are set out in the action plan (Section 10) which will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to measure progress.

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4. Strategy context

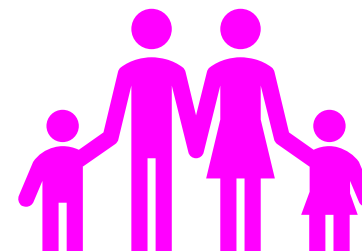
The Council has looked at the key priorities from a national, county and local context when developing this Strategy. Alignment to national strategies and being able to deliver their expected outcomes can assist the Council in attracting external funding to support investment in facilities.

a) National Context

Sport England

Sport England's Strategy Towards an Active Nation 2016-21 in the Active Lives Survey, defines inactivity as doing less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week, fairly active as 30-149 minutes per week and Active as more than 150 minutes per week. Their main priorities are to:

- Focusing more money and resources on tackling inactivity because this is where the gains for the individual and for society are greatest
- Investing more in children and young people from the age of five to build positive attitudes to sport and activity as the foundations of an active life
- Helping those who are active now to carry on, but at lower cost to the public purse over time
- Putting customers at the heart of what we do, responding on how they organise their lives and helping the sector to be more welcoming and inclusive



- **Helping sport to keep pace** with the digital expectations of customers
- **Working nationally where it makes sense to do so** but encouraging local collaboration to deliver a more joined-up experience of sport and activity for all
- **Working with a wide range of partners**, including the private sector, using our expertise as well as our investment to help align their resources
- **Working with our sector to encourage innovation and share best practice**, particularly through applying the principles and practical learning of behaviour change

They will measure the success of their strategy through the following KPIs:

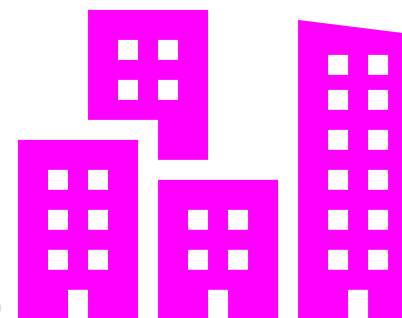
- Increase the percentage of the population taking part in sport and physical activity at least twice in the last month
- Decrease in the percentage of people physically inactive
- Increase the percentage of adults using outdoor space for exercise/health reasons
- Increase in the percentage of children achieving physical literacy
- Increase the percentage of young people (11-18) with a positive attitude towards sport and being active
- Increase in the number of people volunteering in sport at least twice in the last year
- The demographics of volunteers in sport to become more representative of society as a whole
- Reduce the percentage of publicly owned facilities with under-utilised capacity
- Support employment in the sport sector



National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes a forward planning approach to the provision of activities and opportunities to participate in sport and add value to the work of others and help to deliver sustainable development goals. They achieve this through:

- Recognising and taking full advantage of the unique role of sport and physical activity in contributing to a wide array of policy and community aspirations, including leisure, health and education
- Using sport and activity as a fundamental part of the planning and delivery of sustainable communities
- The development of partnership working using sport an active recreation as common interest



Planning objectives

- Protect existing facilities
- Enhance the quality, accessibility and management of existing facilities
- Provide new facilities to meet demand

County Context

Active Essex

Active Essex provides the strategy lead for physical activity and sport across Essex and is supported by Essex County Council and Sport England. The Strategy for 2017-21 is focussed on increasing and sustaining 1million people's participation across Essex.



Their key priorities

- Drive and sustain participation – focus on getting more people in Essex being active, taking part and living healthy and active lifestyles
- Improve Health and Wellbeing – focus on changing behaviours to reduce inactivity and make a real impact on physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Develop individuals and organisations – focus on enabling people and organisations to develop skills, achieve goals, ambitions and maximise their potential
- Strengthen localities, communities and networks - focus on leading, developing and driving the Eco-system across Essex, raising the profile and impact of physical activity and sport

c) Local context

Brentwood Borough Council Corporate Plan 2016 -19

The Leisure strategy sits across many strands under the Council's Corporate Plan.

Environment and Housing Management

- Develop a leisure strategy to provide strong and sustainable leisure facilities for residents and visitors
- Develop effective partnership arrangements with key agencies to deliver services

Community and Health

- Encourage thriving and engaged communities and
- Make Brentwood a Borough where people feel safe, healthy and supported

Economic Development

- Develop conditions for job creation and help people back into work
- Work with other Essex local authorities to promote Essex for shared economic gain
- Consider how Council assets can be utilised to promote sustainable development in the Borough
- Support economic growth and sustainable development

Transformation

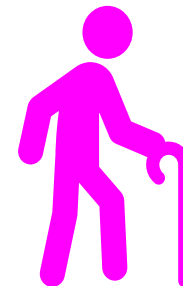
- Explore alternative methods of service delivery, including shared services and outsourcing

Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-22

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Brentwood sets out three key priority areas:

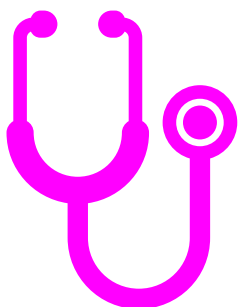
- Ageing Well

- Reduce levels of social isolation through increasing activity and strengthening connections within the community
- Working with partners to promote winter warmth message to prevent ill health during winter months
- Support the over 50s to increase levels of physical activity through a range of activities



- Tackling Obesity and Improving physical health

- Work with partnership with schools to explore further opportunities to support them in taking actions tackling child obesity
- To work with partners to establish opportunities for residents to become more physically active
- To explore further opportunities to increase levels of active travel, working in partnership with schools and businesses to consider new initiatives



- Support local food business in providing healthier alternatives for customers

- Mental Health and Wellbeing

- To contribute to the Essex Mental Health Prevention Strategy through improving; Access to Services, Supporting Community Assets, Access to voluntary employment/encampment opportunities and promoting physical activity and good mental health

- To support local schools and businesses to support pupils and employee mental health and wellbeing
- To support residents living with dementia to live well

In addition, the Council will work closely with the Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board when planning new developments to ensure that they are healthy places with a focus on active travel and the intergenerational use of leisure facilities.

Leisure facilities assessments

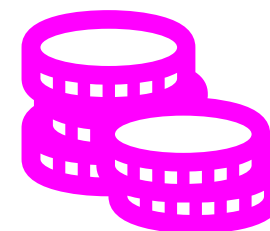
The Council commissioned some key assessments of its leisure facilities which highlights the challenges and improvements that are required to ensure that Brentwood has sustainable and fit for purpose leisure facilities. The Value for Money Review and Options Appraisal examined the Council's built facilities, Hartswood Golf Course and its play areas, and the Play and Non-Play Pitch Assessment looked at both the outdoor and indoor facilities available in the Borough. The recommendations from these reports are set out in Appendix i - ii and form part of the priorities within the strategy.

The economic value of sport and leisure in Brentwood

There is significant economic value to sport and leisure in Brentwood*

- Total direct economic value of sport £23.6m (1)
- Volunteering value £10.3m (1)
- Health (wider economic value) £31.2m (1)
- 698 total employment (1)
- 74% are 16+ population are economically active - 71.1% of those are in employment, and 3.5% are unemployed (2)

**Figures from Sport England (1) - ONS Annual population survey (2)*



5. What does the local profile of Brentwood tell us?

The Council needs to understand what the future demands of its residents will be that also informs the priorities for the strategy. We know that between 2015 – 2025*:

- Brentwood's population will increase from 75,000 to 81,800 so the Council will need to ensure that its leisure facilities can meet that increased demand
- Life expectancy is 8.7 years lower for men and 7.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Brentwood than the least deprived areas, so the Council needs to provide targeted programming that will improve the health and wellbeing of residents and decrease health inequalities across the Borough
- 61.4% of residents aged between 16 and 64
- There is expected to be a 17% increase of over 65s which will put a greater demand on health, social services and housing needs
- There is expected to be 1,800 more under 19s
- 9,200 new babies will be born over the period

**Public Health England Brentwood Health Profile 2017*

Although Brentwood has no areas of distinct inequality, Brentwood South and Brentwood North wards are areas with higher levels of child poverty and long-term unemployment than others in the Borough, which may indicate health inequalities.

Age

- Brentwood has a higher than average 65+ age group and an increasing elderly population will put pressure on its services.
- Generally, Brentwood has good participation rates, but the Active People's Survey indicated that the activity in some age groups could be increased such as the 26 – 34year olds and the over 55s.

Health

- The health of people in Brentwood is generally better than the England average
- Life expectancy for both men and women in Brentwood is significantly better than the national average
- 12.6% of adults are **smokers**, lower than the national average
- 1,230 people aged over 65 are thought to have **dementia** and this number is expected to rise by 41% to 1,740 by 2030
- 65% of adults and 27.7% of 10-11year old children are **overweight or obese**
- 15.6% of residents have a disability of long-term health issue
- 20.2% of adults are doing enough physical activity to benefit their health
- 5% of Brentwood residents have **diabetes** and the figure has risen over the last 4 years
- 0.79%* (In CCG area) have a **mental health** problem although 4.5% of people completing GP survey report that they have a long term mental or physical health problem. Maybe due to under recording?
- 37.5 per 100,000 **cardiovascular disease**

Activity

Brentwood has relatively good activity levels when compared nationally. The Active Lives* survey for Brentwood identified that:

- 70.2 % active, 13% fairly active, 16.8% inactive
- 81.3% have taken part in sport and physical activity at least twice in the last 28 days
- 43.8% are active once a week
- 47.3% of males are active once a week
- 40.7% of females are active once a week
- 27.5% are active 3 x 30 mins a week
- 28.9% have a sport club membership
- 38% of residents did 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on five days or more

The survey also identified the perceived barriers to sport and physical activity

- 45% of residents are most likely to cite lack of time as the main reason for not taking more exercise
- 21% of resident's state that it is too expensive
- 20% of resident's state lack of motivation
- 20% of resident's state other family commitments

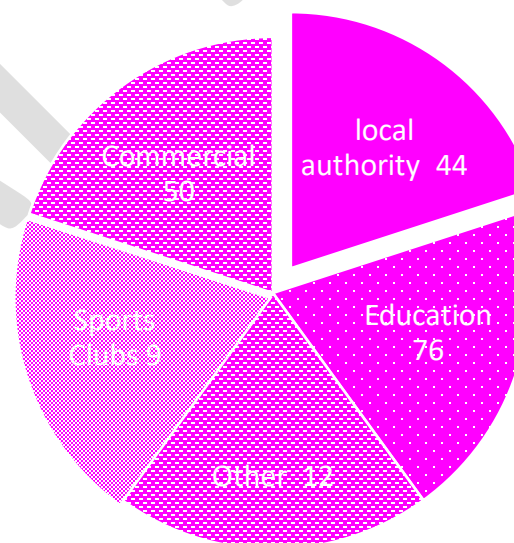
Essex Residents Survey October 2016

- 85% of Brentwood residents are satisfied with a high-quality environment
- 89% of Brentwood residents are satisfied with the local area as a place to live
- 85% of Brentwood are satisfied with their parks and open spaces
- 87% of Brentwood are satisfied with the ease of access to parks and open spaces
- 76% of Brentwood residents have good general health
- 20% of Brentwood say they have given unpaid help to groups, clubs or organisations over the last 12 months (lower than the county average)
- 48% of residents are satisfied with their local bus service

6. Existing provision

Our existing provision, the quantity, quality and accessibility of this, as well as the operational issues and geographic location. A full list of facilities in Brentwood is in Appendix X at the back of the strategy. The table below provides a summary of the facilities in Brentwood. Please note that not all leisure facilities are managed by Brentwood Borough Council. The assessments that have been undertaken consider the entire provision across the Borough and how accessible they are i.e. is it membership only, or are they based within an educational setting?

Type of facilities	Quantity
Artificial pitches	8
Grass pitches	123
Swimming Pools	18
Sports Halls	21
Tennis Courts	26
Parks and open spaces	41



7. Key issues facing the Council

Due to the current financial climate and reduced central government grants the Council needs to reduce its expenditure on its leisure facilities and ensure that they will be sustainable in the future. The leisure offer can deliver across different agendas, but it must evidence the difference it plays in tackling these challenges. **The Council can provide a leadership role and facilitate joint dialogue with Public Health and education providers to develop joint use of facilities.** This will involve working with partners to effectively coordinate limited resources across the Borough and monitor outcomes from interventions. It also needs to ensure that the facilities are the right mix to achieve the Council's objectives. This could mean that some facilities are consolidated, while others could be expanded.

Customer's tastes and preferences are continuing to change. Investment in facilities to match customer expectations based on customer feedback should be planned. Without a focus on keeping facilities attractive and appealing to our community, the service will not be sustainable. Therefore, the Council needs to ensure that there are not only the right facilities mix but the right programming is in place to meet customer needs across all age groups.

With limited resources the Council needs to prioritise its investment programme across the Borough and increase income streams that will support the future sustainability of its facilities. The commercial viability of some facilities will need to be balanced while maintaining the core community offer.

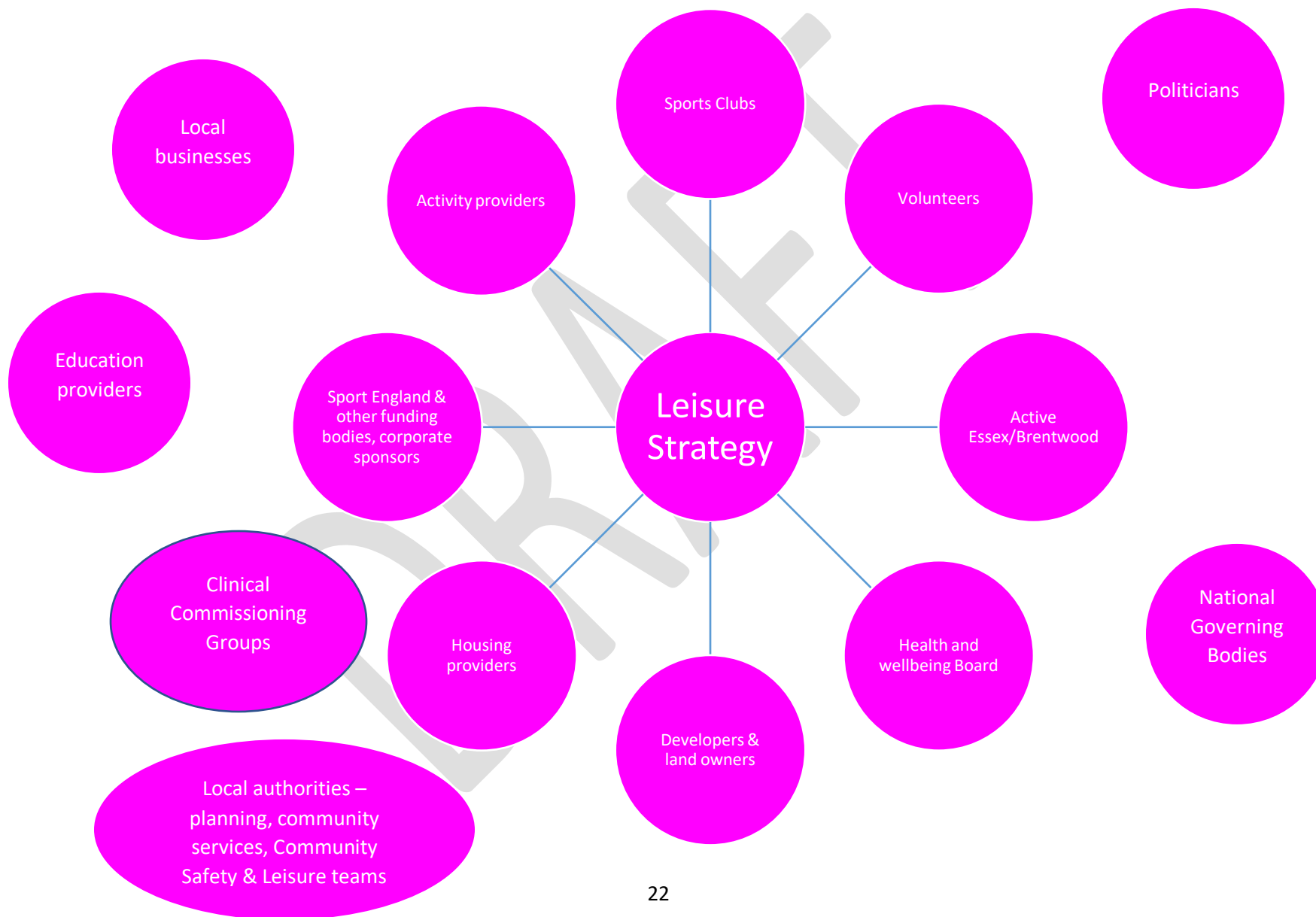
8. How will we deliver a successful strategy?

As mentioned earlier in the Strategy, its covers a number of areas that can assist in the improvement of public health and wellbeing. To deliver a strategy of this scale the work has been split into workstreams to achieve the expected outcomes. These workstreams are set out in the Leisure Strategy Action Plan pages 31 to 46 of this document. Although the Arts can be included in the Leisure Strategy the Council has included this strand within the Health and Wellbeing workstream in the Leisure Strategy action plan.

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The Big Picture – key stakeholders and influencers in the development and delivery of the Leisure Strategy



Brentwood Borough Council will use KPI's to measure the success across the course of the strategy aligning these to our priorities and outcomes. We will develop an annual delivery/action plan to define how we intend to work towards the strategic priorities, goals and associated outcomes. We will regularly report our progress to the appropriate Council committee who will take responsibility for overseeing the successful implementation of the strategy. We will publish an annual report to celebrate our collective successes, identify any areas for improvement and highlight any changes we intend to make in the forthcoming year to deliver the strategy more efficiently and effectively.

The focus will be on making better use of our assets, improvement to facilities, providing a core community offer to encourage participation and identify commercial opportunities that can provide sustainable income streams to the Council.

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Priority 1 - Built facilities

The Council needs to ensure that its built facilities are fit for purpose and future proof and the Council will need to target it funding appropriately. It needs to ensure that its running costs are kept to a minimum through efficient service provision whilst income levels must grow – reducing net cost further still.

The Council will focus on:

- **Brentwood Centre**
 - Enhance the Brentwood Centre as a venue for events to attract high quality events and acts
 - Capitalise on the location of the Centre and make it a focus for Sport, Health, Football and Mental Health provision
 - Consider alternative management options for Brentwood Centre
 - Focus on increasing leisure centre attendance levels leading to improved public health, as well as a more financially sustainable service
 - Ensure that the Brentwood Leisure Centre follows health and fitness trends to be more attractive to target groups, providing activities that will ensure sustained use and customer growth
 - Use insight led, effective, targeted marketing to develop a larger customer base
- **Pavilion in King George's Playing Fields**
 - Look at creating a 'Park Hub' that includes sports provision, family provision, café/retail provision and conferencing/event provision to maximise community usage
 - Undertake feasibility study to identify viability
 - Develop Rugby hub for King George's Playing Fields

- Community Halls
 - Renegotiate lease with Brentwood Leisure Trust
 - Undertake external condition survey to ascertain future costs and viability of the halls
 - Align with the Council’s Asset Management Strategy to maximise income to the Council
 - Explore options for Community Asset Transfer
- New developments
 - Explore opportunities for joint use and maximising developer contributions
 - Explore opportunity to create indoor play facility i.e. to make King George’s Playing Fields an all-season destination for play
 - Work with schools to develop and support new Community Use Agreements

Key Performance Indicators

- Increased income to the Council
- Reduced costs to the Council
- Investment to improve customer offer
- Increased participation by 4% per annum*
- Increased customer satisfaction

**this is the target set from Active Essex over the next 3 years*

Priority 2 - Open Spaces

The Council will ensure that the Leisure Strategy promotes the policies of the Field in Trust guidance which are set out in <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England-Apr18.pdf>. It has also noted the recommendations from the Play Pitch assessments and the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (set out in Appendix i), and that any investment from the Council is targeted to enhance its facilities. Before any work is undertaken the Council will need to undertake a feasibility study to ensure that any works will be sustainable in the future.

The Council will focus on:

- Improvement's to the Council's Country Parks* which include Hutton Country Park, Warley Country Park and St Faiths**. *Please note that South Weald and Thorndon Country Park are managed by Essex County Council. **Please not St Faith's is a designated local wildlife site.
- Improvements to the Council's formal Open Spaces such King George's Playing Fields
- Improvements to its's play pitches for Football, Rugby, Cricket and Hockey. Working to existing clubs to develop their visions etc.,
- Recommendations from the Essex Biodiversity Plan to protect, enhance and provide open space
- Allotments – population standard approach and/or the creation of new sites
- Woodlands explore any income opportunities
- Promote informal sport and physical activity opportunities in Brentwood's open spaces
- Use social media and effective marketing in open spaces locations to promote opportunities that Brentwood's open spaces offer for sport and physical activity

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase sport and physical activity in the Council's open spaces
- Improve awareness of the offer in the Council's open spaces
- Increase volunteering

Priority 3 - Play Areas

The Council has looked at its current provision and how it can be maintained in the future. Currently the Borough has **28** play areas. **11** of those are owned and managed on Council housing estates, **7** of those are managed by Brentwood Borough Council in the parks and **10** of those are owned and managed directly by the Parish Councils.

The Council will ensure that all residents will have good and free access to high-quality play areas, possible as a hub and spoke with significant play areas maintained in key locations across the Borough, i.e. Pilgrims Hatch, Hutton, Shenfield and Warley. The Council needs to reduce its revenue and capital costs and ensure that its play areas meet the needs of any British and European health and safety standards. Costs for some recent improvements have been met by developer contribution (S106), but the Council will still incur on-going maintenance costs associated with its play areas. To make the play areas more sustainable moving forward it is proposed that some rationalisation of the play areas is required. The Council would not rationalise without investing in key strategically located parks across the Borough. The Council will also explore income generating activities and ensure investment is strategically targeted in the creation of destination play areas across the Borough. A phased rationalisation of play facilities would help to produce a sustainable play service which would provide a portfolio of traditional robust equipment that is safe and simple to maintain, well-designed, well-planned that will provide high-quality play facilities fit for current and future needs and demands. The Council will also look at opportunities for Community Asset Transfer if local volunteer groups can demonstrate with a business case that they can take on the direct management of a play area.

The Council will also need to look at new housing growth within the Borough to ensure that adequate play facilities are considered. As the nature of play is changing, the Council will need to ensure that it is inclusive and that it can be part of an inter-generational space. It is also key that Children and Young People are involved in the development of these facilities.

Current provision

The Council will focus on:

- Investment into the creation of destination play areas
- Ensure key population centres in Brentwood have reasonable walking distance access to play areas
- Strategically maximising developer contributions (S106)
- Opportunities for Public Private Partnerships that could provide capital funding, income, expertise and management of new facilities
- The phased rationalisation of some play areas
- Parish Council play areas will still remain the responsibility of the Parish Council's to maintain and inspect
- Consideration of Community Asset Transfer for smaller parks run by volunteer groups

Proposed provision

Key Performance Indicators

- Increased satisfaction levels of the Council's Play areas
- Reduced capital and revenue costs

Priority 4 - Sport

The Council will continue to work to make leisure and sport accessible to the whole population. While the leisure centre acts as sports hub other activities are provided in the community settings such as village halls and local playing fields, reducing the need to travel, increasing accessibility, and subsequently increasing participation levels.

Community sport is thriving in Brentwood but in many cases, it is at capacity, and the Council recognises the importance of working with the community to maintain current and develop new sporting opportunities. There are many clubs supported by community volunteers with a wide variety of activities taking place, all of which benefit from support over the period of this strategy.

The Council will focus on:

- Consulting with NGB's and national associations to access opportunities for a regional centre of excellence
- The creation of a football hub at the Brentwood Centre with 3G pitches.
- The creation of a rugby hub at King George's Playing Fields including the enhancement of the current pavilion building
- The creation of an indoor nets facility for year-round cricket development
- Enhancement of the golf course at Hartswood in King George's Playing Fields, including enhancement of the current pavilion building
- Work with Active Essex, taking into account the findings from the Play Pitch Strategy and the Indoor Facilities Strategy to ensure clear Asset Management site priorities, local plan sites and potential priorities are identified
- Ensure that Active Brentwood works as an enabler to improve participation, local facilities and coach education
- Continue to work with local clubs and partners to identify funding to improve facilities and encourage increased sport and physical activity in Brentwood

- Work with National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Active Brentwood and Sport England to develop, monitor and evaluate programmes in the Borough
- Work with partners to develop active leisure programmes that develop respect and strengthen cohesion, including cross-generational and cross-cultural activities
- Consider creating a centre of excellence in the Borough
- Look at the consolidation of some facilities and improvement to others
- Identify other sports that the Council might want to attract to the Borough
- Where possible help community clubs retain local identity by ensuring access to facilities and pitches near their home base

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in club growth i.e. increase in the number of teams and promotion of clubs through their respective league system
- Improved standard of facilities that can support talented individuals to national levels of competition
- Active Brentwood hits annual attendance targets?
- Value of funding brought to the Borough supported by Brentwood Borough Council increases year on year with a baseline established in 2018/19
- Number of active leisure schemes set up and supported by partners with Brentwood Borough Council increases year on year
- Increased recognition and awards for the Brentwood Centre as a centre of excellence for its Mental Health and disability programming

Priority 5 - Health and Wellbeing

The Leisure Strategy will be a key document to deliver the outcomes for the Health and Wellbeing Board priorities of tackling obesity, ageing well and improving Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing. Health and employment are intimately linked, and long-term unemployment can have a negative effect on health and wellbeing. The Council will support programmes that target a reduction in health inequalities and that will positively impact sections of the population requiring extra support.

The Council will focus on:

- Working with the Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board to create Healthy Places through new developments, prioritising cycling and walkway infrastructure
- Increasing participation through the enhancement of facilities
- Continue to work with businesses to reduce sugar and salt consumption through the TuckIN project
- Providing a core community offer to residents with a focus on activity programmes for older people, Mental Health activity programmes and diversionary activity programmes for younger people
- Improving partnership working through Active Brentwood/Essex and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to provide activities and volunteering opportunities in the community
- Promote and support the Livewell campaign www.livewellcampaign.co.uk

Key Performance Indicators

- Increased participation especially with over 55s
- Increased participation of those with Mental Ill Health supported through physical activity programmes
- Increased awareness in schemes that are available

Priority 6 – Leadership Management and Oversight

The Council needs to ensure that there is the right management and governance in place to ensure that the Leisure Strategy can be successfully delivered. Whatever governance model is decided upon it will need to include Local Authority members and officers and also public/independent members. The Council will focus on:

- Identifying the right operating model that will best deliver the Leisure Strategy. This could mean one main operator or a hybrid approach
- Ensuring that the Council delivers Value for Money for its residents through its procurement process and relevant feasibility studies
- Identify external funding opportunities that can assist the Council in financing improvements to facilities
- Ensuring that robust contract management and monitoring is in place to deliver on the Council's expected outcomes through the establishment of Key Performance Indicators
- Identify the risks and the potential rewards
- Ensure that the true costs for the lifecycle of the facilities are identified to ensure planned budgets are in place to identify ongoing future costs for facilities
- Ensuring that the right workforce structure is in place to support the delivery of the outcomes for the Leisure Strategy
- Ensure staff are properly trained so that they can provide a high-quality customer service and identify opportunities for improved revenue generation and growth
- Provide a communication plan so that the public are informed of the progress of the Leisure Strategy

9. Who can deliver the Strategy?

The Council needs to ensure that the right operating model is in place to deliver the desired outcomes of the Leisure Strategy in the most effective, efficient way and delivers best Value for Money to our residents. Whatever the operator, the Council needs to ensure that it is a key stakeholder on the 'board' and in a position of influence with regard to the operations and strategy, and there is an agreed core community offer available to the residents.

Currently the Council has a hybrid operating model, where some is delivered directly by Brentwood Borough Council, some through Brentwood Leisure Trust and some through private operators. The future options available to the Council are set out as follows:

- Use the Brentwood Leisure Trust as the main operator and identify other activities/facilities that could be included as part of the core community offer
- Establish a new trust model to deliver the Leisure Strategy
- Adopt a new hybrid approach
- Establish a joint venture company
- Establish one principle operator
- Liaise with local sports clubs and put them on long leases

10. How can the Leisure Strategy be delivered?

Due to the current financial constraints the Council needs to ensure that it maximises the amount of external funding that it can attract. This will mean that a model is developed for all the options so that both the risks and the rewards are identified.

The Council will focus on the following areas:

- Ensure that objectives and expected outcomes are aligned where possible to the National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Sport England and Public Health England.
- Explore opportunities to work with Leisure Development Partner who can provide expertise
- Prioritise the investment programme
- Explore opportunities to work with private partners to invest in some facilities
- Brentwood Borough Council borrowing, how the loan is serviced
- Sports Clubs contributions
- Capital receipts from asset disposal
- Maximise developer contributions (S106) from new developments to strategically support the Council's leisure facilities
- New initiatives such as soil relocation to enhance facilities
- Utilising a trust model to access additional funding streams

11. Leisure Strategy Action Plan

Priority 1 –Built Facilities

Recommendation	Action	Outcomes
General		
Recommendations from the Indoor Facilities Assessment	Review the recommendations from the Indoor facility assessment	Increased facilities Improved facilities
Address the issues raised within the assessment of the Council’s ageing leisure facilities and assets	Undertake an external condition survey of the Council’s built facilities. Review and address any items contained within the external condition surveys and full lifecycle Planned Programme Maintenance (PPM) of the Council’s leisure assets.	Identify future costs to Brentwood Borough Council
Work with leisure partners to utilise and publicise the facilities available across the borough enabling more physical activity opportunities in rural communities	Agree communications plan to publicise activities on offer	Increased participation
Encourage relationships with leisure operational partners in neighbouring districts to encourage the development of cross boundary offers for local communities.	Work with planning and neighbouring authorities.	Increased participation
Where possible increase accessibility, usability and affordability of sites and facilities	Work with Brentwood Borough Council’s Leisure Development and Operational partners and disability groups to ensure appropriate consideration is given to access to and from leisure sites and disabled equipment and facilities is applied during the design and delivery of the agreed facilities upgrade plan	Increased participation
	Identify and support schools that want to open up their facilities to the community	Increased participation
	Support the development of the Most Active County’s Sport England Partnership Programme action plan which encourages schools to increase access of their facilities to local communities	Increased participation

Develop mechanisms to ensure new planning developments consider active travel routes and easy access for all leisure facilities and open spaces.	Planning team adoption of Brentwood Borough Council’s Pitch, Non-pitch, Open Spaces and Built Facilities assessments when considering future planning applications/developments	Increased participation
	Support the development of Neighbourhood and Parish Plans to consider the wider leisure and recreation opportunities	Improved facilities
Improve internal and external communications, raising public awareness of the wide number and range of physical activity opportunities that already exist.	Develop partner communications plans and publicise opportunities delivered by partner organisations	Increased participation
	Use the data obtained from the underpinning assessments to develop a facilities map highlighting key community use facilities and promote this externally to the residents of Brentwood Borough Council	Increased participation
Ensure that customer facing employees have the appropriate skills and awareness to work with a range of customers with varying needs.	Work with users and community groups to develop insight in aspects of facilities that need improvement	Increased customer satisfaction
	Continue to work with staff and leisure partners to ensure employees are appropriately trained	Increased customer satisfaction
Brentwood Centre		
Capitalise on the location of the Brentwood Centre and make it a focus for Sport, Health, Football and Mental Health provision	Identify Leisure Development Partner that can undertake a feasibility study for investment programme for Brentwood Centre and possible funding streams to support it.	Improvement to facilities Increase participation Increase footfall
Focus on increasing leisure centre attendance levels and ensure Brentwood Centre follows health and fitness trends to be more attractive to target groups, providing activities that will ensure sustained use and customer growth	Use the built facilities assessment to agree specification for an agreed facilities upgrade plan that will also be commercially viable	Improvement to facilities Increased participation

Brentwood Centre as an events venue of the right quality	Identify areas for improvement such as dressing rooms which will support and attract a strong event plan	Improvement to facilities Increased footfall
Consider alternative management options for the Brentwood Centre	Work with Brentwood Leisure Trust to look at future requirements and needs from the Brentwood Centre.	Delivers Value for Money for residents Increase income to Brentwood Borough Council
Pavilion Building in King George’s Playing Fields		
Creation of a family hub at King George’s Playing Fields	Identify opportunities with partner organisations to develop the pavilion building as a family hub in KGPF to support existing sports provision of golf, football and rugby plus creation of new indoor play/sport facilities for year round access. Work with Brentwood Rugby Club to develop joint use facility and possible centre of excellence	Improvement to facilities Increased use of open spaces Increased activity levels
Undertake a business plan for improvements to King George’s Playing Fields including the pavilion building	Appoint a Leisure Development Partner to undertake a business plan to identify a commercial viable option for the site and identify any shortfall that Brentwood Borough Council will need to fund.	Improvement to facilities
Community Halls		
Renegotiate Halls Management Agreement with Brentwood Leisure Trust	Meetings with BLT to renegotiate the Halls Management Agreement	Reduce expenditure to Council
Identify future costs for the halls	Undertake an external condition survey to identify future costs for the halls	Reduce expenditure to the Council

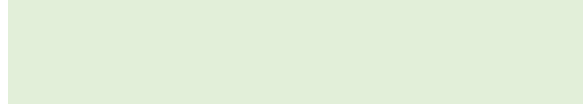
Identify opportunities for a Community Asset Transfer	Look at halls case by case to identify opportunities	Reduce expenditure to the Council
New Developments		
Identify future facility need within any new developments	Ensure any developer contribution is maximised to support community and leisure facilities	New facilities to meet demand Increase participation
	Work with partner organisation such as Health and Sport England to identify opportunities create community hub to support new community such as GP, Health, Education and Leisure services sharing a site	New facilities to meet demand
Promote active travel routes	Identify links to existing sites to promote walking, cycling routes	Increase participation and activity levels



Priority 2 – Open Spaces

Recommendation	Action	Outcomes
Improvements to the Council's Country Parks* which include Hutton Country Park, Warley Country Park and St Faiths.	Identify improvements in the Country Parks and establish improvement plans for each.	Improvement to facilities Increased use of open spaces
Improvements to the Council's formal Open Spaces such King George's Playing Fields	Undertake feasibility study with Leisure Development Partner to develop viable business plan	Improvement to facilities Increased participation and activity
Improvements to the Council's play pitches for Football, Rugby, Cricket and Hockey.	Working to existing clubs to develop their visions etc., in particular ancillary facilities such as improved parking capacity and changing/toilet facilities i.e. Larkins	Improvement to facilities Increased participation
Recommendations from the Essex Biodiversity Plan to protect, enhance and provide open space	Review recommendations and feed into any improvement plans	Improvement and protection of facilities
Continue to sustainably manage Brentwood countryside, woodlands and SSSI sites to agreed standards, enabling integrated access and supporting resident recreation whilst protecting the areas wildlife habitat and natural tranquillity.	Support the recommendations and actions of Natural England's National Character Area Profile NE466 NCA profile: 111 North Thames Basin 2013	Protection of facilities
Continue to provide a work programme for the Countryside Volunteers	Agree areas for works and improvement using the existing Countryside volunteers	Increased volunteering Improvement to facilities
Promote informal sport and physical activity opportunities in Brentwood's open spaces	Use social media and effective marketing in open spaces locations to promote opportunities that Brentwood's open spaces offer for sport and physical activity	Increase use of public open spaces Increased participation and activity

	Utilise Brentwood open spaces to provide community events such as Family Fun Days and similar activities	Increase use of public open spaces Increased participation and activity
	Explore the options of installing outdoor gyms in strategic locations	Increase use of public open spaces Increased participation and activity



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Priority 3 – Play Areas

Recommendation	Action	Outcomes
Investment into the creation of destination play areas	Identify and prioritise play areas for investment and ensure as far as possible to be strategically located i.e. within a 15minute walk for 90% of the population	Improvement to facilities Reduce Council expenditure Increase in activity Reduce risk to the Council
Strategically maximising developer contributions (S106)	Identify develop contribution opportunities that will support strategic investment in facilities	Improvement to facilities Reduce Council expenditure Increase in activity
Opportunities for Public Private Partnerships that could provide capital funding, income, expertise and management of new facilities	Identify commercial income streams that can support inward investment of facilities	Improvement to facilities Reduce Council expenditure
Meeting the needs of residents in new housing developments	Identify community requirements within new housing developments	Increase in activity New facilities
The phased rationalisation of some play areas	Identify timescales for the phased rationalisation of play areas which will be subject to strategic investment in destination play areas	Reduce risk to the Council Reduce Council expenditure
Consideration of community asset transfer	Identify any groups who would be interested and submit viable bids	Reduce risk to the Council Reduce Council expenditure

Priority 4 – Sports

Recommendation	Action	outcomes
Support and implement the recommendations and actions of the Brentwood Play Pitch and Non-Play pitch and Built facilities assessments	Awaiting the recommendations? Review and implement recommendations from the assessments	Improvement to facilities
Encourage sports clubs and community groups to be more involved in the operation of facilities and sites	Mavericks development at Warley	Improvement to facilities at Warley Playing Fields
	Brentwood Youth AFC	Improvement to Larkin Playing Fields
	Hutton Football Club	Improvement of facilities
	Identify locations across the borough that would benefit from application of Sports Hub principles unifying sporting clubs or disciplines allowing clubs to grow and release financial benefit in the process	
Introduce further sporting and physical activity opportunities for disabled and older residents	Utilise and support new initiatives	Increase participation and activity
	Continue to support the Walking for Health programme	Increase participation and activity
Enable people and organisations to develop skills, achieve goals and maximise their potential	Ensure pathways exist which identify talent, nurture and retain athlete, coaches and officials at all levels	Achieve more people engaged in volunteering
	Inspire people from more diverse backgrounds to get and stay involved in volunteering	Increase the economic value of the physical activity and sport sector
	Support organisations in achieving accreditation and compliance with 'A code for Sports Governance'	Increase the numbers of organisations meeting accreditation standards

	Promote opportunities for new careers in the sector and help attract new investment by the industry in Essex	Enable more people to be trained in the sector
	Identify and address the training needs of the workforce including those around employability	Increase the skills of the sector’s workforce
Support club development and engagement across the Borough, signposting clubs to relevant funding opportunities when available	Support sports clubs to develop sporting opportunities within schools	Increase participation and activity
	Engage NGB’s, school, local clubs and other key partners in delivery of Active Brentwood, the community sports network for Brentwood and use this as a forum to support club development across the district.	Active Brentwood Networking events
Increase physical and sporting activity across the borough by X% year on year using Sport England’s Active People Survey as a measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a sustainable network of safe and accessible facilities, open spaces and active travel routes • Ensure workplaces adopt an active culture that encourages participation • Improve and enhance the customer experience of physical activity and sport, with a focus on the core market • Use technology and innovation to promote activities on offer • Facilitate and promote spectator sport and mass participation events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce inactivity levels • Increase the number of people being active • Improve young people’s attitudes towards physical activity and sport • Provide a sustainable network of the right, high quality and accessible facilities in the right places • Get more people using open spaces for exercise and health reasons • Increase the numbers of mass participation and elite sports events hosted. • Maintain and increase the economic value of physical activity and sport
Support the network of volunteers that underpin the	Communicate the training opportunities available to new volunteers enabling clubs to grow	Increase volunteering associated with sport and physical activity

Borough’s sport /community clubs.	Provide networking opportunities for existing volunteers/clubs to enable sharing of best practice	Supported and well-developed community clubs
Enhancement of existing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore viability and location for indoor cricket net provision • Indoor/covered tennis • Seek opportunities with NGB’s for regional centre of excellence 	Improved facilities Increased participation
Promote new sports in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with new clubs or existing clubs that require more support in setting up i.e. baseball, table tennis, boxing 	Increased participation

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Priority 5 – Health and Wellbeing

Recommendations	Action	Outcomes
<p>Support the priorities and the desired outcomes for the Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board</p>	<p>Tackling Obesity Continue to work with businesses to reduce sugar and salt consumption through the TuckIN project.</p> <p>Increase participation with improvement to facilities and affordable and accessible programming</p> <p>Work with schools to promote new initiatives</p> <p>Work with businesses to promote new initiatives such as workout from work</p> <p>Utilise Active Brentwood as an enabler</p>	<p>Local residents enjoy positive activities and are physically and emotionally healthy</p>
	<p>Ageing Well Supporting the over 50s to increase levels of physical activity through a range of activities</p> <p>Improve programming opportunities for over 55 activities</p> <p>Promote available offer for senior activities Utilise Active Brentwood as an enabler</p>	<p>Local residents enjoy positive activities and are physically and emotionally healthy</p>

	<p>Improvement to Physical and Mental Health Wellbeing Increase participation levels through the right programme of activities especially the target groups who need to increase their activity levels Such as those with Mental Ill Health and with a physical disability</p>	Local residents enjoy positive activities and are physically and emotionally healthy
Target specific groups to increase their participation levels	<p>The Council would work with partners to increase their activity levels, in particular: People with a life-long limiting illness or disability People aged 65+ People from lower socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 5-8) Unemployed people Females Black and ethnic minorities. This could include assisted equipment for those that have limited mobility or the promotion of seated exercise classes.</p>	<p>Increase activity levels Improved health and wellbeing of residents</p>
Support the growth of active travel methods	<p>Support the recommendations and actions of Essex County Council's Cycling Strategy 2016 http://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/docs/ecc-cycling-strategy-novemeber-2016.pdf</p>	Increase activity levels
	<p>Create safe walking and cycling routes with three schools across Brentwood (H&WB action plan)</p>	Increased activity levels
	<p>Encouraging and promoting use of the cycle footpath networks available across the district especially in new developments (Dunton Garden Village)</p>	Increased activity levels

	<p>Ensure that key facilities such as frequently used countryside sites and leisure facilities have the facilities required for ease of active travel i.e. footpaths and cycle tracks</p> <p>Support the renewal of Essex County Council’s Right of Way Improvement Plan 2009 http://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/final-rowip.pdf</p> <p>Actively support groups, organisations or projects that increase walking activities</p> <p>Walking for Health initiative</p> <p>Local businesses promote /incentives?</p>	<p>Greater use of open spaces Reducing obesity Increased participation</p>
<p>Establishment of outdoor gyms</p>	<p>Identify potential sites aligned to the creation of destination play areas for strategic investment and where health inequality is most prevalent in the Borough.</p>	<p>Increase accessibility to facilities Increase activity levels</p>

<p>Increase and encourage residents of the wider community including young people, older people, people with disabilities and the economically disadvantaged, to increase their physical activity levels by utilising the Council’s open spaces and leisure facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a targeted approach to groups which are most likely to be inactive and under-represented in both physical activity and sport. • Ensure physical activity and sport are utilised as effective tools in prevention, early intervention and management of long term conditions/reablement • Develop resilience, tackle social isolation and promote independence • Ensure there is an inclusive offer which meets the needs of disabled people and those with limiting illnesses/conditions • Promote the benefits of being active to enable people to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing and make better lifestyle choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce inactivity levels amongst target groups • Support NHS targets of reducing numbers of serious health conditions associated with inactivity • Increase the number of people being active • Improve young people’s attitudes towards physical activity and sport • Provide a sustainable network of the right, high quality and accessible facilities in the right places • Get more people using open spaces for exercise and health reasons • Support NHS targets for more adults and children achieving and maintaining a healthy weight
	<p>Continue to build relationships with schools to develop educational countryside programmes currently available</p>	<p>Link with Forest School programme to increase usage of Council’s open spaces</p>
	<p>Support the recommendations and actions of Natural England’s National Character Area Profile – NE466 NCA profile: 111 North Thames Basin 2013 http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4721112340496384?category=587130</p>	<p>Increase bio-diversity within the Council’s Country Parks</p>
	<p>Support volunteer working parties within the Borough that promote health and wellbeing benefits and increase the volunteer’s physical activity levels</p>	<p>Volunteer Tree Warden Scheme Country side Volunteers work programme</p>

<p>Continue to develop summer holiday activity programme across the borough to incorporate a wide range of activities for young people</p>	<p>Work with partner organisations to support programmes or enable communities to deliver their own programmes, eliminating duplication and offering a more comprehensive approach to delivery.</p>	<p>Family Fun day programme Brentwood Sports Festival Increase activity and participation</p>
<p>Promote healthy living and healthy lifestyle choices such as diet, drinking and smoking cessation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to develop and promote Health Week • Promote LiveWell programme of available activities 	<p>Increase awareness and signposting to support services</p>
<p>Promote art and cultural activities and opportunities in Brentwood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Brentwood Arts Council and other cultural organisations to promote activities for residents • Promote Brentwood Art Trail 	<p>Increase participation in Arts and Cultural projects</p>



Priority 6 – Leadership Management and Oversight

Recommendations	Actions	Outcomes
Identifying the right operating model that will best deliver the Leisure Strategy.	This could mean one main operator or a hybrid approach	Reduced expenditure to the Council
Ensuring that the Council delivers Value for Money for its residents	Through its procurement process and relevant feasibility studies	Reduced expenditure to the Council
Identify external funding opportunities to support investment programme	Once specifications are agreed work with partners and funders to complete funding applications	Reduce expenditure to the Council
Ensuring that robust contract management and monitoring is in place to deliver on the Council's expected outcomes	Establish Key Performance Indicators to measure success Ensure Brentwood Borough Council is key stakeholder and influencer at 'Board' level	Deliver the desired outcomes
Identify the risks and the potential rewards	Through the specification and contract management process	Reduce expenditure to the Council
All costs are identified in facilities	Ensure that the true costs for the lifecycle of the facilities are identified to ensure planned budgets are in place to identify ongoing future costs for facilities	Reduce expenditure to the Council
Training and Development of workforce	Ensuring that the right workforce structure is in place to support the delivery of the outcomes for the Leisure Strategy	Increased customer satisfaction
	Ensure staff are properly trained	Increased customer satisfaction
Increase Public Awareness	Provide a communication plan so that the public are informed of the progress of the Leisure Strategy	Public awareness of the progress of the strategy
Ensure that customer satisfaction and opportunity is available for public involvement	Feedback and satisfaction and trends are reviewed regularly by the 'Board'	Increased customer satisfaction

12. Appendices and background documents and links

- a. Sport England
 - i. Towards an Active Nation 2016-21 <https://www.sportengland.org/media/10629/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf>
- b. Public Health England
 - i. 2014 Everybody Active, Every Day <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/everybody-active-every-day-a-framework-to-embed-physical-activity-into-daily-life>
- c. Department of Health and Social Care
 - i. Childhood Obesity Plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action>
- d. Department of Transport
 - i. Cycling and Walking Strategy 2017 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy>
- e. Public Health England
 - i. Brentwood Borough Health Profile https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E10000012?place_name=Brentwood&search_type=place-name
- f. Fields in Trust
 - i. Guidance <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/>
- g. Essex Health and Wellbeing Board
 - i. Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy https://www.essex.gov.uk/Business-Partners/Partners/Health-wellbeing-Essex/Documents/Essex_Health_Wellbeing_Strategy.pdf
- h. Active Essex
 - i. Active Essex Strategy 2017-2021– 1million People Active <https://www.activeessex.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Active-Essex-Changing-1-Million-Lives-Strategy.pdf>
- i. Brentwood Borough Council
 - i. Local Development Plan <http://www.brentwood.gov.uk/index.php?cid=694>

- ii. Playing Pitch Strategy 2018-2033
- iii. Open Space Assessment
- iv. Built facilities Strategy
- v. Asset Management Strategy
- vi. Brentwood Green Infrastructure Strategy
- j. Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board
 - i. Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

<https://brentwood.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s12535/Appendix%20A.pdf>

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Appendix B

Responses from Leisure Strategy Consultation

Name	Organisation	Comments	Response from BBC
David Morpew	Brentwood Leisure Trust - trustee	<p>I find it interesting the measure for inactivity is at 30mins or less of moderate exercise per week, yet the guidelines for recommended exercise is 150 mins per week. I feel setting the bar at 30 mins per week most people can achieve this so keeping the inactivity figure lower than it really is.</p> <p>* The figure for inactivity being 16.8% and the number for disabled people in the borough being 15.6% it would be interesting how much of the inactivity figure would be made up of disabled people.</p> <p>* Looking at the worrying figures of CV disease, Diabetes etc it would be great to propose a GP Referral Scheme working with all local GP Surgeries, Clinics, Medical professionals participating by referring patients that would benefit from exercise to a subsidised Membership at Brentwood Centre..(this works really well at Aspire, £20 a month membership for 9 months then transferring into an ordinary membership there after)</p> <p>* Although in parts it briefly mentions disability I feel there is not too much and would of liked to see a section on engaging people with all disabilities or Medical Conditions. Assisted Exercise programs at the centre could work well. Offering People with Physical Disabilities help to use the gym equipment that normally wouldn't come along to the gym as they cannot get on or off equipment (Aspire charge £10 for 30mins assistance or £20 for an hour which is kind of like a PT session but done by our fitness instructors) Also we do Seated Classes which work very well.</p> <p>* Is there any provision for Athletics in Brentwood? as currently Chelmsford or Basildon are the only places I know of.</p> <p>But lot of the strategy is positive especially targeting grassroots, millennials and encouraging the use of the Brentwood Centre with the proposals of improvement.</p>	<p>The following definitions are set by Sport England in the Active Lives Survey Inactive less than 30 minutes per week Fairly Active 30-149 minutes per week Active more than 150 minutes per week This is has been referenced in the Strategy on page 6.</p> <p>This one of the targeted groups that the Council would look to engage with to increase their activity levels: People with a life-long limiting illness or disability People aged 65+ People from lower socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 5-8) Unemployed people Females Black and ethnic minorities 16.8% for inactivity figure is from the Active Lives Survey from Sport England and the 15.6% long term disability data is from Census 2011. As part of the Council's KPIs we will look to identify how many of these people have a long term disability and measure how we can work with them to increase their activity levels. This has been added to the Action Plan on page 42.</p> <p>There is a current GP referral scheme through the Brentwood Centre. There are number of GP surgeries that are involved as part of the Care Navigation package which looks at prescribing activity to people as an alternative to medicines.</p> <p>Noted and we would look to expand this through a number of the workstreams such as the Health and Wellbeing, and engage what other leisure providers to identify what they are doing. The Council would explore looking at assisted equipment when looking at improvements to our leisure facilities such as the Brentwood Centre. This has been added to the Action plan on page 42.</p> <p>Brentwood School has the only athletics facility in Brentwood - assessments have not indicated the need for an additional athletics facility in the Brentwood Borough.</p>
Eric Watts	Health and Wellbeing Board representative	<p>I'm concerned by the statement that "the Council needs to reduce its expenditure" as the benefit of adopting healthy lifestyles will be reduced spending in the future. The 'Walking for Health' project is a good example of a very low cost initiative and I'm pleased to see it included but I think it needs more active promotion.</p>	<p>The Council as a whole needs to reduce its expenditure, but the strategy does look at key investment of its leisure facilities to make them future proof to meet the needs of the changing demographics in the Borough. The Council is also keen to identify low cost or free activities that are easily accessible for the community. Part of our communication plan will be how we can improve the promotion of existing and planned activities in the Borough.</p>
Elaine Higgins	Health and Wellbeing Board lead	<p>Page 27: TUCK IN – this should be referenced as TuckIN (no space between the two words). This is a reduction in saturated fats, sugar, salt and calories through portion control (not just salt and sugar) Livewell Campaign – the document refers to Living Well, this is the discontinued ECC scheme and we now need to refer to Livewell www.livewellcampaign.co.uk Your outcomes could include the number of activities in Brentwood listed on Livewell – currently there are very few. P23. The Health and Wellbeing Board would welcome the addition of outdoor gyms where possible, to be integrated in the play provision and re-development of play areas as they occur. The purpose of these is to increase activity levels in adults.</p>	<p>Comments noted and will be amended for inclusion in the final strategy and the Action Plan on pages 41, 43 and 45</p>
Jo Grant	Active Brentwood	<p>Page 17 – Each facility type would be good to have a breakdown of percentage of who owns what – esp LA – swimming pool % etc. That way what % of influence do we have as a L.A. A report to Active Brentwood as an update and involvement expected would be good.</p>	<p>Noted and will include breakdown in the final strategy. We would look to provide an annual report to the relevant Council Committee Committee, but also to Active Brentwood and the Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board on progress against the action plan.</p>
Kevin Lorikins	Hutton FC	<p>I represent one of the largest football clubs in Essex in Hutton Football Club. We have 60 teams and play on various facilities across Brentwood and Shenfield. We are seeking to develop a hub for the Club at Wynbarns Farm in Chelmsford Road. We need the full support of BBC to achieve this so that we can continue to deliver on the strategic outcomes of your plans.</p> <p>I am also the League Secretary of the Brentwood Community Football Alliance Youth League which is where all of Brentwood's football clubs look to put their younger teams and are one of the fastest growing youth leagues in the country. The League really needs a hub site as we are beginning to run out of space to play matches. We currently use Shenfield High School and Headley Walter Astro pitches. When we have discussed this with the ECFA it has been stated that we could fill a 3G on our own. We also play Futsal matches indoors and again use Shenfield High School for that but we also have to use facilities in Chelmsford. So we would ask for access to more indoor facilities.</p> <p>Finally, I am also the League Secretary of the Essex Olympian Football League. A number of Brentwood teams play in that League and need access to better facilities. Too many games get called off because of the weather which costs the Clubs revenue and puts players off the game.</p> <p>There is a lot we can do in terms of sharing good practice and supporting our Clubs. There is a lot more to running Clubs than just organising and playing matches.</p> <p>I would be more than happy to share my knowledge and experience with BBC to develop and support our Clubs and their army of volunteers.</p>	<p>Noted and would look to work with the Essex FA and the Borough local football teams to support the improvement of facilities and clubs across the Borough</p>
Bob McLintock	Active Brentwood Chair	<p>Thank you for giving Active Brentwood the opportunity to comment on the Council's Leisure Strategy 2018-2018. The current document acknowledges and reflects the existing objectives and priorities of a number of national, county and local groups and organisations. However, with a strategy designed for implementation over a ten year period the strategic and operational focus of these organisations may well change. At that time, appropriate decisions may be necessary to confirm or amend the strategy now being proposed. The strategy indicates that the Brentwood Borough Council has a significant number of leisure aspirations that the authority wish to pursue. Whilst such an ambitious programme should be welcomed and supported, we have concerns that the staff resources required to deliver the proposals are not currently available. Indeed whilst we obviously support the Council's ambition in their Corporate Plan (2016-19) to make Brentwood a Borough where people feel "safe, healthy and supported" the description of the key issues indicates that "The Council needs to reduce its expenditure on its sport and leisure facilities" and the Council "would like to get to the point where any leisure provision is at a minimum a nil cost to the Council". This gives little confidence that your ambition to improve the health of residence via encouraging exercise and physical activity is realistic or genuine. Surely the Council should be willing to identify funding to achieve this worthwhile objective. With regard to the six specific areas of the Strategy, we would comment as follows:</p> <p>PRIORITY 1 – Built Facilities The Brentwood Centre and King Georges Pavilion are valuable community assets which already contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of Brentwood. Any proposal that will increase the opportunities for greater use would be welcomed. Proposals for alternative management options or Asset Transfer should be the subject of further detailed public consultation, which explains the reasoning and implications of any proposed change.</p> <p>PRIORITY 2 – Open Space Mindful of the limitations for income generation from public open space together with your ambition for leisure facilities to be provided at nil cost the list of improvements proposed seems ambitious and investment intensive. The question has to be raised if these are realistic proposals and if so is there a timetable for the works proposed and is this available to view?</p> <p>PRIORITY 3 – Play Areas Your proposal for a number of destination play areas has advantages and benefits regarding the range of play equipment that can be provided and the potential learning and enjoyment to the children. This part of the Strategy is welcomed. However, there are some housing areas where the opportunities for children for casual play are limited because of flatted living, small gardens etc. In these areas the idea of smaller, more local play facilities should be retained.</p> <p>PRIORITY 4 – Sport The number and range of Sports Clubs in Brentwood is one of the Borough's greatest assets. Every effort should be made to engage Clubs in the delivery of the Strategy and encourage them to play a role in the promotion and organisation of sport and physical activity. Their potential role in increasing participation and promoting health and wellbeing cannot be over emphasised.</p> <p>PRIORITY 5 – Health and Wellbeing Active Brentwood naturally supports the initiatives and objectives of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Board. In addition to supporting the priorities of the Board, Active Brentwood is committed to encouraging increased physical activity and health living within the community which will hopefully contribute to the improved physical and mental health of residents.</p> <p>PRIORITY 6 – Leadership Management and Oversight The statement that the "Council needs to ensure that there is the right management and governance in place to ensure that the Leisure Strategy can be successfully delivered" is crucial to the overall success of the implementation phase of the Strategy. Active Brentwood is available to assist the Council wherever and whenever it is felt appropriate. Similarly in Section 9 – Who can deliver the Strategy, is a crucial decision for the future and how the Council decides to move forward. To ensure the maximum involvement and support of stakeholders, partners and the Brentwood community, that decision should be made by the Brentwood Borough Council after a full and detailed appraisal of the options and a public consultation on the preferred choices. In conclusion Active Brentwood is always available to discuss any issue the Council wishes to raise.</p>	<p>Noted. Although the Strategy covers 10 years, it is expected that there could be changes in strategic and operational focus and if necessary the Council may well review the strategy earlier than the planned date of 2027. Resourcing the Strategy and its delivery will be part of any business case for future development opportunities and the Council will work with external funders and utilise any developer contributions to support leisure development.</p> <p>Noted and further consultation would be undertaken if there was a change in the management of facilities or the Council would look Asset Transfer any facilities</p> <p>Noted. It is proposed that with investments in key facilities that this would provide increased income to the Council which would be used to ringfence those elements of the Council's leisure facilities that do not generate any income to ensure that they are sustainable.</p> <p>This will be looked at in more detail with the Play Area Strategy. It is important that the Council has facilities that are accessible, high quality and can be sustained within current budgets. Any rationalisation of play areas will be looked at as a case by case scenario. Any major housing developments or growth such as Dunton Hills Garden Village will need to identify leisure requirements, including play areas.</p> <p>Noted. The Council will work closely with sports clubs to develop their clubs and support their ambitions.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
Tom McLaren		<p>River Road - Play area 1. Replacement of the trees, preferably by fast growing shrubs or trees. The local kids play hide and seek in the current trees so a number of residents were disappointed by their removal, although understood why when it was explained. In addition, that close to the A12 the trees provide a much needed noise and pollution barrier. 2. Accessible equipment. There are two families with disabled children in the immediate vicinity of the park who raised the point that their children are only able to use certain of the existing pieces and would like any new pieces to be more accessible. I guess that this would fit well with your equalities impact assessment as well. 3. Equipment for older kids - a number of residents raised how the current equipment is only suitable for up to, say age 7. They would welcome something for their older kids to use. Given the space being created by the tree removal there is scope for additional pieces. 4. Replacement of the single full size goal posts with 2x 5 a side goals. The single goal is used (allegedly, I've not seen it!) but it was raised about how only having one large goal is not particularly suitable for a proper game. Of the existing pieces, the orange round thing was particularly cited as heavy and unwieldy for children.</p>	<p>Noted and will be fed into the Play Area strategy and with consultation with local residents and councillors.</p>
Stephen Hay	Planning Policy	<p>Page 3 - as a borough Page 4 Physical Wellbeing - I need to capitalise Page 5 - What do we need to achieve Leadership role, Facilitation role and direct delivery Page 11 - HWB strategy - info/note on planning for healthy places - a clearer focus on spacial issues and active travel for example Page 17 - Do we want to focus upon wider leadership/facilitation and public health etc. Page 18 - Header - could pull out earlier - see previous comments - section feels fragmented Page 22 ref. to recently commissioned sport and open space work (4Global and Active Essex) and we also have a Strategic Green Infrastructure doc. On BBC website and further detailed work to be delivered this year on green infrastructure. Have an emerging GI typology. St Faiths designated local wildlife site Bre62 Page 23 - Council proposing substantial housing development with urban areas and on the the fringes of the Brentwood Urban Area (BAU) . Need to ensure the demand for play areas for this new growth is adequately considered . The nature of play areas is changing and this needs to be reflected in the report - part of a multi generational space. Council involved in an academic study and potential commissioning on designing spaces for children and young people with University of Birmingham. Page 25 - Sport - how relate to the emerging Active Essex/4 Global. Need to ensure we are clear on asset management site priorities, any emerging local plan sites and potential priorities. Page 27 Health and Wellbeing - creating healthy places through new developments to be included as a focus. Dunton Hills Garden Village will have clear public health agenda running through the scheme design objectives e.g. prioritised cycling and walkway infrastructure Page 28 leadership - management and oversight Page 31 Actions might need to be updated to reflect earlier comments</p>	<p>Noted and amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Noted and amended in the final strategy Action plan has been updated for the final strategy</p>

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3 July 2018

Community Health and Housing Committee

Leisure Strategy Working Group

Report of: *Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager*

Wards Affected: *All Brentwood Borough Wards*

This report is: *Public report*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1.** The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider appointments to the Leisure Strategy Working Group (LSWG) and an indicative work plan, to enable officers to review the development and delivery of the Council's Leisure Strategy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** That any necessary changes to the Membership of the Leisure Strategy Working Group during the Municipal Year 2018/19 are made in accordance with paragraph 4.2.
- 2.3** That Members note the indicative work plan in Appendix A for the review of Leisure Strategy, during the 2018/19 Municipal Year.
- 2.4** Agree that the Leisure Strategy Working Group will report to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee with any recommendations.

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1.** The Leisure Strategy Working Group was established in August 2017 to review the following areas of the Council's Leisure and cultural provision. This was initially split into three phases:
- a) Phase 1 – King George's Playing Fields and Warley Playing Fields
 - b) Phase 2 – Play areas and options for ongoing maintenance
 - c) Phase 3 – Brentwood Centre and provision for sport/leisure across the Borough
- 3.2.** The purpose of the review was to ensure that the Leisure Strategy delivers Value for Money, provides a sustainable and fit for purpose leisure provision for the residents of Brentwood by:

- a) Reducing revenue and capital expenditure to Brentwood Borough Council in its leisure facilities
- b) Increase capital investment in leisure facilities
- c) Explore alternative operational management opportunities
- d) Reduce the risk to the Council
- e) Increased sport and leisure participation in Brentwood

3.3. Subsequently it was agreed that rather than the three phases that the Leisure Strategy work would be split into six workstreams to allow greater flexibility in the delivery of the Strategy.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1. Group Leaders have proposed the following nominations for appointments to the Leisure Strategy Working Group for the Municipal Year 2018/19 which were agreed at Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 13 June 2018 and they are as follows:

Name	Group
Councillor Chris Hossack	Conservative
Councillor Cliff Poppy	Conservative
Councillor Mrs Cat Tierney	Conservative
Councillor Mrs Vicky Davies	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Gareth Barrett	Labour

4.2. Should there be any need to make changes to the membership of the Leisure Strategy Working Group during the municipal year, it is anticipated that Group Leaders will communicate with the Chief Executive in year of the changes to be made.

4.3. Contained as an appendix to this report is an indicative work plan for the 2018/19 municipal year, with an indication of when reports will be presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and any recommendations referred to the Community Health and Housing Committee or to the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee as required.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 The Council's needs to ensure that options for each of the workstreams are fully examined, reviewed and prioritised and that the Leisure Strategy delivers Value for Money, is sustainable and meets the needs of Brentwood residents.

6. References to Council Priorities

The Leisure Strategy sits under two main strands of the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19: Environment and Housing Management to develop a Leisure Strategy to provide strong and sustainable leisure facilities for residents and businesses;

and Community and Health - to work with community and voluntary organisations to develop the priorities for community development. There are also strong links for the priorities of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017, the Local Development Plan, Active Brentwood/Essex and the Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts

Tel & Email: 01277 312829 jacqueline.vanmellaerts @brentwood.gov.uk

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising for this report.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Assaf Chaudry, Governance Solicitor

Tel & Email: 01277 312500/assaf.chaudry@brentwood.gov.uk

7.4 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider appointments to the Leisure Strategy Working Group and an indicative work plan, to enable officers to review the development and delivery of the Council's Leisure Strategy. Given that the Leisure Strategy Working Group will report to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee with any recommendations there are no legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.

8. Background documents:

Local Development Plan

National Planning Policy framework

Fields in Trust - Guidance for Outdoor sport Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard

9. Appendices to this report.

Appendix A – Indicative Work programme for Leisure Strategy Working Group

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Appendix A

Draft Indicative work programme for Leisure Strategy Working Group

Date of proposed meeting	Committee / Meeting	Agenda item	Reference
13 June	Audit and Scrutiny Committee	Agreement Audit and Scrutiny work programme which will include Leisure Strategy Working Group (LSWG) and Membership of the group	
3 July	Community Health and Housing Committee	Final Leisure Strategy Play Area Strategy LSWG – Agree work programme for 2018/19	
9, 11 or 13 July 2018 (dates to be agreed)	Leisure Strategy Working Group	Update and progress report the development of the sustainable business plan on King George's Playing Fields Play Area Strategy Community Halls soft market testing approach Mini Master plan for Brentwood Centre site Agree recommendations to Audit and Scrutiny Committee and Community Health and Housing Committee for 11 September	Information packs for Community Halls and agreed timeline
25 July 2018	Audit and Scrutiny Committee	Report from LSWG with recommendations to be referred to Community Health and Housing Committee	
11 September 2018	Community Health and Housing	Final report and business plan for King George's Playing Fields	Alliance Leisure Services report

12 September	Ordinary Council	Chairs report from Community Health and Housing Committee	
17/24 September 2018	Leisure Strategy Working Group	TBC Prepare report for Audit and Scrutiny Committee 17 October 2018	
18 September 2018	Policy Projects and Resources	Review recommendations from business plan from King George's and if agreed submit planning application and/or subject to the resources etc being agreed	
16 October 2018	Planning Committee	King George's Playing Fields application and submission	
17 October	Audit and Scrutiny Committee	Minutes from September LSWG meeting and recommendations to Audit and Scrutiny Committee and Community Health and Housing Committee	
20 November	Policy, Projects and Resources Committee	Community Halls TBC	
4 December 2018	Community Health and Housing Committee	TBC	
23/31 December 2018	Leisure Strategy Working Group	Prepare report for Audit and Scrutiny committee 23 January 2019	
5 February 2019	Policy Projects and Resources Committee	Budgets agreed	
13 February	Leisure Strategy Working Group	TBC Prepare report for Audit and Scrutiny Committee 13 March	
5 March 2019	Community Health and Housing Committee	TBC	
13 March	Audit and Scrutiny Committee	Minutes and report from LSWG	

3rd July 2018

Community and Housing Committee

Play Area Strategy – Working Group

Report of: *Stuart Anderson – Deputy operations Manager*

Wards Affected: *All Wards*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 As Members will be aware Councillors recently approved the draft Leisure Strategy at the Community, Health and Housing Committee on 5th March 2018.
- 1.2 The strategy is an overarching document that draws together all the Council's leisure and recreation opportunities within the Borough and how this can be supplied and improved to meet current and future demand of residents.
- 1.3 One element of the strategy is to review the provision, supply and condition of play areas within the Borough, this work stream was identified early within the working process of producing the leisure Strategy and has been highlighted in previous update reports.
- 1.4 Whilst the Leisure Strategy takes a holistic view of the Boroughs leisure and recreation facilities it does not identify the specific work programmes that are required to address supply, demand and condition within each workstream.
- 1.5 To achieve this, supporting strategies are needed that focus more on the detail of the workstream. To this end it has been identified by Officers that there is a need to produce a Play Area Strategy focusing specifically on the provision, supply and condition of play areas within the Borough.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members agree to the formation of a working group to aid in the development of a new Play Area Strategy to be brought back to a future Committee.**
- 2.2 That Members agree to and instruct Officers to commence and move forward with the refurbishment of the toddler area at Courage Playing Field, outside of the work stream for the Play Area Strategy. That this be achieved using existing resources within the capital works programme.**
- 2.3 That Members instruct Officers to undertake an 'audit' of the Council's play sites to determine those areas that require more immediate attention on individual items and to report the findings of this audit back to a future committee.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council's most recent Play Area Strategy expired in 2010 having been produced in 2007.
- 3.2 That document gave direction and scope as to the provision of play facilities within the Borough, what these facilities would look like in terms of size, equipment mix and also where sites were no longer required or not fit for purpose.
- 3.3 Although great steps were taken to improve play provision during the time the strategy was active it has been recognised, via the Leisure Strategy, that a new updated Strategy is required that considers the changes that have occurred in the Borough both in terms of built environment and demographics but also the changing financial position of the Council.
- 3.4 The intention of the new Strategy will be to build on the work achieved under the previous document and ensure that the Council is providing fresh, safe, vibrant, exciting, accessible and engaging play areas for the residents of the Borough.
- 3.5 The new Strategy will need to address the very different backdrop the Council now finds itself with, increased development and

greater demands on resources will mean that the need for robust play provision within the Borough will be of significant importance to both residents and visitors to the Borough.

- 3.6 In order for an encompassing Strategy to be produced it is recommended that the development of the document be referred to the Leisure Strategy members working group and that the finalised document be brought back to a future committee for consideration.
- 3.7 The purpose of this working group will be to review the existing provision within the Borough from a holistic approach and to then focus on each site on a case by case basis to determine suitability, condition and future need.
- 3.8 From this work a Strategy and, more importantly a works programme can be derived for Officers to execute over the requisite time frame to ensure the Council strives and continues to provide the high level of play facilities that have been enjoyed for many years within the Borough.
- 3.9 However, it is also recognised that some key sites may need to have attention in terms of their immediate condition and provision before the work on the new Strategy is completed.
- 3.10 This need will largely be due to Health and Safety issues around condition and also reputational risk to the Council if an unsafe or deteriorated facility does receive remedial attention.
- 3.11 One such situation has been identified by Officers as needing more urgent and timely attention, this being the toddler play area at Courage Playing Fields.
- 3.12 As Members may be aware, Courage Playing Fields is one of only two open spaces in the heavily populated Ward of Shenfield. It is also the only publicly accessible play area in the Ward which in 2011 was estimated to have a population of 5,432 people. This number will almost have certainly increased since that time.
- 3.13 Although work was undertaken to enlarge the play in in 2015 there was not sufficient funds to refurbish the toddler area at the time. This facility is now over 20 years old with much of the equipment, although safe, now aged and needing replacing.

- 3.14 Parts for the ageing play equipment are no longer available and as these fail safety inspections or become broken there is little choice but to either fence off or, when resources allow, to remove items altogether.
- 3.15 It is felt that due to the strategic location of this site, the sheer number of potential users in the Ward and surrounding area and the current condition of the play area that more urgent works are needed to refurbish this facility outside of the work of the planned strategy.
- 3.16 Officers therefore seek permission to undertake a refurbishment of the toddler area and further enhancements to the existing older age group play area in the current financial year.
- 3.17 Funding for the project has been identified within slippage from the current Capital Works Programme for 2018/19 which was approved at the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee on 19th June 2018
- 3.18 If works cannot take place this current financial year then it is highly likely that over the course of the next 6 months that the facility will need to be closed to public access until such time as works can take place, this is due to the likely safety risk associated with the deteriorating equipment.
- 3.19 In addition to this it is recommended that Officers undertake an 'audit' of the Council's play areas so that a determination may be made as to those sites that require more immediate attention on individual items of equipment as oppose to full refurbishments. This focus will be in terms of replacing individual items that are beyond economic repair, where spares are no longer readily available or where a safety risk would be imminent if the item were not replaced. The results of this audit will then be reported to members at a future committee.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The Council currently operates, manages or oversees some 29 play facility sites around the Borough.

- 4.2 In order for the Council to continue to provide safe, fit for purpose engaging and modern play facilities it is important that it has an active Play Area Strategy in place that has a robust and achievable work programme behind it.
- 4.3 If it does not then the Authority exposes itself to both reputational risk but also financial risk due to the potential for claims from faulty, damaged or unrepairable equipment or infrastructure.
- 4.4 Whilst the Leisure Strategy will take an holistic view of the leisure and recreation facilities within the Borough it is important that this is supported by service specific strategies focusing on specific areas with work programmes for improvements and enhancements. Without these work streams it is possible that needed improvements will not be achieved in a structured manner.
- 4.5 It is estimated that the works will cost in the region of £100,000 to £125,000. Any underspend on the project will be passed back to the capital works programme for redistribution on other play facilities.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To ensure that the Council has a robust strategy in place for the future provision and refurbishment of its play facilities around the Borough.
- 5.2 To ensure that resources, both financial and staffing can be adequately planned for as part of the Council's medium to long term financial plan.
- 5.3 To ensure that the existing play area at Courage Playing Fields is refurbished and remains fit for purpose and use for the residents of Shenfield and the surrounding area.

6. References to Corporate Plan

- 6.1 To ensure the provision of efficient and effective services to our residents and businesses.
- 6.2 Providing increased customer satisfaction in the quality of Council services.
- 6.3 To Increase access to the Borough's leisure opportunities.

6.4 Making Brentwood a Borough where people feel safe, healthy and supported.

7. Implications

Financial implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief Finance Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312 829

jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

7.1 £151k Slippage has been identified from 2017/18 for play area refurbishment and approved at Policy, Project and resources committee on 19th June 2018.

This expenditure is available to fund the required works at courage playing fields, to refurbish the play area.

The Play Area Strategy, will seek a long term view of our play provision within the borough, and will enable necessary works to be structured within our Capital programme, which enforces good financial management.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Assaf Chaudry, Governance Solicitor – Deputy Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312 703, assaf.chaudry@brentwood.gov.uk

The purpose of this report is to set up a working group to develop a new Play Area Strategy and to refurbish the Courage Playing field pending approval of funding. All works will be required to be procured in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders relating to Contracts and the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010 and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 2010 to design out potential for anti-social behaviour and property crime / damage.

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

7.2 **Health & Safety implications**

Name & Title: David Wellings, Health & Safety Officers

Tel & email: 01277 312 500 david.wellings@brentwood.gov.uk .

A proactive working group to support the new Play Area Strategy will assist in the identification of known risks and enable planned management and prioritisation.

The play area highlighted above, needs investment to reduce the Council's risk level and potential claims. The Council's duty of care to persons not in its employ, using the Council's public open spaces facilities for play and recreation, should ensure safe play areas where provided. This proposal will address these risks and concerns as well as reduce the Council's risk exposure from aged and damaged play equipment.

8. **Appendixes**

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3rd July 2018

Community and Housing Committee

Request By Shenfield Cricket Club for Additional Fixtures of Courage Playing Fields Park Field

Report of: *Stuart Anderson – Deputy operations Manager*

Wards Affected: *Shenfield*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council has been approached by Shenfield Cricket Club with regard to playing additional fixtures on the park field and cricket square at Courage Playing Fields.
- 1.2 The club use two fields at the site, the first is the clubs original field on the land and is the field named in the 1950 deed of gift as the “Cricket ground situate upon the property”.
- 1.3 The second field is the main park field and permission was granted by the Council via the Leisure, Recreation and Arts Committee on the 27th September 1993 for the club to establish a second cricket square on site due to the increase in playing members at the club.
- 1.4 This permission was granted with conditions, two of which were that the facility should be used for cricket on one day of the weekend and the other that the permission be reviewed at a later date [min. 304].
- 1.5 The later condition has never been carried out and the current arrangement has not been reviewed since 1993.
- 1.6 The club have requested to use the park field for additional fixtures this season that would result in the field being used for more then one day a weekend, therefore the Chair has requested that the item be brought before members for consideration as per the original permission.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That members consider the request for additional fixtures and instruct Officers to action accordingly.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 In 1950 Courage Playing Fields was gifted to the Council by the Courage family.
- 3.2 The intention behind this was to provide much needed publicly accessible open space to the residents of the rapidly expanding ward of Shenfield. As part of the deed of gift an area of land was also highlighted to provide playing facilities i.e. square and wicket for Shenfield Cricket Club.
- 3.3 The club have utilised this piece of land as their home ground since the deed of gift, however in 1993 they approached the Council with a request to expand their facilities into the adjoining park field next to the main cricket field.
- 3.4 This request was considered by the Leisure, Recreation and Arts Committee on 27th September 1993 with permission granted for the club to establish a second square and wickets on the park field.
- 3.5 This permission was granted with conditions, two of which were that the facility should be used for cricket on one day of the weekend and the other that the permission be reviewed at a later date [min. 304].
- 3.6 Each season the club have notified the Council in advance of the upcoming fixtures for the season so that they may be published on site on notice boards. The intention of this is that families are aware of when a match may be played on the park field and can plan their social recreation around these.
- 3.7 To date the club have fulfilled their obligations under the permission and have not played matches on more than one day of the weekend unless there has been exceptional circumstances.
- 3.8 The overall number of fixtures that are normally played on the park pitch during any given season can vary but is normally between 17 and 20 fixtures over the course of a season.

- 3.9 This season the club have approached the Council with a revised list of fixtures with 37 matches highlighted to be played between the 3rd and 4th XI's over the course of the season. This will result in the park field being used every Saturday and Sunday during the summer months. Please see appendix A.
- 3.10 As this request is outside of the conditions set by the Leisure, Recreation and Arts Committee in 1993 it has been brought back before Members for further consideration and debate.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The Council has been approached by representatives of Shenfield Cricket Club who have submitted a list of fixtures for the current cricket season that contravenes the current permission granted by the Council.
- 4.2 If members are minded to granting permission then consideration needs to be given to the fact that the public use of the park field will be restricted during the busy summer weekends.
- 4.3 Members may also be aware that health and safety reports have been carried out by both the Club and Council which has resulted in the provision of safety netting and signage adjacent to the public right of way to reduce the risk of cricket balls conflicting with the users of the park field.
- 4.4 If permission for the fixtures is refused then this may have an impact on the club and it's ability to fulfil it league obligations for this season and possibly impact on its ability to attract additional members.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To establish the Council's position with regard to the request for additional cricket fixtures at Courage Playing Fields on the park field.

6. References to Corporate Plan

- 6.1 To ensure the provision of efficient and effective services to our residents and businesses.

- 6.2 Providing increased customer satisfaction in the quality of Council services.
- 6.3 To Increase access to the Borough's leisure opportunities.
- 6.4 Making Brentwood a Borough where people feel safe, healthy and supported.

7. Implications

Financial implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief Finance Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312 829

jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Assaf Chaudry, Governance Solicitor

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 assaf.chaudry@brentwod.gov.uk

The purpose of this report is to consider the request from Shenfield Cricket Club for additional fixtures at Courage Playing Fields. Members would need to as part of their deliberation consider if they need to be cognizant of any conditions/restrictions contained in the Deed of Gift by the Courage family before agreeing the additional fixtures.

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

- 7.2 **Health & Safety implications**

Name & Title: David Wellings, Health & Safety Officers

Tel & email: 01277 312 500 david.wellings@brentwood.gov.uk .

A health and safety report has been agreed by a previous committee in September 2017 to require safety netting for cricket played on the Park pitch.

To minimise the Council's risk exposure and maximise public safety on the Park pitch from cricket balls during play, the agreed netting and signage arrangements continues to be installed, maintained in a good condition and pegged to prevent gaps in the netting. This will

be prior to each match on this pitch, and this to include the additional fixtures, should these be granted.

8. **Appendix**

Appendix A – Fixture list

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Appendix A

Appendix ? Fixtures Request for Shenfield Cricket Club 2018 Season

	Date	Home side	Opposition
Sunday	April 29th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Sunday	May 6th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	May 12th	Shenfield 3rd XI	Hutton 3rd XI
Sunday	May 13th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	May 19th	Shenfield 4th XI	Buckhurst Hill 4th XI
Sunday	May 20th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	May 26th	Shenfield 3rd XI	Billericay 3rd XI
Sunday	May 27th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	June 2nd	Shenfield 4th XI	West Essex 4th XI
Sunday	June 3rd	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	June 9th	Shenfield 3rd XI	Wanstead & Snaresbrook 3rd XI
Sunday	June 10th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	June 16th	Shenfield 3rd XI	South Woodford 3rd XI
Sunday	June 17th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	June 23rd	Shenfield 4th XI	South Woodford 4th XI
Sunday	June 24th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	June 30th	Shenfield 3rd XI	Upminster 4th XI
Sunday	July 1st	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	July 7th	Shenfield 4th XI	Oakfield Parkonians 4th XI
Sunday	July 8th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	July 14th	Shenfield 4th XI	Brentwood 4th XI
Sunday	July 15th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	July 21st	Shenfield 3rd XI	Loughton 3rd XI
Sunday	July 22nd	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	July 28th	Shenfield 4th XI	Ilford 4th XI
Sunday	July 29th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	August 4th	Shenfield 3rd XI	Chelmsford 4th XI

Sunday	August 5th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	August 11th	Shenfield 4th XI	Upminster 5th XI
Sunday	August 12th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	August 18th	Shenfield 4th XI	Fives and Heronians 4th XI
Sunday	August 19th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	August 25th	Shenfield 3rd XI	Old Southendian & Southchurch 3rd XI
Sunday	August 26th	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	September 1st	Shenfield 4th XI	Loughton 5th XI
Sunday	September 2nd	Shenfield colts (junior) side fixture (9am-midday)	
Saturday	September 8th	Shenfield 3rd XI	Wickford 3rd XI

4th July 2018

Community and Housing Committee

Request for Licence to Occupy by Brentwood Youth AFC – Larkin Playing Field

Report of: *Stuart Anderson – Deputy operations Manager*

Wards Affected: *Pilgrims Hatch*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Larkins Playing Fields is one of the Council's larger and principle open spaces in the Borough and is located in the Pilgrims Hatch ward along the Ongar Road.
- 1.2 The site has, since 2016, been the home of Brentwood Youth AFC, the club came into being when Brentwood Athletic and Kelvedon Hatch decided to merge. This created a new club within Brentwood with over 400 members.
- 1.3 The site currently has three football pitches of varying sizes marked out to support the club at, what is, its home ground.
- 1.4 There is also an area of unused ground that could accommodate a further two pitches, however this lay wet during the winter months rendering it unusable in its current condition.
- 1.5 The club currently reside at the site on an unofficial basis with no secure tenure, their residency is secured each season via the hiring of pitches from the council for the winter sports season. This allocation is not guaranteed each year.
- 1.6 In order to allow the club to create a permanent base at Larkins Playing Field club representatives have approached the Council with regard to securing a licence to occupy the site on a more formal and permanent basis.
- 1.7 The site is designated as public open space and also has a number of restrictive covenants placed on it as part of the dee of gift when the site was given to the Council by the Larkin family.
- 1.8 This designation coupled with the restrictive covenants means that there could be complications in issuing the club a licence to occupy, therefore it is felt that legal advice should be sought prior to responding to the club.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members instruct Officers to investigate the legal implications and restrictions that may be present in the issuing of a licence to occupy to Brentwood Youth AFC for Larkins Playing Fields.**
- 2.2 That the findings of this investigation be reported back to a future panel along with associated recommendations as to how the issue may be progressed further.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Larkin Playing Field is a key open space not just for the Ward and community of Pilgrims Hatch but also as part of the Council's open space estate.
- 3.2 The site currently has 2 junior football pitches and 1 mini soccer pitch, foundations of the old sports pavilion, car park and an area of general amenity grassland.
- 3.3 In 2016 a new youth football club formed following a merger of Brentwood Athletic and Kelvedon Hatch, this club currently has over 400 playing members and is based out of Larkin Playing Fields as one of its sites.
- 3.4 The club has aspirations for further expansion across the site bringing a currently open grassland area into use as pitches during the winter season. They have indicated that they would also like to improve the existing infrastructure such as rebuilding the changing pavilion which is no longer present on site and also expand and resurface the car park.
- 3.5 Although the club have met with Officers to explain their aspirations they do not currently have funding to undertake the works

outlined. The works would be conditional on the club obtaining external funding to carry them out.

- 3.6 In order for the club to be able to access external funding then some sort of security of tenure would be needed on the site to qualify for grant funding hence seeking a licence to occupy.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The Council has been approached by representatives of Brentwood Youth AFC who wish to obtain a licence to occupy for Larkin Playing Field.
- 4.2 The club hope that by securing a tenure of occupancy for the site that it will enable them to attract external funding from bodies such as the Football Foundation to allow for improvements to the site to meet their aspirations.
- 4.3 If, after seeking legal advice it transpires that it is not possible to grant a licence to occupy then other options to deliver the improvements for the benefit of the club and wider community will need to be explored by both Officers and club.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To allow Officers to establish the legal position of issuing a licence to occupy for Brentwood Youth AFC at Larkin Playing Fields.

6. References to Corporate Plan

- 6.1 To ensure the provision of efficient and effective services to our residents and businesses.
- 6.2 Providing increased customer satisfaction in the quality of Council services.
- 6.3 To Increase access to the Borough's leisure opportunities.
- 6.4 Making Brentwood a Borough where people feel safe, healthy and supported.

7. Implications

Financial implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Interim Chief Finance Officer

**Tel & Email: 01277 312 829
jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 7.1 Legal instructions do incur internal costs, however this will be monitored and managed against existing budgets with the Council Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 and significant variances report back to Council.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Assaf Chaudry, Governance Solicitor

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 assaf.chaudry@brentwood.gov.uk

The purpose of this report is to consider the representation made by Brentwood Youth AFC to the Council with a request that formal licence to occupy Larkin Playing Field be given to the club.

It is anticipated that by securing a formal arrangement with the Council the club shall be able to attract external funding from bodies such as the Football Foundation to allow for improvements of the site.

Although the site is designated as public open space there are apparently a number of restrictive covenants on the title deeds which were registered by the Larkin family when they gave the site as a gift to the Council .

In light of the above information there are no legal implications arising from the recommendations given that the report is purely for the purposes of obtaining legal advice and considering options.

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

- 7.2 **Health & Safety implications**

Name & Title: David Wellings, Health & Safety Officers

Tel & email: 01277 312500 david.wellings@brentwood.gov.uk .

To ensure the Council is aware of the health and safety legal obligations from any proposal to change the current arrangements. To define the risks that may develop, and appropriate controls as required to minimise the Council and public safety risk exposure.

8. **Appendix**

None

Report Author Contact Details:

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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, of 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.

Community, Health and Housing Committee

1. The functions within the remit of the Community, Health and Housing Committee are set out below

- 1) Community and Localism Initiatives including Assets of Community Value
- 2) The Voluntary Sector and community partnerships
- 3) Leisure and cultural initiatives.
- 4) Parish Council liaison
- 5) Health and Wellbeing
- 6) Grants to organisations/voluntary organisations.
- 7) Parks, open spaces, countryside, allotments
- 8) Community Safety and CCTV
- 9) Affordable housing
- 10) Housing strategy and investment programme where the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee does not decide to exercise such functions as the superior Committee
- 11) The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan where the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee does not decide to exercise such functions as the superior Committee
- 12) Housing standards, homelessness, homelessness prevention and advice
- 13) Housing needs assessment
- 14) Housing benefit - welfare aspects
- 15) Private sector housing and administration of housing grants
- 16) Tenancy Management and landlord functions
- 17) To make recommendations to Policy, Projects and Resources on the setting of rents for Council homes.

2. To take the lead on community leadership and consultation with stakeholders.

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