

Date: 24 August 2012  
Contact number: 01395 517525 (group number 01395 517546)  
E-mail: [athompson@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:athompson@eastdevon.gov.uk)



To: Members of the Housing Review Board  
Other Members of the Council for Information  
Members of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel  
Members of the Tenant Representative Group  
Chief Executive  
Deputy Chief Executives

East Devon District Council  
Knowle  
Sidmouth  
Devon  
EX10 8HL

DX 48705 Sidmouth

Tel: 01395 516551

Fax: 01395 517507

[www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)

**Meeting of the Housing Review Board**  
**Thursday, 6 September 2012 at 6.00 pm**  
**Council Chamber, Knowle, Sidmouth**

The above meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at East Devon District Council Offices, Knowle, Sidmouth, to consider the matters detailed on the agenda below.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting.

- A period of 15 minutes has been provided at the beginning of the meeting to allow members of the public to raise questions.
- In addition, the public may speak on items listed on the agenda. After a report has been introduced, the Chairman of the Committee will ask if any member of the public would like to speak in respect of the matter and/or ask questions.
- All individual contributions will be limited to a period of 3 minutes – where there is an interest group of objectors or supporters, a spokesperson should be appointed to speak on behalf of the group.
- The public is advised that the Chairman has the right and discretion to control questions to avoid disruption, repetition and to make best use of the meeting time.

Councillors and members of the public are reminded to switch off mobile phones during the meeting. If this is not practical due to particular circumstances, please advise the Chairman before the meeting.

**AGENDA**

**PART A - Matters for Decision**

**Page/s**

- 1 **Public question time** – standard agenda item (15 minutes)  
Members of the public are invited to put questions to the Board through the Chairman.  
Councillors also have the opportunity to ask questions of the Chairman and/or Portfolio Holders present during this time slot. Members of the public are given priority at this part of the agenda.
- 2 To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Review Board held on 21 June 2012. 5 – 13

Chief Executive: Mark Williams  
Richard Cohen – Deputy Chief Executive  
Denise Lyon – Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

**PART A - Matters for Decision**

Page/s

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|----|--|--|---------|
| 3  | To receive any apologies for absence.  |  |         |
| 4  | To receive any declarations of interests relating to items on the agenda.  |  |         |
| 5  | To consider any items which, the Chairman thinks, should be dealt with as matters of urgency because of special circumstances.<br><br>(Note: such circumstances need to be recorded in the minutes; any individual wishing to raise a matter under this item is requested to notify the Chairman before the meeting).  |  |         |
| 6  | To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There is one item which Officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.  |  |         |
| 7  | Housing Review Board forward plan.   | Head of Housing                          | 14 - 15 |
| 8  | Standardised Tenants and Residents (STAR) survey results.  | Information & Analysis Officer           | 16 - 30 |
| 9  | Financial monitoring report.   | Accountant                               | 31 - 39 |
| 10 | Threats to future income.  | Head of Housing                          | 40 - 51 |
| 11 | Devon Home Choice – Changes to allocation policy.<br>Appendix A policy – available online with this agenda.  | Housing Needs and Strategy Manager       | 52 - 55 |
| 12 | Development Statement for increasing Council housing stock.  | Housing Development and Enabling Officer | 56 - 62 |
| 13 | Equalities and Diversity Charter for Housing   | Head of Housing                          | 63 - 70 |
| 14 | Garage Management Review – Task and Finish Forum   | Housing Needs and Strategy Manager       | 71 - 97 |
| 15 | <b>The Vice Chairman to move the following:-</b><br>“that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).” |  |         |

**PART B - Matters for Decision**

- |    |  |  |                          |          |
|----|--|--|--------------------------|----------|
| 16 | Affordable Housing – Land adjoining the Knapp, Dalwood | Para 3 Schedule 12A information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). | Housing Enabling Officer | 98 - 106 |
|----|--|--|--------------------------|----------|

## Decision making and equality duties

- The Council will give due regard under the Equality Act 2010 to the equality impact of its decisions.
- An appropriate level of analysis of equality issues, assessment of equalities impact and any mitigation and/or monitoring of impact will be addressed in committee reports.
- Consultation on major policy changes will take place in line with any legal requirements and with what is appropriate and fair for the decisions being taken.
- Members will be expected to give reasons for decisions which demonstrate they have addressed equality issues.

### Members remember!

- ❑ You must declare any personal or prejudicial interests in an item whenever it becomes apparent that you have an interest in the business being considered.
- ❑ Make sure you say the reason for your interest as this has to be included in the minutes.
- ❑ If your interest is prejudicial you must leave the room unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Council's Standards Committee or where Para 12(2) of the Code can be applied. Para 12(2) allows a Member with a prejudicial interest to stay for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business but only at meetings where the public are also allowed to make representations. If you do remain, you must not exercise decision-making functions or seek to improperly influence the decision; you must leave the meeting room once you have made your representation. [Please note -generally speaking you cannot remain for an item in closed session (part B) because the public cannot speak on exempt business – unless a statutory procedure gives them a right to be there]
- ❑ You also need to declare when you are subject to the party whip before the matter is discussed.

### Getting to the Meeting – for the benefit of visitors



The entrance to the Council Offices is located on Station Road, Sidmouth. **Parking** is limited during normal working hours but normally easily available for evening meetings.

The following **bus service** stops outside the Council Offices on Station Road: **From Exmouth, Budleigh, Otterton and Newton Poppleford – 157**

The following buses all terminate at the Triangle in Sidmouth. From the Triangle, walk up Station Road until you reach the Council Offices (approximately ½ mile).

**From Exeter – 52A, 52B**

**From Honiton – 52B**

**From Seaton – 52A**

**From Ottery St Mary – 379, 387**

Please check your local timetable for times.

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The Committee Suite has a separate entrance to the main building, located at the end of the visitor and Councillor car park. The rooms are at ground level and easily accessible; there is also a toilet for disabled users.

**For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546**

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Housing Review Board held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 21 June 2012**

**Present:**

Councillors:

Pauline Stott (Chairman)  
Christine Drew  
Douglas Hull  
Jim Knight  
Chris Wale

Co-opted Tenant Members:

Victor Kemp  
Pat Rous  
Sally Lancaster  
Sue Saunders

Officers:

Sue Bewes, Landlord Services Manager  
Dennis Boobier, Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  
John Golding, Head of Housing  
Jane Reading, Tenant & Communities Section Leader  
Giles Salter, Solicitor  
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer  
Mandy White, Housing Accountant

**Also Present:**

Councillors:

Stephanie Jones – Deputy  
Portfolio Holder for Sustainable  
Homes and Communities  
Geoff Chamberlain  
Paul Diviani  
Steve Gazzard  
Phil Twiss

Tenant Scrutiny Panel  
members:

Eric Howard  
Josie Ireland  
Roger Pell

**Apologies**

Co-opted Independent Community Representatives:

Julie Adkin  
Rob Finch

Councillors:

Jill Elson - Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and  
Communities  
Alan Dent  
Pat Graham  
John O'Leary  
Eileen Wragg

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 8.05pm.

**\*1 Chairman's welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting. She welcomed new member Councillor Chris Wale to the Housing Review Board, as well as members of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and Councillors who had come to observe the meeting. The Chairman invited everybody present to introduce themselves.

**\*2 Public question time**

Tenant member Sue Saunders gave feedback to those present on the Annual Tenants' Conference which had taken place on 8 June 2012 in Broadclyst's Victory Hall. The theme of the conference was 'Communities – past, present and future'. The day included speakers from East Devon District Council and four workshops. The Community Development Officers demonstrated the work that they had been doing. Positive feedback had been received and ideas were already being put forward for next year's conference.

On behalf of the Board the Chairman thanked Sue for her verbal report and thanks were given to the committee which organised the Annual Tenants' Conference.

**\*3 Appointment of Vice Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that tenant representative Sue Saunders be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year.

**\*4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Housing Review Board held on 3 May 2012, were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**\*5 Declarations of interest**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Minute number</b>	<b>Type of interest</b>	<b>Nature of interest</b>
Jim Knight		Personal	His daughter lived in a Council owned property.
Jim Knight	10	Personal	He was a Devon County Council Councillor
Sue Saunders	10 & 11	Personal	She lived in sheltered accommodation.
Sally Lancaster	10 & 11	Personal	She lived in sheltered accommodation.
Pat Rous	10 & 11	Personal	She lived in sheltered accommodation.
Victor Kemp	13	Personal	He had a disability.

**\*6 Exclusion of the public**

**RESOLVED:** that the classification given to the documents to be submitted to the Housing Review Board, be confirmed, and that the reports relating to exempt information, be dealt with under Part B.

\*7 **Housing Review Board forward plan**

The Head of Housing presented the forward plan. A request was made for an item to be added to the forward plan, ideally in September 2012, for a report on the viability and cost of turning open spaces in Millwey Rise, Axminster into allotments. It was noted that a statement in respect of the Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement 2011-2014 had been reported at the previous meeting, and could be removed from the forward plan. The Garage Management Review Task and Finish Forum would be reporting its findings to the Housing Review Board in September 2012.

**RESOLVED:** that the forward plan be noted and updated.

8 **Right to Buy: reinvesting receipts into new affordable homes**

The Head of Housing's report considered the recently issued guidance on the use of receipts from Right to Buy sales and how they might be retained to provide new affordable housing. The Board needed to decide whether to enter into an agreement with the Communities and Local Government (CLG) department to use the receipts generated through the Right to Buy towards the provision of affordable housing. There were a number of risks in the conditions being imposed, but the report concluded that the Council should enter into an agreement to re-invest Right to Buy receipts.

The Secretary of State would agree that EDDC could retain additional Right to Buy receipts, on condition that EDDC agreed:

- i. to use those receipts for the provision of affordable rented homes;
- ii. that those receipts would constitute no more than 30% of total investment in such homes (net of any contribution from another public body);
- iii. that if, after three years, any of those receipts were not used as set out above, it would pay the un-used sums - plus interest - to the Secretary of State.

The deadline to enter into the agreement was 27 June 2012. The Council had the option to cancel this in the future.

The Head of Housing reported that the key issue to be aware of was the requirement on EDDC to provide 70% of the funding towards new homes built under the scheme. If Right to Buy sales exceeded expectations the Council could find itself in a position of needing to commit more resources than it could afford. Previously, the Council had only sold two or three homes a year. Under the new scheme the current level of Right to Buy sales was estimated to be approximately 10 per year. The Council could reasonably match this with the 70% funding and meet its development aspirations. Financial modelling based on a range of scenarios and assumptions was contained in the report and members noted the impact of selling 10, 20 and 30 homes.

A booklet from the Communities and Local Government (CLG) was circulated at the meeting giving up to date advice on the Right to Buy scheme.

**8 Right to Buy: reinvesting receipts into new affordable homes (cont'd)**

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Council enter into an agreement with the CLG for the reinvestment of Right to Buy receipts into new affordable housing schemes.

**9 HRA financial monitoring report 2012/13 – month 1, April**

The Board received a report from the Housing Accountant giving a summary of the overall financial position on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), HRA Capital Programme and the Business Plan for 2012/13 at the end of month one (April 2012). Regular monitoring would highlight any areas of concern or unforeseen expenditure in the HRA and associated capital programme and enable corrective action to be taken as required. Any variances would be reflected in the Business Plan.

Current monitoring indicated that:

- The Housing Revenue Account Balance would be maintained at or above the adopted level.
- The position on the HRA Business Plan had not changed significantly and remained healthy.

Members felt that the report was good and easy to understand and noted the two variances so far. A query was raised over how residents were informed of the funding for loft conversions. The Housing Needs and Strategy Manager reported that Devon Home Choice was used to identify homes that were severely overcrowded. An EDDC surveyor would be assessing these properties over the next few months with a view to preparing schemes for extension or loft conversion.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the variances identified as part of the HRA revenue and capital monitoring process up to month one be acknowledged.

**10 The financial risks and service delivery impact for tenants in moving to spot contracts**

Consideration was given to the report of the Landlord Services Manager, detailing the financial risks and service delivery impact for tenants in agreeing to a change of Supporting People contract type, and separating the support contract from the client's tenancy agreement. This followed on from a report to the previous meeting of the HRB on 3 May 2012, which made a series of recommendations around the future of Housing Support Services for older people in East Devon.

Officers had met to debate the issues and a list of perceived risks and service delivery impacts, along with suggested mitigating actions, had been produced and were contained within the report. These were noted and discussed by the Board.



10 **The financial risks and service delivery impact for tenants in moving to spot contracts (cont'd)**

The eligibility criteria for the support service/community alarm had been considered by Devon County Council. It was anticipated that this would not change and that it was something that EDDC could work with. However, there was a risk that DCC could restrict funding for people over 55 years with a support need. There was the risk that if people downsizing with no support requirements were moved into sheltered accommodation, EDDC could lose that funding. However, this risk needed to be assessed on an individual basis, with a balanced judgement between losing support charges or gaining a 3/4 bedroom property.

The Vice Chairman raised a number of questions on behalf of the tenants and these were discussed by the Board. One of the major concerns was the mixed housing that would result from decommissioning properties.

The Landlord Services Manager was thanked for her well presented report.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the risks and impacts contained within the report be taken into consideration when deciding the future of support services for older people.

\*11 **Decommissioning of sheltered housing update**

The report of the Housing Landlord Services Manager reminded the Board of the process that had been adopted to decommission some of the Council's sheltered housing. The process was designed to ensure that the sheltered housing was 'fit for purpose'. The report also provided an update on the decommissioning of properties identified within the 'Year One' plan.

The Sheltered Housing Task and Finish Forum (TaFF) had set out a one year, three year and five year plan for decommissioning properties. The three routes taken to decommission properties were:

- Automatically decommission properties when they become void;
- Tenants stay, receive services with no change, and the property is automatically decommissioned when it becomes void;
- Tenants who request to 'opt out' are notified of a date that the decommissioning would take place.

In the future there would be a procedure that would see decommissioning built into the day to day process of managing void properties.

The list of schemes that were being decommissioned under the one year plan was noted. It was envisaged that the decommissioning of year one properties would be completed by the end of September 2012. The matter would then be brought back to the Sheltered Housing Task and Finish Forum for their review.

The Board sent its congratulations to all the staff involved in the process.

**RESOLVED:** that the report be noted.

## 12 **Feedback on Tenant Scrutiny Panel report**

The Chairman invited the Chairman of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel to the table.

The Housing Landlord Services Manager's report contained at Annex 1 the Council's suggested response to the recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) in its review of housing community centres. The first Tenant Scrutiny Panel report was well researched and presented. Careful consideration had been given to the recommendations and the Housing Landlord Services Manager's report outlined a positive response to the findings.

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities' Think Tank had discussed the TSP's recommendations and generally agreed with them. Officers then decided the actions that could be taken in response.

The TSP raised the concern that many of the community centres lacked some basic facilities/equipment. All of these items had been logged in the evidence file. It was agreed that this would be passed onto the Landlord Services Manager who would use the existing budget to rectify these issues.

The Board thanked and congratulated the TSP for all the hard work on the first piece of work that they had undertaken.

- RECOMMENDED:**
- 1 that the series of actions contained in Annex 1 to the report be agreed as the response to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel review of community centres.
  - 2 that the TSP evidence file be passed to the Landlord Services Manager who would use this as a basis for upgrading and refurbishing facilities within the existing community centres budget.

## 13 **Adaptations and recharges**

The Housing Review Board considered the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager's report which set out the options for charging for major adaptations required by tenants to enable them to continue to live independently. Members had considered a detailed report at their meeting in March 2011 and adopted a revised Landlord Disabled Adaptations Policy. They had also asked officers to submit a report to a future meeting on whether or not to introduce charges for adaptations. Members noted the key features of the adopted policy.

The introduction of a revised landlord adaptation policy had been running for 12 months. The backlog had been eliminated; less had been spent on adaptations in 2011/12 than in previous years; and only six tenants had been denied an adaptation because they were under occupying a family home. The cost of introducing a charging policy could outweigh the amount recovered from eligible tenants. It was therefore recommended that no charge be made for the adaptations provided to tenants to enable them to live independently.

- RECOMMENDED:** that the Council agrees not to introduce charging for adaptations to tenants' homes.

## 14 **East Devon's tenancy strategy and tenancy policy**

The Localism Act 2011 created a statutory requirement for all local authorities to develop a tenancy strategy by January 2013. The revised regulatory standards framework had an expectation that all housing providers would develop a tenancy policy. As a local authority that still had housing stock EDDC needed to develop both a tenancy strategy and a tenancy policy. The Government had made some radical changes to social tenancies by the introduction of flexible tenancies and affordable rents and the Council needed to state its position on these policy changes. The Board had received an initial paper on the need to have a tenancy strategy and tenancy policy at its meeting on 1 December 2011.

The tenancy strategy set out the Council's approach to tenancy issues and reflected the housing needs and priorities for the district. Registered housing providers with stock within the district should take note of this strategy with regard to the management and development of their properties. The strategy was based on a Devon wide framework and would therefore be similar to other local authorities in Devon. Key points included:

- Affordability
- Length of tenancy
- Type of tenancy
- Tenancy review
- Disposal of stock
- Downsizing
- Vulnerable groups

The draft tenancy strategy had been sent to all registered housing providers within the district. Several of the tenant groups, including the Tenant Representative Group (TRG) and the Housing Needs Review Group had also been consulted with. The tenancy strategy must be in place by 14 January 2013.

The tenancy policy sets out the types of tenancy that EDDC as a landlord would use, in what circumstances, and other aspects of managing its tenancies. The policy included sections on the following areas:

- Tenancy types and conditions
- Tenancy agreements
- Sustaining the tenancies
- Ending the tenancy
- Succeeding to a tenancy
- Tacking under occupation
- Adapted properties
- Transfers
- Mutual exchanges

The Board were asked to agree to the introduction of flexible tenancies. The details of these were outlined in the report and discussed by the Board. The changes to the rules on succession were also noted.

14 **East Devon's tenancy strategy and tenancy policy (cont'd)**

The Vice Chairman raised a number of questions on behalf of the tenants and these were discussed by the Board. Specifically tenants were concerned about the right to carry out improvements and to be compensated for improvements undertaken. It was suggested that the Council were unlikely to refuse permission for most improvements.

The Board thanked the officers concerned for their report and agreed that the tenancy policy would introduce benefits for the Council.

- RECOMMENDED**
- 1 that EDDC's position on affordability as set out in Section 2.5.1 of the report be confirmed.
  - 2 that EDDC only consider charging affordable rent (80% of market rent) (or in some cases intermediate rent) on Council new build schemes or acquisitions.
  - 3 that the introduction of a flexible tenancy as in the circumstances outlined in Section 3.7 – to come into effect on 1 April 2013, be agreed.
  - 4 that the change to succession rights as outlined in Section 3.8 – to come into effect on 1 April 2013, be agreed.
  - 5 that the Tenancy Strategy (Annex 1) and Tenancy Policy (Annex 2) be adopted

\*15 **Housing performance indicator report 2011/12**

The Board considered the Housing Performance Indicator Report for 2011/12 which detailed selected indicators to gauge the performance of each of the Housing Service's teams. The information included had been reported quarterly throughout the year to Housemark, and internally to Housing Managers, so as to be able to benchmark and monitor the service provided to tenants. The report allowed managers to understand where their teams had been successful and where there might be room for improvement.

Good performance monitoring was critical with the Council's new Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and the report was considered alongside the financial monitoring regime discussed earlier during the meeting.

- RESOLVED:** that the report be noted and the Board highlight any issues they would like further information on.

16 **Advantage South West procurement club review**

Consideration was give to the Head of Housing's report which showed the performance specific to East Devon of the Advantage SW procurement club that the Council joined in 2009. The group existed to improve the value for money for its members in the building products used and in relation to new build. The report provided a review of the activities undertaken during 2011/12 and highlighted some of the good practice being undertaken.

The issue of solar panels was raised and discussed and it was noted that further reports would be brought to the Board on renewable energy and the Green Deal.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and the Council confirm its intention to remain a member of Advantage SW.

\*17 **Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing the items in private session (Part B).

18 **Possible disposal of two Council houses at Normandy Close, Exmouth**

The Head of Housing's report asked the Board to consider, in light of the structural issues related to the properties, whether it wished to continue to retain 24 and possibly 26 Normandy Close, Exmouth, or dispose on the open market, or refurbish/repair the existing properties.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Council dispose of 24 and 26 Normandy Close, Exmouth on the open market and use the receipts to enable further council housing to be constructed or acquired in Exmouth.

Chairman .....

Date .....

## HOUSING REVIEW BOARD – FORWARD PLAN

This forward plan identifies reports and other agenda items for future meetings of the Housing Review Board. It is also intended to assist agenda management and act as a reminder of items to come forward to future meetings.

<b>Report title</b>	<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Author</b>
STAR survey results	September 2012	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Financial monitoring report	September 2012	Housing Accountant
Threats to future income	September 2012	Head of Housing
Allocation of social housing	September 2012	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Development Statement for increasing Council housing stock	September 2012	Housing Enabling Officer
Equalities and Diversity Charter	September 2012	Head of Housing
Garage Task and Finish Forum report	September 2012	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Performance digest – a dashboard of performance indicators	November 2012	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
HouseMark benchmarking survey results	November 2012	Head of Housing
South West Audit Partnership report on the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	November 2012	Head of Housing
Changes to support services	November 2012	Landlord Services Manager
Green Deal	TBC	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Tenant and Council Partnership Agreement 2011-2014	November 2012	Landlord Services Manager
Review of Drop In sessions and Surgeries	November 2012	Landlord Services Manager
Telecare services	TBC	Home Safeguard Manager
Running a business from home	TBC	Landlord Services Manager
Danby House/Exbank – DCC updated proposals	Reliant on DCC timetable	Head of Housing
Review of Key Safe installations	TBC	Support Services Manager

<b>Quarterly performance reports and regular report</b>		
Responsive repairs	Quarterly report	Asset and Property Manager
Letting of Council homes/voids	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Devon Home Choice	Quarterly report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Rent management	Quarterly report	Landlord Services Manager
Housing Revenue Account budget	Quarterly report	Head of Housing
Systems Thinking leading & lagging measures New Tenants Survey	Quarterly report	Head of Housing
Forward Plan	Every meeting	Head of Housing
Formal Complaints	Annual report	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager
Evaluating the achievements of the Board	Annual report	Head of Housing

<b>HRB &amp; Housing Drop In sessions - dates and venues</b>	<b>Date and time</b>
Beer Primary School, Beer	12 September 4pm - 6pm
Yonder Close Community Centre, Ottery St Mary	9 November 10am- 12 noon

Board Members can propose agenda items during meetings/debates that can be included on the Forward Plan for future meetings, or outside the meetings with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice chairman.

Future HRB meeting dates: 8 November 2012; 10 January 2013; 7 March 2013; 9 May 2013.

## Agenda Item: 08

Housing Review Board

6 September 2012

STAR Survey Results



### Standardised Tenants and Residents (STAR) Survey Results

#### Summary

This report provides a summary of the STAR survey methodology and an overview of the satisfaction results that the survey provided the Housing Service. Overall we are very pleased with the results, which saw an improvement on earlier STATUS survey results. However, we will use the survey results to improve services in areas where there is room for improvement and learn from the messages being provided to us.

#### Recommendation

**That the results be acknowledged by the Housing Review Board; that where high satisfaction was achieved results are celebrated, but where results are not so good, measures are taken to improve satisfaction.**

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

The STAR survey has provided valuable tenant satisfaction information that can now be used to focus staff attention to where the Housing Service can improve upon the service it provides to tenants.

#### b) Alternative Options

To publish, but then not utilise the STAR survey results to their fullest extent.

#### c) Risk Considerations

If the STAR survey results are not fully utilised, the survey's value will be lost and it may become more difficult to secure finance to commission satisfaction surveys in the future.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

##### Positive Impact Overall

Affordable Homes

Excellent Customer Service

#### e) Date for Review of Decision

The survey results should be considered and further investigation made where needed immediately so as to act upon current data. Survey results can date very quickly, especially in an environment of change.



## **1 The STAR Survey so far**

- 1.1 In 2008 East Devon District Council (EDDC) undertook the STATUS survey which was the tenant satisfaction survey housing providers were required to do by CLG. As of 2010 housing providers were no longer obliged to undertake this survey. In 2011, having recognised the value of the STATUS satisfaction survey, EDDC proposed to undertake the STAR survey as an alternative to the STATUS survey. The STAR survey is a replacement for the STATUS survey devised by Housemark, the company that provides EDDC's benchmarking services.
- 1.2 The proposal to commission a consultant to undertake the STAR survey was taken to the December 2011 Housing Review Board. The report detailed the benefits of the STAR survey and the possible options for running the survey. The Board approved the proposal and a financial commitment was made in the Housing Revenue Account budget to be able to commission a consultant to undertake the survey on EDDC's behalf.
- 1.3 At that time EDDC were able to take advantage of the fact that Exeter City Council and Mid Devon District Council were keen to commission a consultant jointly. Therefore, the commissioning process was organised by Exeter City Council who sent out the tender documents and scored the proposals received. EDDC's Information and Analysis Officer attended the interviews of the two shortlisted consultants BMG Research and Marketing Means. After the interviews EDDC, Mid Devon and Exeter were all in agreement that BMG Research could provide the individual service required by all three local authorities at a competitive cost through an experienced team that we could have confidence in.
- 1.3 While the STAR survey requires certain questions be taken from a library of standardised questions, there is more flexibility with this survey than there was with the STATUS survey. Therefore, it was agreed that each local authority would have the survey tailored to their individual needs. To decide which questions to include from the standardised library of questions, EDDC Housing Managers were asked to pick out those questions they wanted to see included.
- 1.4 The questions were also taken to the Tenant Representative Group (TRG) who fed back to the Information and Analysis Officer the questions they wanted to be included. A scoring system was devised to take into account both managers and the TRG's question preferences. The STAR survey also allowed bespoke questions to be included, managers were asked to submit requests for bespoke questions at this stage and three bespoke questions were added as a result.
- 1.5 At the end of January 2012 an inception meeting was held with BMG Research's study team, the survey methodology, promotion and questions were discussed and arrangements made as to how to proceed. By February the survey was finalised and the first mail out sent. A separate survey was created for each of EDDC's tenant groups: General Needs tenants, Sheltered tenants and Leaseholders, a sample from each of these groups was chosen at random. To provide reliable results, a certain number of responses were required from each client group. In order to reach the required response rate, a second and third mail out were sent in March and the beginning of April. The returned surveys were collected until mid April, when analysis of the results began.
- 1.6 BMG Research have provided draft reports for both the Sheltered and General Needs tenant survey results and an annotated survey for the Leaseholder results. These have



been taken to the Housing Management Team Meetings where amendments have been suggested and BMG Research asked to amend the reports accordingly. The Final Report was signed off at the end of July.

## 2 STAR Survey Results

- 2.1 The table below provides an overview of the results of the STAR survey's key questions. To view the Executive Summaries and Key Findings for both reports, please see **Annex 1 and 2**. The full reports are available on the Housing web pages. BMG Research will be presenting the results in more detail during the meeting.

**Table 1: Satisfaction levels according to client group**

Question (% respondents satisfied)	Group	General Needs	Sheltered
With the overall service	91%	89%	96%
With the quality of the home	89%	86%	94%
With value for money for rent	92%	91%	95%
With the neighbourhood as a place to live	91%	89%	93%
With the final outcome of contact	81%	80%	84%
With repairs and maintenance	91%	88%	96%
That the Housing Service listens to views and acts upon them	76%	73%	82%

NB: 'Group' denotes combined General Needs and Sheltered Housing results

### Legal Implications

There are no identifiable legal implications

### Financial Implications

There are no identifiable financial implications.

### Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet

None.

### Background Papers

- STAR Survey Research Report – General Needs Tenants
- STAR Survey Research Report – Sheltered Tenants

Natasha Redfern 2220  
Information & Analysis Officer

Housing Review Board  
6 September 2012



## **Annex 1**

### **Customer Satisfaction Survey – General needs tenants**

Executive Summary and Key Findings  
Prepared for: East Devon District Council  
Prepared by: BMG Research  
July 2012

#### **Executive Summary**

The results for all three key indicators (satisfaction with the overall service, satisfaction with repairs and maintenance and satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live) for EDDC's Housing Service have improved since the last customer satisfaction survey in 2008.

Overall satisfaction has increased by two-percentage points from 87% in 2008 to 89% in 2012, similarly, satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service has increased by three-percentage points from 85% in 2008 to 88% satisfied this year. However, satisfaction with the neighbourhood has improved considerably more, increasing by eight-percentage points; from 81% in 2008 to 89% in 2012, this is a creditable improvement. Examining this in more detail, a possible explanation for such an improvement could be due to the decline in perceived neighbourhood problems. Although the top three neighbourhood problems remain the same as in 2008 (car parking, rubbish or litter and noisy neighbours), the proportion of respondents actually considering these to be a problem to any extent has fallen by at least nine-percentage points with 60% of respondents considering car parking to be a problem (69% in 2008), 43% considering rubbish or litter a problem (60% in 2008) and 30% considering noisy neighbours to be a problem (52% in 2008) in this year's customer satisfaction survey findings.

Repairs and maintenance remains one of the three most important aspects to the largest proportion of tenants and satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is a driver of satisfaction with the overall service provided for the vast majority of organisations. Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service, depends not just on aspects of the physical repair, but also on the 'flow' of communications around the repair, such as time taken before work starts and being told when workers will call; aspects in which the Housing Service performs well.

In fact, four in five respondents who state they have had a repair completed in the last 12 months are satisfied with each aspect of the repairs service. Certain aspects of the repairs service, such as attitude of the workers, speed of completion of the work and keeping dirt and mess to a minimum are viewed very favourably with more than nine in ten respondents expressing satisfaction. Although more than four in five (86%) respondents are satisfied with the repairs being done 'right first time', this is the aspect of the repairs service with which respondents are least satisfied and suggests a possible mis-match between published service standards for repairs and customer expectations of what is deemed a completed repair.

In common with other landlords, particular groups are more likely to express dissatisfaction with the Housing Service across a range of indicators. These groups include those aged under 35 years. A possible explanation for this is that younger respondents tend to have higher expectations than older respondents and so will expect more from their landlord. Communicating key messages consistently and repeatedly will be important in attempting to manage expectations in an environment where other providers of services are innovating and updating their 'offer'.

Listening to and acting upon residents' views is important not only to understand residents' needs but also to demonstrate that the Housing Service is interested in residents' views and encourages feedback about how services can be improved.

In 2011 the STATUS key indicator satisfaction with taking views into account was replaced with STAR's satisfaction that views are listened to and acted upon. Although not entirely comparable with each other, in BMG's experience, organisations' experience a decline in satisfaction levels when comparing results of the old indicator with the new. However, for the Housing Service a nine-percentage point increase since 2008 is seen where 64% were satisfied that their views were taken into account, comparing with 73% this year who express satisfaction that the Housing Service listens to and acts upon their views. This is a very impressive finding and one which the Housing Service should take pride in and share with colleagues and customers alike. Regular communication in the form of 'you said, we did' will help promote to residents that the Housing Service does listen to and act upon the views of its residents and will help to maintain and even build upon these increased satisfaction levels.

Another area showing improvement since 2008 is the proportion of customers who are satisfied with the value for money for rent. This indicator has increased by two-percentage points from 89% in 2008 to 91% this year. This is a commendable result given the tough economic climate in which we find ourselves; being able to improve customer satisfaction levels with value for money is a great achievement for the Housing Service in a time when everybody is looking to extract every bit of value out of the services they use.

The data from the survey has been analysed by area and has revealed some differences in the views and experiences of customers. Respondents living in Exmouth are those most likely to express dissatisfaction. However, Exmouth is also the area where the largest proportion of under 35's is likely to reside. The Housing Service may want to use this information to target communications such as service standards to this group in an attempt to manage expectation levels.

The proportion of respondents contacting the Housing Service in the last 12 months is considerably lower than in 2008. However, the proportion stating that it is easy to contact the right person and that the member of staff was helpful have also declined. An interesting finding here is that despite the proportion finding it easy to contact the right member of staff and that the staff member was helpful, satisfaction with the final outcome has improved by four-percentage points since 2008, from 76% to 80% this year. This suggests that although the initial contact may need reviewing, the Housing Service is ultimately providing a good customer service as respondents are more satisfied overall than they were back in 2008.

## **Key Findings**

### **Introduction and methodology**

#### **Background**

As part of its ongoing commitment to seek the views of its customers, in January 2012 East Devon District Council (EDDC) commissioned BMG Research to carry out a postal survey. The overall objective of the survey was to measure levels of customer satisfaction with EDDC in key service areas and to enable satisfaction with services to be tracked over time.

#### **Methodology**

A postal survey of a random sample of 1,350 general needs tenants was carried out from February to April 2012. In total 591 questionnaires were returned, representing a 44% response rate.



This is subject to a maximum confidence interval of  $\pm 3.6\%$  at the 95% confidence level on an observed statistic of 50%. Therefore, we can be 95% confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by the population, if a census had been conducted, to within 3.6% of the percentages reported.

### **Aspects that are of most importance to respondents**

The majority (81%) of respondents included repairs and maintenance within the three attributes they consider to be most important. More than half (57%) highlighted the overall quality of their home and a third (33%) included value for money for rent.

### **Satisfaction with the overall service provided by the Housing Service**

Approaching nine in ten (89%) respondents are satisfied with the overall service provided by EDDC's Housing Service, with 45% very satisfied. Conversely, just 5% are dissatisfied and the remaining 6% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Views on the home**

#### **The quality of the home**

More than four fifths (86%) of respondents are satisfied with the overall quality of their home, with 36% very satisfied. One in ten (10%) respondents report some level of dissatisfaction with the quality of their home whilst 4% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Satisfaction that the rent paid provides value for money**

Nine in ten (91%) respondents are satisfied that the rent paid provides value for money, whilst just 3% are dissatisfied.

### **Advice and support**

#### **Advice and support for new tenants**

All respondents were asked to rate how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the advice and support the Housing Service provides to new tenants. More than two fifths (45%) of respondents are satisfied with the advice and support provided for new tenants, conversely just 3% are dissatisfied and 26% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. More than a quarter (27%) of respondents indicate that the question was not applicable to them.

#### **Advice and support for vulnerable tenants**

All respondents were also asked to rate how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the advice and support for vulnerable tenants. Two fifths (40%) of all respondents are satisfied with the advice and support received. Conversely, 4% are dissatisfied and 29% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. More than a quarter (27%) of respondents indicate that this question was not applicable to them.

### **Claiming housing benefit and other welfare benefits**

All respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the advice and support the Housing Service provides with regard to claiming housing benefit and other welfare benefits. More than three fifths (62%) of all respondents are satisfied with the advice and support received compared to just 4% who are dissatisfied. Around one in seven (15%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and approaching a fifth (19%) considered this question was not applicable to them.

### **Managing finances and paying rent and service charges**

Approaching three fifths (59%) of all respondents are satisfied with the advice and support received with managing finances and paying rent and service charges. A very small proportion (2%) of



respondents are dissatisfied whilst a fifth (21%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Approaching a fifth (19%) indicate that this question is not applicable to them.

### **Listening to and acting upon residents views**

All respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are that the Housing Service listens to tenants' views and acts upon them. More than seven in ten (73%) respondents are satisfied that the Housing Service listens to tenants views and acts upon them, compared with 9% who are dissatisfied.

### **Contact with the Housing Service**

More than two fifths (44%) of respondents have been in contact with the Housing Service in the past 12 months. The remaining 56% state they have not contacted the Housing Service in the last 12 months.

### **Getting hold of the right person**

Those who had made contact with the Housing Service were asked how easy it was to get hold of the right person. Four fifths (81%) of respondents state that it was easy to get hold of the right person whereas one in ten (10%) felt it was difficult.

### **Whether found staff helpful or unhelpful**

The majority (86%) indicate that they did find the staff helpful whereas 8% found them to be unhelpful. The remaining 6% comment that staff were neither helpful nor unhelpful.

### **Whether query was answered within a reasonable time**

The vast majority (89%) did feel that their query was answered within a reasonable time whilst the remaining 11% did not.

### **The ability of staff to deal with the query quickly and efficiently**

Approaching nine in ten (89%) respondents are satisfied with the ability of staff to deal with the query quickly and efficiently. A further 6% are dissatisfied and the remaining 5% are ambivalent.

### **Satisfaction with the final outcome of the query**

Four fifths (80%) of respondents are satisfied with the final outcome of their query. This proportion is larger than that recorded in 2008 (76%). The proportion of respondents dissatisfied with the final outcome is 16% whilst the remaining 4% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Repairs and maintenance**

Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is high, approaching nine in ten (88%) of all respondents are satisfied. Conversely, 7% of respondents express some level of dissatisfaction and the remaining 5% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Repairs completed in the past 12 months**

More than three fifths (62%) have had a repair completed during this period.

### **Views of aspects of the repairs service**

Those respondents who have had a repair completed in the past 12 months (62% of all respondents) were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with 10 aspects of the repairs service. At least nine in ten respondents are satisfied with eight out of the ten aspects of the repairs service. Respondents are most satisfied with



the attitude of the workers (94%) but are least satisfied with the repair being done 'right first time' (86%).

### **Contractor proof of identity**

Seven in ten (70%) respondents state that the contractor did show proof of identity whilst the remaining 30% indicate that they did not.

### **Whether repair appointment was kept**

When asked whether or not the repair appointment was kept, the vast majority (94%) of respondents state that it was kept. Just 6% state that the appointment was not kept.

### **Property upgrades**

All respondents were asked whether or not they had had a property upgrade (e.g. new kitchen, bathroom, heating system or doors) in the last 12 months. One fifth (20%) of all respondents indicate that they have had a property upgrade in the last 12 months whilst the four fifths (80%) have not.

### **Aspects of the property upgrade**

The majority (89%) of those who have had an upgrade to their property are satisfied with the communication they received about when they will receive upgrades to their home. Around one in thirteen (8%) are dissatisfied with this communication whilst 2% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

A lower proportion (73%) are satisfied with the frequency with which upgrades happen to the home. This is coupled with around one in nine (11%) who are dissatisfied with this. The remaining 15% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **The neighbourhood**

#### **Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live**

Approaching nine in ten (89%) of all respondents are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, with 58% very satisfied. The level of dissatisfaction is low with just 4% of respondents expressing some level of dissatisfaction. The remaining 7% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

#### **Neighbourhood problems**

Car parking is considered to be a problem by the majority of respondents, with 60% rating it either a major or minor problem (31% and 29% respectively). More than two fifths (43%) of respondents considers rubbish or litter to be a problem in their neighbourhood and three in ten (30%) respondents consider noisy neighbours to be a problem.

### **ASB**

#### **Experiencing ASB**

All respondents were asked whether or not they have experienced ASB in the last 12 months. Around one in eight (13%) state they have whilst the remaining 87% have not.

#### **Reporting ASB**

Approaching half (49%) of those who have experienced ASB in the last 12 months state that they have reported ASB to the Housing Service in the last 12 months whilst the remaining 51% have not.



### **Ease of contacting a staff member**

The majority (77%; 27 respondents) indicate that it was easy to contact a member of staff to report their complaint whilst 14% (5 respondents) state that it was difficult. The remaining 9% (3 respondents) were ambivalent.

### **Advice provided by staff**

The majority of respondents (67%; 23 respondents) are satisfied with the advice provided by staff whereas 20% (7 respondents) are dissatisfied. The remaining 13% (5 respondents) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **The way the complaint was dealt with**

Two thirds of respondents (66%; 23 respondents) are satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with, whilst 24% (8 respondents) are dissatisfied and just 7% (3 respondents) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Final outcome of the complaint**

Three fifths (61%; 21 respondents) indicate that they are satisfied with the final outcome whereas a third (33%; 11 respondents) are dissatisfied. The remaining 6% (2 respondents) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the final outcome of their ASB complaint.

### **Community Development**

EDDC's Housing Service provides a community development service that works to support and run groups and events aimed at building the community. All respondents were asked to rate how important or unimportant they felt a number of activities and groups currently run by the community development service are. At least seven in ten respondents rate activities for young people (73%), activities for the elderly (72%) and youth groups (70%) as important. Community festivals and digital media activities are considered the least important of all activities and groups (48% and 45% respectively rated as important).



## **Annex 2**

### **Customer Satisfaction Survey – Sheltered tenants**

Executive Summary and Key Findings  
Prepared for: East Devon District Council  
Prepared by: BMG Research  
July 2012

#### **Executive Summary**

Satisfaction with the vast majority of services provided is high, with more than four fifths of tenants satisfied in most cases. For the key indicators more than nine in ten respondents report some level of satisfaction; overall satisfaction with the services provided (96%), satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service (96%) and satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live (93%). In addition to this, the Housing Service also sees more than nine in ten sheltered tenants satisfied with the quality of the home (94%) and value for money for the rent paid (95%). To achieve such high satisfaction levels is an impressive feat given the cutbacks that have undoubtedly had to be made by all due to the tough economic conditions faced over the past few years. The Housing Service should take pride in these results and share these with both staff and tenants alike.

Repairs and maintenance is rated as one of the three most important aspects to the largest proportion of tenants and satisfaction with this service is a driver of satisfaction with the overall service provided for the vast majority of organisations. Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service depends not just on aspects of the physical repair, but also on the 'flow' of communications around the repair, such as time taken before work starts and being told when workers will call; aspects which the Housing Service performs well. In fact, all aspects of the repairs service are viewed very positively, particularly 'being told when workers would call' and the 'attitude of workers' with 96% of all respondents who have had a repair completed expressing satisfaction with these aspects of the service. Although repairs being done 'right first time' is the aspect with which respondents are least satisfied with, still 88% express satisfaction. However, this could suggest a possible mismatch between published service standards for repairs and customer expectations of what is deemed a completed repair and so promotion of the service standards could help to increase satisfaction levels with this aspect to be more in line with all of the other repairs aspects.

Listening to and acting upon residents' views is important not only in understanding residents' needs but demonstrating that the Housing Service is interested in the views of its residents and encourages feedback about how services can be improved. Regular communication in the form of 'you said, we did' will help promote to residents that the Housing Service does listen to and acts upon the views of its residents. The majority of landlords' in BMG's experience to date see a considerable difference in satisfaction levels with this indicator compared to others asked in the survey, with as much as a fifth of respondents expressing a lower level of satisfaction. This is not the case for EDDC's Housing Service, whilst satisfaction levels are lower (82% satisfied); the difference between the proportion satisfied compared to other indicators is by no more than one in ten respondents compared to other indicators. Therefore intimating that tenants do feel the Housing Service is listening to and acting upon their views and the very high levels of satisfaction for the services provided offer support for this claim.

The customer contact experience for sheltered tenants on the whole is excellent. The Housing Service receive very high levels of positive ratings for all aspects of contact; easy to get hold of the right person (84%), staff are helpful (91%), query answered within a reasonable time (94%), query answered quickly and efficiently (90%) and satisfaction with

the final outcome of the query (84%). The Housing Service should share these results with the customer contact staff to show them how their courteous and affable manner is helping to deliver such high customer satisfaction levels.

Sheltered services are viewed favourably by the vast majority of respondents, particularly ease of access to all areas of the home and scheme as well as the safety and security of the home, where 91% of all tenants are satisfied with each.

Whilst four in five respondents are satisfied with the facilities at the scheme, this is an aspect the Housing Service should seek to improve, especially given the fact that 'activities for the elderly' and 'outside activities' are viewed as the most important activities run by the Housing Service. It is clear that this group of tenants are keen to see more of these types of activities. Additional promotion of facilities and activities currently available both in schemes and within the community may assist in increasing awareness so that more tenants can get involved, in turn helping to increase satisfaction levels with the facilities at the scheme.

Alternatively, the Housing Service may wish to conduct further research into understanding the needs of sheltered tenants and what facilities they may benefit from in their scheme.

## **Introduction and methodology**

### **Background**

As part of its ongoing commitment to seek the views of its customers, in January 2012 East Devon District Council (EDDC) commissioned BMG Research to carry out a postal survey. The overall objective of the survey was to measure levels of customer satisfaction with EDDC in key service areas and to enable satisfaction with services to be tracked over time.

### **Methodology**

A postal survey of a random sample of 900 sheltered tenants was carried out from February to April 2012. Following two full reminder mailings (letter, questionnaire and pre-paid envelope), 603 questionnaires were returned, representing a 67% response rate. This is subject to a maximum confidence interval of  $\pm 3.0\%$  at the 95% confidence level on an observed statistic of 50%. Therefore, we can be 95% confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by the population, if a census had been conducted, to within 3.0% of the percentages reported.

### **Aspects that are of most importance to respondents**

The majority (65%) of respondents included repairs and maintenance within the three attributes they consider to be most important. More than two fifths (46%) highlighted the overall quality of their home and the emergency call system (42%) as attributes they consider to be most important.

### **Satisfaction with the overall service provided by the Housing Service**

More than nine in ten (96%) respondents are satisfied with the overall service provided by EDDC's Housing Service, with 63% very satisfied. Conversely, just 2% are dissatisfied and the remaining 2% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



## **Views on the home**

### **The quality of the home**

More than nine in ten (94%) respondents are satisfied with the overall quality of their home. Fewer than one in twenty (3%) respondents report some level of dissatisfaction with the quality of their home whilst 3% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Satisfaction that the rent paid provides value for money**

More than nine in ten (95%) respondents are satisfied that the rent paid provides value for money, whilst just 1% are dissatisfied. The remaining 4% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

## **Advice and support**

### **Advice and support for new tenants**

Two thirds (66%) of respondents are satisfied with the advice and support provided for new tenants, conversely just 3% are dissatisfied and 16% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Approximately one in seven (14%) respondents indicates that the question was not applicable to them.

### **Advice and support for vulnerable tenants**

More than two thirds (68%) of all respondents are satisfied with the advice and support received. Conversely, 4% are dissatisfied and 16% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Around one in nine (11%) respondents indicates that this question was not applicable to them.

### **Claiming housing benefit and other welfare benefits**

Four fifths (80%) of respondents are satisfied with the advice and support received compared to just 4% who are dissatisfied. One in ten (10%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and around one in thirteen (8%) considered this question not applicable to them.

### **Managing finances and paying rent and service charges**

Two thirds (67%) of all respondents are satisfied with the advice and support received with managing finances and paying rent and service charges. A very small proportion (2%) of respondents are dissatisfied whilst around one in six (17%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. The remaining 14% indicates that this question is not applicable to them.

## **Sheltered housing services**

More than four fifths of all respondents are satisfied with the various aspects of the sheltered housing service. Respondents are most likely to be satisfied with how easy it is to access all areas of the home and scheme as well as the safety and security of the home (91% each). Respondents are least likely to express satisfaction with the facilities at the scheme (81%).

## **Listening to and acting upon residents' views**

More than four fifths (82%) of respondents are satisfied that the Housing Service listens to residents' views and acts upon them, whereas around one in twenty (5%) are dissatisfied. The remaining 12% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



### **Contact with the Housing Service**

More than one third (35%) of respondents reported that they have been in contact with the Housing Service in the past 12 months. The remaining 65% state they have not contacted the Housing Service in the last 12 months.

### **Getting hold of the right person**

More than four fifths (84%) of respondents state that it was easy to get hold of the right person whereas 7% felt it was difficult. The remaining 8% found it neither easy nor difficult to get hold of the right person.

### **Whether found staff helpful or unhelpful**

The majority (91%) indicate that they did find the staff helpful whereas 4% found them to be unhelpful. The remaining 5% comment that staff were neither helpful nor unhelpful.

### **Whether query was answered within a reasonable time**

The vast majority (94%) did feel that their query was answered within a reasonable time whilst the remaining 6% did not.

### **The ability of staff to deal with the query quickly and efficiently**

Nine in ten (90%) respondents are satisfied with the ability of staff to deal with the query quickly and efficiently, with 72% being very satisfied. A further 5% are dissatisfied and the remaining 5% are ambivalent.

### **Satisfaction with the final outcome of the query**

More than four fifths (84%) of respondents are satisfied with the final outcome of their query, with 67% who are very satisfied. However, around one in eight (12%) report some level of dissatisfaction whilst the remaining 4% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Repairs and maintenance**

Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is high, with more than nine in ten (96%) respondents satisfied, including 71% who are very satisfied. Conversely, just 2% of respondents express some level of dissatisfaction and the remaining 2% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Repairs completed in the past 12 months**

More than three fifths (64%) have had a repair completed during this period.

### **Views of aspects of the repairs service**

At least nine in ten respondents are satisfied with nine out of the ten aspects of the repairs service. Respondents are most satisfied with being told when workers would call and the attitude of the workers (96% each) but are least satisfied with the repair being done 'right first time' (88%).

### **Contractor proof of identity**

More than four fifths (87%) of respondents state that the contractor did show proof of identity whilst the remaining 13% indicate that they did not.

### **Whether repair appointment was kept**

The vast majority (97%) of respondents state that it was kept. Just 3% state that the appointment was not kept.



## **Property upgrades**

Approaching one fifth (19%) of all respondents indicate that they have had a property upgrade in the last 12 months whilst the remaining four fifths (81%) have not.

### **Aspects of the property upgrade**

The majority (92%) of those who have had an upgrade to their property are satisfied with the communication they received about when they will receive upgrades to their home. Just 2% are dissatisfied with this communication whilst 6% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

A lower proportion (78%) are satisfied with the frequency with which upgrades happen to the home. This is coupled with one in twenty (5%) who are dissatisfied. The remaining 17% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

## **The neighbourhood**

### **Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live**

More than nine in ten (93%) of all respondents are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, with 68% very satisfied. The level of dissatisfaction is low with just 3% of respondents expressing some level of dissatisfaction. The remaining 3% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **Neighbourhood problems**

Car parking is considered to be a problem by the majority of respondents, with 62% rating it either a major or minor problem (40% and 22% respectively). More than a quarter (28%) of respondents consider rubbish or litter to be a problem in their neighbourhood and a fifth (21%) of respondents consider pets and animals to be a problem.

## **ASB**

### **Experiencing ASB**

One in ten (10%) state they have experienced ASB in the last 12 months whilst the remaining 90% have not.

### **Reporting ASB**

All those who have experienced ASB in the last 12 months were then asked whether or not they had reported the ASB to the Housing Service. Approximately two thirds (65%) state that they have reported ASB in the last 12 months whilst the remaining 35% have not.

### **Ease of contacting a staff member**

The majority (74%; 25 respondents) indicate that it was easy to contact a member of staff to report their complaint whilst 14% (5 respondents) state that it was difficult. The remaining 12% (4 respondents) are ambivalent.

### **Advice provided by staff**

The majority of respondents (65%; 17 respondents) are satisfied with the advice provided by staff whereas 14% (4 respondents) are dissatisfied. The remaining 22% (6 respondents) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

### **The way the complaint was dealt with**

Approaching three fifths (58%; 17 respondents) of respondents are satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with, whilst 25% (7 respondents) are dissatisfied and just 17% (5 respondents) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



### **Final outcome of the complaint**

Two fifths (41%; 12 respondents) indicate that they are satisfied with the final outcome whereas a third (34%; 10 respondents) are dissatisfied. The remaining 25% (8 respondents) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the final outcome of their ASB complaint.

### **Community Development**

All respondents were asked to rate how important or unimportant they felt a number of activities and groups currently run by the community development service are. The activity which respondents are most likely to consider important is activities for the elderly (71%). This is followed by 54% rating outside activities and events as important. Homework clubs are considered to be the least important of all activities with less than two fifths (38%) rating them as important.

## Agenda Item: 09

Housing Review Board

06 September 2012

MW



### HRA Financial Monitoring Report 2012/13 – Month 4 July

#### Summary

This report gives a summary of the overall financial position on the Housing Revenue Account, HRA Capital Programme and the Business Plan for 2012/13 at the end of month four (July 2012).

Regular monitoring will highlight any areas of concern or unforeseen expenditure in the HRA and associated capital programme and enable corrective action to be taken as required. Any variances will be reflected in the Business Plan.

Current monitoring indicates that:

- The Housing Revenue Account Balance will be maintained at or above the adopted level.
- The position on the HRA Business Plan has not changed significantly and remains in a healthy position.

#### Recommendation

**That the variances identified as part of the HRA revenue and capital monitoring process up to month four be acknowledged.**

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

The report updates the Board on the overall financial position of the Housing Revenue Account and Business Plan following the end of each month and includes recommendations where corrective action is required for the remainder of the financial year.

#### b) Alternative Options

To disagree with the recommended actions proposed.

#### c) Risk Considerations

Current monitoring indicates that the HRA and Business Plan balances are being maintained at or above the adopted levels.

In compiling this report we have looked at all large, high risk and volatile budget areas. Predicted spending patterns have been linked to operational activity and all material budgets have been subject to thorough risk assessments by operational managers

and finance staff. Any continuing variances in spending patterns will be considered and incorporated into the Business Plan.

**d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

This report highlights all budgetary variances and then comments on the level and adequacy of balances.

**e) Date for Review of Decision**

Updated positions are to be presented to future meetings of the Board.

**Financial Monitoring Report 2012/13 – To Month Four July**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The purpose of this monitoring report is to update members of the Board on the overall financial position of the Housing Revenue Account and Business Plan following the end of month four.

**2. Housing Revenue Account Position**

2.1 A summary of the predicted over and under spends to the year end is shown below:

	Variation at Month 4 £	Predicted Outturn Variation £
Additional Community Development Worker agreed at HRB 21/06/12 for 6 months	0	14,000
Housing Apprentice (6 months)	0	2,500
Property & Asset Team saving due to vacancies	(11,183)	(25,000)
Variations from previous report (month 1)		(482,000)
<b>Total variations</b>		<b>(490,500)</b>

2.2 The following table shows the original budget surplus set for the year and the total variations, as identified above, which are likely to affect the budget to give a revised budget surplus for the year.

	£	£
<b>Budget surplus (set 22/02/12)</b>		<b>(1,733,760)</b>
Month 4 predicted net (under)/overspend to year end	(490,500)	(490,500)
<b>Predicted Budget Surplus</b>		<b>(2,224,260)</b>

Appendix A gives a more detailed breakdown of the HRA budgets and actual expenditure and income to date.





- 2.3 These variations will have the following effect on the Housing Revenue Account Balance:

	£	£
<b>Housing Revenue Account Balance (01/04/12)</b>		<b>(623,967)</b>
Predicted budget surplus as above		(2,224,260)
<b>Predicted HRA Balance (31/03/13)</b>		<b>(£2,848,227)</b>

The recommended level for the HRA balance has been agreed at £2.1m. The predicted balance is currently above the recommended level.

### 3. Capital Programme Position

- 3.1 The following table shows the HRA Capital Programme totalling £1.934m and the expenditure to date. Capital receipts can be used to fund part of this sum with the balance to be met by a revenue contribution from the HRA and/or from external borrowing.

<b>HRA Capital Programme Summary</b>	<b>Budget £000</b>	<b>Spend to date £000</b>
River Otter flood & erosion protection scheme	265	70
New Housing IT System	150	0
Major improvements/extensions/loft conversions to existing dwellings	175	5
Off street car parking	50	10
Re-modelling of sheltered schemes	200	29
Non feaseance road repairs	10	1
Social Services Adaptations	200	17
Purchase of 11 houses Morton Way Axminster	884	0
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>1,934</b>	<b>132</b>

The purchase of 11 houses at Morton Way Axminster is, at this stage, anticipated to be funded by borrowing from the PWLB, a Section 106 commuted sum and retained RTB capital receipts.

The HRA's current borrowing ability or headroom is £2.827m. This is calculated by taking the Debt Cap of £87.844m, notified as part of the self financing determinations, less the self financing debt of £84.376m and other existing borrowing of £0.641m.

- 3.2 This table shows the capital receipts received in the year to date and how those receipts are to be allocated.

<b>Capital Receipts</b>	<b>£000</b>
Sale of council houses/flats	(135)
Sale of land	0
<b>Total capital receipts received</b>	<b>(135)</b>
Allocation of receipts:	
Retained for provision of new social housing	(26)
Retained for funding other capital expenditure	(33)
Paid to HM Treasury	(76)
<b>Total capital receipts allocation</b>	<b>(135)</b>

There has been 1 Right to Buy sale completed so far this year. Currently there are known to be 5 further RTBs in progress with a total expected sale price of £325,625. RTB receipts, after certain specific reductions including an amount to be paid to the Treasury based on an assumption of what they would have received under the old RTB legislation, may now be retained as the Council has signed up to an agreement with the government which states our intention to spend those receipts on the provision of new social housing.

#### **HRA Business Plan**

- 4.1 Appendix B shows the Business Plan Operating Account which reflects the above changes in 2012/13 and the subsequent impact on balances for future years. The effect of Welfare Reform from April 2013 could have a significant impact on the collection rate for rents and is the subject of a separate report elsewhere on this agenda. A provision of 1.5% in the current year increasing to 3% by 2015/16 has already been made for voids and bad debts in the Business Plan.

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#### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications identified.

#### **Financial Implications**

Details are contained within the report.

#### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

Not applicable.

#### **Background Papers**

- Accountancy working papers
- HRA Business Plan

Mandy White (HRA Accountant) Ext 2357

## APPENDIX A

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2012/2013**

**SUMMARY OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT  
Period to 31 July 2012**

	2012/2013			Service	2012/2013	2012/2013
	Budget				Actual	Variance
	Original	Revised	Year to Date		£	£
	£	£	£			
1	(16,318,000)	(16,318,000)	(5,332,725)	<b>INCOME</b>		
2	(89,000)	(89,000)	(8,320)	Gross Property Rent including Garages	(5,401,089)	(68,364)
3	<b>(16,407,000)</b>	<b>(16,407,000)</b>	<b>(5,341,045)</b>	Other Rents & Income	(13,777)	(5,457)
				<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(5,414,866)</b>	<b>(73,821)</b>
				<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
				<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b>		
4	2,110,710	2,110,710	703,750	General	679,772	(23,978)
5	876,660	876,660	292,240	Improvements	84,821	(207,419)
				<b>Supervision &amp; Management</b>		
6	2,420,510	2,412,010	1,175,960	General	1,150,816	(25,144)
7	846,030	846,030	636,880	Special Items	610,489	(26,391)
8	225,700	225,700	92,410	Other Expenditure	58,761	(33,649)
9	6,479,610	6,471,110	2,901,240	<b>Total Management &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>2,584,659</b>	<b>(316,581)</b>
10	0	0	0	Adjustment to Bad Debt Provision	0	0
11	4,140,000	4,140,000	1,379,920	Major Repairs Account	877,893	(502,027)
12	<b>10,619,610</b>	<b>10,611,110</b>	<b>4,281,160</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>3,462,552</b>	<b>(818,608)</b>
13	<b>(5,787,390)</b>	<b>(5,795,890)</b>	<b>(1,059,885)</b>	<b>NET COST OF SERVICE</b>	<b>(1,952,314)</b>	<b>(892,429)</b>
14	(12,360)	(12,360)	0	Interest on Balances	0	0
15	3,316,150	2,569,150	0	Interest Payable (PWLB loans)	(27,727)	(27,727)
16	(160)	(160)	(40)	Interest on Council House Sales	(32)	8
17	<b>3,303,630</b>	<b>2,556,630</b>	<b>(40)</b>		<b>(27,759)</b>	<b>(27,719)</b>
18	<b>(2,483,760)</b>	<b>(3,239,260)</b>	<b>(1,059,925)</b>	<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE - Deficit / (Surplus)</b>	<b>(1,980,073)</b>	<b>(920,148)</b>
19	750,000	1,015,000	0	Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure	0	0
20	<b>(1,733,760)</b>	<b>(2,224,260)</b>	<b>(1,059,925)</b>	<b>Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year</b>	<b>(1,980,073)</b>	<b>(920,148)</b>
				<b>BALANCES</b>		
21	(1,235,911)	(623,967)	(623,967)	Balance b/f	(623,967)	0
22	(1,733,760)	(2,224,260)	(1,059,925)	Deficit / (Surplus)	(1,980,073)	(920,148)
23	<b>(2,969,671)</b>	<b>(2,848,227)</b>	<b>(1,683,892)</b>	<b>Balance C/F</b>	<b>(2,604,040)</b>	<b>(920,148)</b>



EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2012/2013

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT

2012/2013			Service	2012/2013		Comments	
Budget				Actual	Variance		
Original	Revised	Year to Date					
£	£	£	£	£			
			<b>SUPERVISION &amp; MANAGEMENT</b>				
			<b>Supervision &amp; Management - General</b>				
1	1,473,980	1,465,480	494,840	Employees	469,557	(25,283)	see below
2	100,190	100,190	100	Premises	4,550	4,450	!
3	106,250	106,250	37,880	Transport	33,648	(4,232)	
4	144,740	144,740	46,130	Supplies & Services	47,827	1,697	!
5	1,029,350	1,029,350	1,029,350	Support Services	1,029,350	0	
6	2,854,510	2,846,010	1,608,300	Total Expenditure	1,584,932	(23,368)	
7	(2,500)	(2,500)	(840)	Income	(2,616)	(1,776)	
8	2,852,010	2,843,510	1,607,460	Net Expenditure before Recharges	1,582,316	(25,144)	
9	(431,500)	(431,500)	(431,500)	Recharges	(431,500)	0	
10	<b>2,420,510</b>	<b>2,412,010</b>	<b>1,175,960</b>	<b>Net Supervision &amp; Management - General</b>	<b>1,150,816</b>	<b>(25,144)</b>	
			<b>Net Expenditure Analysis by Cost Centre</b>				
11	563,840	563,840	439,570	JG General Operational Management	444,311	4,741	!
12	188,050	188,050	113,350	JG Head of Housing	113,088	(262)	
13	744,950	761,450	349,400	SB Landlord Services	333,310	(16,090)	incl Comm Dev Worker & apprentice
14	612,330	612,330	289,510	DB Housing Needs & Strategy	284,654	(4,856)	
15	676,450	651,450	378,610	DB Asset & Property	369,659	(8,951)	incl £25k vacancies saving
16	2,750	2,750	2,390	SB Council House Sales	3,184	794	!
17	3,450	3,450	3,240	DB Sewage Treatment Works	3,217	(23)	
18	60,190	60,190	31,390	SB Communal Areas Cleaning	30,893	(497)	
19	2,852,010	2,843,510	1,607,460	Net Expenditure before Recharges	1,582,316	(25,144)	
20	(431,500)	(431,500)	(431,500)	Recharges	(431,500)	0	
21	<b>2,420,510</b>	<b>2,412,010</b>	<b>1,175,960</b>	<b>Total Analysis by Cost Centre</b>	<b>1,150,816</b>	<b>(25,144)</b>	
			<b>Supervision &amp; Management - Special</b>				
22	42,500	42,500	11,750	SB Community Centres	5,617	(6,133)	
23	5,000	5,000	1,680	DB Choice Based Lettings	0	(1,680)	
24	323,470	323,470	315,470	SB Maintenance of Grounds	311,470	(4,000)	
25	66,770	66,770	49,930	SB Play Areas	48,424	(1,506)	
26	0	0	0	SB Caretaking & Window Cleaning	102	102	!
27	29,380	29,380	9,800	SB Communal Areas Lighting	7,447	(2,353)	
28	12,000	12,000	4,000	SB Communal Areas Heating	7,943	3,943	!
29	5,000	5,000	5,000	SB STAR Survey	8,255	3,255	!
30	3,240	3,240	3,240	SB Tenants' Conference	2,181	(1,059)	
31	15,000	15,000	15,000	JG ASW Procurement	14,074	(926)	
32	10,000	10,000	3,320	SB Decommissioning Costs	2,649	(671)	
33	10,300	10,300	0	JG Business Plan Update	0	0	
34	5,670	5,670	1,940	SB District Offices running expenses	2,537	597	!
35	317,700	317,700	215,750	SB Mobile Support Officers	199,790	(15,960)	
36	<b>846,030</b>	<b>846,030</b>	<b>636,880</b>	<b>Total Supervision &amp; Management - Special</b>	<b>610,489</b>	<b>(26,391)</b>	

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2012/2013**

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - DETAILED STATEMENT**

	2012/2013			Service	2012/2013		Comments
	Budget				Actual	Variance	
	Original	Revised	Year to Date				
	£	£	£	£	£		
				<b>OTHER EXPENDITURE</b>			
1	13,850	13,850	4,000	DB Sewerage - Repairs, Maintenance & Emptying	2,877	(1,123)	
2	36,070	36,070	13,780	SB Tenant Participation	11,926	(1,854)	
3	5,150	5,150	1,720	SB Tenant Scrutiny	1,393	(327)	
4	2,060	2,060	680	SB Storage	261	(419)	
5	2,000	2,000	680	SB Horiton - Heathpark	0	(680)	
6	6,000	6,000	2,000	SB Community Development Work	1,123	(877)	
7	2,000	2,000	680	SB Minor Management Schemes	631	(49)	
8	10,000	10,000	3,320	DB Road Repairs	(1,700)	(5,020)	
9	1,000	1,000	320	SB Signs on Estates	440	120	!
10	3,000	3,000	1,000	DB Off Street parking - Grants to Tenants	1,021	21	!
11	10,000	10,000	3,320	DB Other Expenses (pest control, eviction expenses)	935	(2,385)	
12	37,170	37,170	23,850	DB Tree Felling and Planting	19,431	(4,419)	
13	5,000	5,000	1,680	DB Landscaping	2,189	509	!
14	75,000	75,000	25,000	DB Removal Expenses (downsizing)	4,000	(21,000)	
15	500	500	160	DB Private Water Supplies - Service & Maintenance	64	(96)	
16	10,000	10,000	3,320	SB Removal of Rubbish	6,965	3,645	!
17	6,900	6,900	6,900	SB Best Value - Housemark	7,205	305	!
18	<b>225,700</b>	<b>225,700</b>	<b>92,410</b>	<b>TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>58,761</b>	<b>(33,649)</b>	
				<b>MAJOR REPAIRS ACCOUNT</b>			
19	500,000	500,000	166,640	DB Central Heating	116,354	(50,286)	
20	0	0	0	DB Gas Appliance Replacement	22,886	22,886	!
21	150,000	150,000	50,000	DB Electrical Updating	0	(50,000)	
22	250,000	250,000	83,320	DB Re-roofing	20,109	(63,211)	
23	1,000,000	1,000,000	333,320	DB Kitchens and Bathrooms	133,968	(199,352)	
24	600,000	600,000	200,000	DB Doors	71,105	(128,895)	
25	0	0	0	DB Water Heater Replacement	156	156	!
26	250,000	250,000	83,320	DB Electrical Works on COT	126,926	43,606	!
27	10,000	10,000	3,320	DB Flat Roof Repairs	4,136	816	!
28	10,000	10,000	3,320	DB Chimney Repairs	450	(2,870)	
29	15,000	15,000	5,000	DB Fence Programme	3,879	(1,121)	
30	0	0	0	DB Renewal of Walls	0	0	
31	20,000	20,000	6,680	DB Replacement Floors	0	(6,680)	
32	900,000	900,000	300,000	DB COT: Other Expenditure	374,438	74,438	!
33	435,000	435,000	145,000	DB Modernisation	3,486	(141,514)	
34	<b>4,140,000</b>	<b>4,140,000</b>	<b>1,379,920</b>	<b>TOTAL MAJOR REPAIRS ACCOUNT</b>	<b>877,893</b>	<b>(502,027)</b>	

**East Devon DC  
Business Plan  
Operating Account - Programme**  
(expressed in money terms)

		Income					Expenditure											Net Operating (Expenditure) £,000	Provision for repayment of external loans £,000	Transfer from / (to) MRR £,000	RCCO £,000	Surplus (Deficit) for the Year £,000	Surplus (Deficit) b/fwd £,000	Interest £,000	Surplus (Deficit) c/fwd £,000
Year	Year	Net rent Income £,000	Other income £,000	Misc Income £,000	HRA Subsidy Receivable £,000	Total Income £,000	Managt. £,000	Depreciation £,000	Responsive & Cyclical £,000	Other Revenue spend £,000	HRA Cost of Rent Rebates £,000	Misc expenses £,000	HRA Subsidy Payable £,000	Total expenses £,000	Capital Charges £,000										
1	2012.13	15,947	477	10	0	16,434	(3,258)	(4,375)	(3,774)	(226)	0	0	0	(11,632)	(2,564)	<b>2,238</b>	(5)	3,005	(3,038)	<b>2,200</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2,848</b>		
2	2013.14	16,630	496	0	0	17,126	(3,393)	(4,532)	(3,942)	(234)	0	0	0	(12,101)	(2,564)	<b>2,461</b>	(5)	3,005	(980)	<b>4,481</b>	<b>2,848</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>7,406</b>		
3	2014.15	17,295	511	0	0	17,807	(3,495)	(4,640)	(4,059)	(239)	0	0	0	(12,433)	(2,563)	<b>2,810</b>	(580)	3,005	(32)	<b>5,204</b>	<b>7,406</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>12,760</b>		
4	2015.16	17,980	527	0	0	18,506	(3,600)	(4,752)	(4,178)	(245)	0	0	0	(12,776)	(2,559)	<b>3,172</b>	(1,029)	3,005	(8,012)	<b>(2,864)</b>	<b>12,760</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>10,066</b>		
5	2016.17	18,582	542	0	0	19,124	(3,708)	(4,868)	(4,302)	(252)	0	0	0	(13,129)	(2,548)	<b>3,447</b>	(1,490)	3,005	(3,535)	<b>1,427</b>	<b>10,066</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>11,655</b>		
6	2017.18	19,175	559	0	0	19,734	(3,819)	(4,986)	(4,429)	(258)	0	0	0	(13,491)	(2,529)	<b>3,713</b>	(1,310)	3,005	(3,575)	<b>1,832</b>	<b>11,655</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>13,676</b>		
7	2018.19	19,767	575	0	0	20,343	(3,933)	(5,107)	(4,559)	(264)	0	0	0	(13,864)	(2,509)	<b>3,969</b>	(1,587)	3,005	(3,617)	<b>1,770</b>	<b>13,676</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>15,664</b>		
8	2019.20	20,362	593	0	0	20,955	(4,051)	(5,231)	(4,694)	(271)	0	0	0	(14,247)	(2,481)	<b>4,227</b>	(1,917)	3,005	(3,661)	<b>1,654</b>	<b>15,664</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>17,565</b>		
9	2020.21	20,966	610	0	0	21,576	(4,172)	(5,358)	(4,832)	(278)	0	0	0	(14,640)	(2,443)	<b>4,493</b>	(2,259)	3,005	(3,706)	<b>1,532</b>	<b>17,565</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>19,372</b>		
10	2021.22	21,583	629	0	0	22,212	(4,297)	(5,488)	(4,975)	(285)	(1)	0	0	(15,046)	(2,392)	<b>4,773</b>	(2,619)	3,005	(3,874)	<b>1,285</b>	<b>19,372</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>20,957</b>		
11	2022.23	22,217	648	0	0	22,864	(4,426)	(5,621)	(5,122)	(292)	(4)	0	0	(15,465)	(2,329)	<b>5,070</b>	(2,889)	3,005	(3,927)	<b>1,259</b>	<b>20,957</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>22,541</b>		
12	2023.24	22,868	667	0	0	23,535	(4,559)	(5,758)	(5,273)	(299)	(4)	0	0	(15,893)	(2,255)	<b>5,387</b>	(3,288)	3,005	(3,982)	<b>1,122</b>	<b>22,541</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>24,010</b>		
13	2024.25	23,538	687	0	0	24,225	(4,695)	(5,898)	(5,429)	(307)	(4)	0	0	(16,332)	(2,166)	<b>5,727</b>	(3,718)	3,005	(4,040)	<b>974</b>	<b>24,010</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>25,352</b>		
14	2025.26	24,227	708	0	0	24,935	(4,836)	(6,041)	(5,589)	(314)	(5)	0	0	(16,786)	(2,060)	<b>6,089</b>	(4,180)	3,005	(4,100)	<b>814</b>	<b>25,352</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>26,552</b>		
15	2026.27	24,937	729	0	0	25,666	(4,981)	(6,188)	(5,754)	(322)	(5)	0	0	(17,250)	(1,938)	<b>6,478</b>	(4,675)	3,005	(7,169)	<b>(2,360)</b>	<b>26,552</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>24,572</b>		
16	2027.28	25,667	751	0	0	26,418	(5,130)	(6,338)	(5,925)	(330)	(5)	0	0	(17,728)	(1,797)	<b>6,892</b>	(4,272)	3,005	(7,322)	<b>148</b>	<b>24,572</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>25,090</b>		
17	2028.29	26,419	773	0	0	27,192	(5,284)	(6,492)	(6,100)	(338)	(5)	0	0	(18,220)	(1,722)	<b>7,250</b>	(2,710)	3,005	(7,481)	<b>64</b>	<b>25,090</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>25,531</b>		
18	2029.30	27,192	796	0	0	27,988	(5,443)	(6,649)	(6,281)	(347)	(5)	0	0	(18,725)	(1,637)	<b>7,627</b>	(3,081)	3,005	(7,644)	<b>(94)</b>	<b>25,531</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>25,820</b>		
19	2030.31	27,988	820	0	0	28,808	(5,606)	(6,811)	(6,467)	(355)	(5)	0	0	(19,244)	(1,537)	<b>8,027</b>	(3,483)	3,005	(7,814)	<b>(265)</b>	<b>25,820</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>25,940</b>		
20	2031.32	28,807	845	0	0	29,652	(5,774)	(6,976)	(6,659)	(364)	(6)	0	0	(19,780)	(1,423)	<b>8,449</b>	(3,915)	3,005	(6,117)	<b>1,422</b>	<b>25,940</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>27,761</b>		
21	2032.33	29,651	870	0	0	30,521	(5,947)	(7,145)	(6,856)	(373)	(5)	0	0	(20,327)	(1,293)	<b>8,901</b>	(6,063)	3,005	(6,244)	<b>(402)</b>	<b>27,761</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>27,773</b>		
22	2033.34	30,519	896	0	0	31,415	(6,126)	(7,319)	(7,059)	(383)	(6)	0	0	(20,893)	(1,090)	<b>9,433</b>	(6,735)	3,005	(6,375)	<b>(673)</b>	<b>27,773</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>27,512</b>		
23	2034.35	31,412	923	0	0	32,335	(6,309)	(7,496)	(7,268)	(392)	(6)	0	0	(21,473)	(862)	<b>10,000</b>	(7,413)	3,005	(6,511)	<b>(919)</b>	<b>27,512</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>26,999</b>		
24	2035.36	32,332	951	0	0	33,283	(6,499)	(7,678)	(7,483)	(402)	(6)	0	0	(22,069)	(613)	<b>10,601</b>	(8,137)	3,005	(6,652)	<b>(1,183)</b>	<b>26,999</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>26,212</b>		
25	2036.37	33,278	980	0	0	34,257	(6,694)	(7,865)	(7,705)	(412)	(6)	0	0	(22,682)	(334)	<b>11,241</b>	(8,911)	3,005	(8,392)	<b>(3,057)</b>	<b>26,212</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>23,526</b>		
26	2037.38	34,252	1,009	0	0	35,261	(6,894)	(8,056)	(7,933)	(423)	(8)	0	0	(23,314)	(27)	<b>11,920</b>	(225)	3,005	(8,590)	<b>6,110</b>	<b>23,526</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>30,035</b>		
27	2038.39	35,255	1,039	0	0	36,294	(7,101)	(8,251)	(8,168)	(433)	(8)	0	0	(23,961)	(19)	<b>12,313</b>	(20)	3,005	(8,794)	<b>6,504</b>	<b>30,035</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>37,038</b>		
28	2039.40	36,286	1,070	0	0	37,357	(7,314)	(8,451)	(8,410)	(444)	(6)	0	0	(24,626)	(18)	<b>12,712</b>	(21)	3,005	(9,006)	<b>6,691</b>	<b>37,038</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>44,334</b>		
29	2040.41	37,348	1,103	0	0	38,451	(7,534)	(8,657)	(8,659)	(455)	(8)	0	0	(25,312)	(17)	<b>13,122</b>	(22)	3,005	(9,225)	<b>6,880</b>	<b>44,334</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>51,931</b>		
30	2041.42	38,442	1,136	0	0	39,577	(7,760)	(8,867)	(8,916)	(466)	(8)	0	0	(26,016)	(16)	<b>13,545</b>	(23)	3,005	(9,451)	<b>7,076</b>	<b>51,931</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>59,839</b>		

## Agenda Item: 10

**Housing Review**

**6 September 2012**

**JG/MH**



### Income Threats

#### Summary

Rent is our main source of income for the Housing Revenue Account and this report considers the threats to our rent collection performance and tenant's ability to pay their rent as a result of the Welfare Reforms being implemented nationally. A risk assessment is set out in this report together with a series of mitigation measures proposed to maintain high levels of rent collection.

Efficient rent collection is a core housing management activity and enables us to manage and maintain Council homes to a good standard. If rent collection falters our ability to do all the things we have planned is affected.

Preparation is critical to being able to manage this process and limit the adverse impact on our Business Plan and low income tenants.

#### Recommendation

**To recognise the risks to future income and implement the proposals to limit the adverse impact of welfare reforms on future income streams.**

##### a) Reasons for Recommendation

To manage the transition to the welfare reform changes so as to maintain high levels of rent and other income collection.

##### b) Alternative Options

We have little option but to work with the changes and attempt to limit the adverse impact on our Business Plan ambitions.

##### c) Risk Considerations

The report is essentially a risk assessment with suggested mitigation measures.

##### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

These are explained in the report.

##### e) Date for Review of Decision

Monthly income and expenditure budget monitoring reports are produced.



## **1 Background**

- 1.1 Our annual rent income amounts to £16.3 million and the collection of income due is a core housing management activity and central to our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012

[http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/hra\\_business\\_plan\\_2012.pdf](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/hra_business_plan_2012.pdf)

- 1.2 Our performance on rent management has improved gradually over the last few years reaching 99.65% in 2011/12. In the first four months of this financial year rent collection has been as follows:

End of April 2012 98.14%

End of May 2012 98.84%

End of June 2012 98.95%

End of July 2012 99.37%

The arrears of current tenants stands at £146,728.

- 1.3 Efficient collection of income due is critical to running the housing business. First call on income is servicing our debt, then to meet management and maintenance costs. Any surpluses are reinvested into improving the housing stock, other assets and/or new build and acquisitions.
- 1.4 Our Systems Thinking purpose for rent management is 'for tenants to pay the right amount at the right time'. We put considerable effort into 'setting new tenants up right' so they can meet their rent obligations from the point their tenancy starts. For tenants who fall into arrears we aim to 'get them back on track' as quickly as possible.
- 1.5 We have developed an excellent working relationship with Housing Benefit colleagues who process benefit claims for our tenants quickly and accurately. We know that at any point in time approximately 60% of our tenants are in receipt of full or partial Housing Benefit.
- 1.6 We have introduced a range of rental payment methods so tenants can use a method that suits them which helps towards optimising income collection.

## **2. HRA Business Plan 2012**

- 2.1 In producing the Business Plan as part of our preparations for the self-financing regime and taking on debt, we anticipated a situation where rental income would be threatened by Welfare Reform and the depressed economic situation.
- 2.2 We built into our plans an increased bad debt provision rising from 1.5% of the rent roll to 3% over several years. This was part of our risk assessment and cautious approach to servicing the debt. If arrears exceed £500k in any year we will have to review our Business Plan and scale back our expenditure proposals or find ways of boosting income.
- 2.3 The Welfare Reforms designed to reduce the size of the national benefit bill and encourage people into work, will impact most on working age households. Many claimants may experience a significant reduction in income. This will have a variety of impacts and from a strictly business point of view I am concerned about tenants ability to prioritise and pay their rent.

2.4 The threats to our income stream from national policy changes include:

- Universal Credit (a combined benefit payment)
- Online applications
- Payment direct to tenants
- Bedroom tax for under occupation
- Single room rate for under 35's
- Local Housing Allowance set at 30<sup>th</sup> percentile rather than 50<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Affordable rents
- Localisation of Council Tax Benefit
- Supporting People budget pressures

2.5 These combined with general austerity and reductions in real income means that some tenants will find it harder to access welfare benefits, receive less benefit, and face difficult choices over expenditure priorities. I have included a leaflet produced by the National Housing Federation on some aspects of Welfare Reform as **annex 1**.

2.6 Rent arrears that may increase as a result will mean that tenant's homes are at risk, which could in turn lead to an increase in homelessness. Landlords may adjust their allocation policies to mitigate the risk of allocating their home to 'poor rent payers' but the social housing sector have traditionally housed low income groups on the basis of housing need not the ability to pay. Some providers will be examining this position to limit their exposure to the risk of lost income.

2.7 There is also a fear that where tenants accumulate arrears the courts will be reluctant to grant social landlords possession because of the homeless implications and few other housing options will be available to such households. We already use possession action as a last resort when all other attempts to support the tenant pay their rent has failed. We will need to monitor this carefully.

2.8 These changes are coming at a time when we have just taken on a substantial level of debt and when we require all our income to service the debt and create surpluses for reinvestment into improved housing services/supply.

2.9 Welfare Reform could have a major impact on our ability to realise our Business Plan ambitions so we need to prepare for the changes and support our tenants through this period of economic difficulty.

2.10 The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) have just launched a campaign to encourage social landlords to prepare for Welfare Reform prior to April 2013 when many of the changes come into effect. The CIH have produced a checklist of things to do including:

- Use of tenant profiling information to assess the risks and impacts of welfare reform on tenants;
- Develop a strategy to mitigate potential risks to income streams;
- Communicate the impacts to affected tenants and prospective tenants. Reassure tenants that will not be affected. Communicate in plain jargon free language;
- Ensure that rent account and IT systems are fit for purpose and can deal with the changes;

- Consider how we are going to equip frontline staff with the skills and knowledge needed to support tenants;
- Review relevant policies and procedures specifically in relation to lettings, arrears, and financial inclusion;
- Plan how we will provide support, including any additional resources we might need;
- Liaise with other Registered Providers in the area and work together to improve mobility for tenants affected;
- Map out points in the area where tenants can access the internet for online claims.

2.11 The CIH have emphasised that the threat is real and highlight the impact on the self-financing arrangements. They urge Councils to quantify the impact of the changes on the housing business.

### 3. **Maintaining Income**

3.1 There are actions that we can take and initiatives we can build on to assist tenants through this period of change. We need to package these into a strategy to be implemented over the next two years.

3.2 We operate a Corporate Debt Policy that encourages tenants to maintain an up to date rent account over other financial demands to prevent the loss of their home. We need to emphasise this message and communicate with tenants over the changes.

3.3 Early intervention when arrears start to show has been successful with tenants struggling with their finances. Our income management procedures should be reviewed to ensure that they reflect the Systems Thinking principles and current good practice.

3.4 Timely and accurate welfare and debt advice will become even more important as benefits become harder to access. It may be in our interest to consider appointing our own advisors if they can maintain our income levels through support to the tenants. This could be an invest to save type consideration.

3.5 We have been promoting Credit Unions in recent months as an ethical form of saving and lending. Tenants on low income may find some of the Credit Union services useful and more available than some of the high street financial services.

3.6 We have been running a Stop the Loan Sharks Campaign with assistance from the national body the Illegal Money Lending Team. We are running a week of action from 24 September with the aim of highlighting the illegal lending activities and risks of debt.

3.7 Our contract with Westcountry Housing Association for floating support was extended by Cabinet in July 2012 and this financial support is helping prevent homelessness. They provide money and other advice to support tenants with budgeting and accessing benefit. This has kept many tenants in their home who struggle with living expenses and managing their household finances. We will also be working closely with the Citizens Advice Bureau who advises tenants on benefits and housing problems.

- 3.8 We are trying to identify individual tenants who will be affected by the changes and plan to make contact with them to offer advice on managing their rent obligations. In some cases this may involve home visits. We can promote our downsizing scheme for those under occupying and explore with reduced income tenants will maintain rent and other payments. Our Housing Matters publication going out late August the first round of information awareness to all tenants' will commence. Telephone contact numbers will be included for tenants that feel they will be affected and they can telephone to find out more.
- 3.9 The next stage is for the Housing Benefits team to receive the new software from Academy which has been promised for delivery in August 2012 and, once installed, will identify those tenants affected. Once we know this we can commence direct contact with tenants to discuss their options, including those that already have debts and those that express concerns on their financial management. This will start to give us an insight to the demand for floating support. Discretionary Housing Payments will play a big part in the early months in helping to minimise income loss. The budget for Discretionary Housing Payments for 2012/2013 has increased to approx £158K, but this is for both the private and social sectors. As soon as we are aware of those households affected, we can immediately start to discuss with them their options and needs.
- 3.10 Our Housing Matters Forum considers breaches of tenancy conditions and co-ordinating housing and legal actions where informal action has failed to achieve the outcomes to comply with tenancy conditions. This Forum could spend more time on rent arrears cases.
- 3.11 The Service Review Group for Rents can play a useful role in monitoring income and identifying corrective actions and good practice from elsewhere.
- 3.12 We will need to make use of the Discretionary Housing Payment regime that enables us to assist in certain households for a limited period who are facing financial hardship.
- 3.13 We need an awareness of the risks to our income streams and have measures that we can implement should the threat start to impact adversely on our ability to implement our Business Plan ambitions. Our financial monitoring systems will detect problems early and prompt interventions and preventative work. We need to turn the ideas in this report and other good practice into an action plan or strategy and trust that our preparations will limit the adverse impact of the changes.

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications identified requiring comment.

### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications could be significant in that a fall in income will affect our ability to invest in the current stock and deliver new homes. Continual monitoring of income and collection rates and prompt intervention where necessary will be vital.

## **Consultation on Reports to the Executive**

None.

## **Background Papers**

- Chartered Institute of Housing conversations inspired by housing, July 2012.

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John Golding ext 2767  
Head of Housing

Housing Review Board  
6 September 2012



**What you need  
to know about  
changes to  
housing benefit**

**The Government is reducing the amount of housing benefit some people can claim.**

This leaflet will help you find out:

- ✓ who will be affected
- ✓ where you can go to get help and advice

## **If you claim housing benefit to help pay your rent you may be affected by changes from April 2013. The changes mean that some people will get less housing benefit than they did before.**

We know that many of you will be worried about what this could mean for you and your family. This leaflet has information to help you find out what's happening and what you can do to prepare.

### **How many bedrooms do you have?**

From April 2013, if you live in a council or housing association home and you have one or more 'spare' bedrooms your housing benefit may be reduced.

#### **This could affect you:**

- ✓ if you are 16 to 61 years old
- ✓ even if you only get a small amount of housing benefit – for example, if you are working
- ✓ even if you are sick or disabled

#### **You won't be affected if:**

- ✗ you live in a one bedroom flat or bedsit, **or if**
- ✗ you or your partner are old enough to receive pension credits. In April 2013 the pension credit age will be around 61 years and 6 months

**The new benefit rules will apply from April 2013, so now is the time to get help and support.**

## What is a 'spare' bedroom?

Under the new rules if you have more bedrooms than the Government says you need, you will lose part of your housing benefit. The new rules mean you will be allocated one bedroom for:

- ✓ each adult couple
- ✓ any other person aged 16 or over
- ✓ two children of the same sex under the age of 16
- ✓ two children under the age of 10 regardless of their sex
- ✓ any other child
- ✓ a carer (who does not normally live with you) if you or your partner need overnight care.

It does not matter how the 'spare' bedroom is used, the new rules will apply even if:

- ✓ you and your partner need to sleep apart because of a medical condition
- ✓ the main residence of your children is another address, but you have a spare room for when they stay with you.

## What happens if you have a 'spare' bedroom?

If you have one 'spare' bedroom your housing benefit will be cut by 14% of the rent you pay every week. If you have two or more spare bedrooms, you will lose 25%.

If your benefit is cut you will have to pay your landlord the difference between your housing benefit and your rent.

**Mr and Mrs Smith** live in a two-bedroom flat costing £70 per week in rent. At the moment housing benefit covers the full cost of their rent. Under the new rules they will have one spare bedroom. **Their housing benefit will be reduced by 14% of their rent (14% of £70 = £9.80) Their housing benefit will be reduced by £9.80 to £60.20 per week. They will have to pay £9.80 per week towards their rent.**



**Mr and Mrs Bell** live with their two teenage boys, aged 13 and 15, in a three bedroom house. Their rent is £100 per week and they receive £10 per week in housing benefit. Under the new rules their children will be expected to share a bedroom and so they will be treated as having one spare.

**Their housing benefit will be reduced by 14% of £100 (£14), and so they will lose all their housing benefit.**

## Limit on benefits

From April 2013, the overall amount of benefit you can receive will be capped.

The Government will add up how much money you get from a range of benefits, including: housing benefit, jobseeker's allowance, employment support allowance, child benefit, child tax credit and carer's allowance.

If the total comes to more than the maximum amount allowed your housing benefit payments will be reduced.

### The maximum amount of benefit you will be able to receive from April 2013 will be:

- ✓ £500 per week for single parents
- ✓ £500 per week for couples with or without children
- ✓ £350 per week for single people without children.

### This will not apply to you if:

- ✗ you get pension credit or working tax credit
- ✗ a member of your household is claiming disability living allowance, attendance allowance or the support element of employment support allowance.

## What should I do?

If you are worried about being able to afford to pay your rent from April 2013 you should ask for advice now. If you don't pay your rent you could lose your home, so talk to your landlord about different ways to pay. You can also:

- ✓ **Talk to your landlord** about transferring to a smaller home or taking in a lodger
- ✓ **Contact your council** to ask about extra financial help. Councils have a limited amount of money available to make discretionary payments towards housing costs. Your council may prioritise your claim if you have a disability and your house has been adapted.
- ✓ **Get in touch** with your local citizens advice bureau ([www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)) or other local advice agencies
- ✓ **Make sure** you are claiming all the benefits you can – for example, money to help with the costs of a disability
- ✓ **Try to find** some paid work to increase your income
- ✓ **Get more information** about the cap on benefits by calling the Government's information line on **0845 605 7064**.

## Do you have a disability and need overnight care?

If you are of working age, have a disability and need a 'spare' bedroom so that a carer can stay overnight you should contact your local council now so that staff can help you keep more of your housing benefit.

## Changes to council tax benefit

From April 2013, if you are of working age and claim council tax benefit, the amount of support you receive may be cut. This is because the Government is reducing the amount of money available and asking local councils to run their own schemes, which may vary from area to area. Contact your local council for details.

**If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet you can talk to your:**

- ✓ landlord
- ✓ local council
- ✓ citizens advice bureau
- ✓ local advice agency.

This leaflet has been produced by the National Housing Federation on behalf of housing associations in England.  
[www.housing.org.uk](http://www.housing.org.uk)

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# Agenda Item: 11

**Housing Review Board**

**6 September 2012**

**DB**



## **Devon Home Choice – Changes to Allocation Policy**

### **Summary**

This report sets out the outcome of the recent review of the Devon Home Choice Policy approved by the Devon Home Choice Board and takes into account the recently published revised guidance for local housing authorities on the allocation of accommodation. In March 2012 Members approved a draft response to the consultation on the draft statutory guidance on the allocation of accommodation. The key changes to the allocation of social housing are set out in the report for Members consideration. It is recommended that Members approve the changes to the Devon Home Choice Policy approved by the Devon Home Choice Board. A further review of the policy will be conducted by the Devon Home Choice Board in 12 months time.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to approve the Devon Home Choice Board decision that:

1. All downsizers are placed in band B.
2. Applicants who formerly served in the regular forces who would normally be placed in band D “no permanent home” are now to be placed in band C.
3. Applicants who need to move to larger accommodation to become foster carers or adopt should have their application placed in band B.
4. The policy on refusals contained in the current published policy document at paragraph 4.12 remains unchanged.

#### **a) Reasons for Recommendation**

Changes to the way social housing is allocated has involved changes to the Devon Home Choice policy that need to be considered by the Board.

#### **b) Alternative Options**

The recommendations follow the new guidance issued although there is scope for different interpretation.

#### **c) Risk Considerations**

None identified.

#### **d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

Any significant budgetary implications are included in the report.

### **Positive Impact Overall**

Affordable Homes.  
Safe Environment.  
Green Environment.  
Excellent Customer Service.  
Inspirational Council.  
Providing same service at less cost.

#### **e) Date for Review of Decision**

September 2013.

---

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced significant amendments to Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. The main policy changes impacting on the allocation of accommodation were to:
- Enable local authorities to determine which applicants do or do not qualify for an allocation of social housing.
  - Make it easier for social tenants to move by removing the constraints of Part 6 from those social tenants who apply to the housing authority for a transfer unless they have a reasonable preference.
  - Maintain the protection provided by the statutory reasonable preference criteria – ensuring that priority for social housing goes to those in greatest need.
- 1.2 The Government consulted local authorities on the new draft statutory guidance on allocations they were proposing to introduce following the enactment of the Localism Act in November 2011.
- 1.3 A report was presented to Members at their meeting on 8 March 2012 and Members approved the recommendations contained in Annex B to the report as well as the draft response to the consultation process.
- 1.4 Devon Home Choice is a partnership of ten local housing authorities in Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay and many Registered Providers (RP's). The Devon Home Choice Board has undertaken a review of the policy and considered the anticipated changes set out in the statutory guidance as well as the impact on both the policy and the partnership.
- 1.5 In June 2012 the Government published new statutory guidance on social housing allocations. This guidance is largely the same as that which the Government consulted on earlier this year. The key issues are set out below.

## **2. Issues and Recommendations**

- 2.1 The changes to the Devon Home Choice (DHC) policy agreed by the Devon Home Choice Board at their meeting on 13 July are generally in line with those that Members agreed on 8 March 2012. However, some decisions by the DHC Board need to be reconsidered and these are set out at paragraph 2.5 below. Members

are asked to consider these changes and agree the recommendations.

- 2.2 The Devon Home Choice policy sets out clearly which applicants do or do not qualify for an allocation of social housing. These are set out in paragraph 2.4 of the policy document. The DHC Board has recommended no change to the eligibility criteria.
- 2.3 The Localism Act and the statutory guidance provide that Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 does not apply to an allocation of accommodation by a housing authority to a tenant (a transfer) unless the tenant is considered to be within the reasonable preference groups. If the tenant requests a transfer where the authority is satisfied the tenant does not have a reasonable preference, the housing authority may set their own transfer policies. This issue was considered at the meeting on 8 March 2012. It was agreed that it was not necessary to treat non reasonable preference applicants who are tenants different from any other applicant as this would increase the administrative burden and reduce the transparency and understanding of the policy. It was also considered that the current policy is fair to all applicants and it is not necessary to treat some tenants differently.
- 2.4 Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 sets out the 'reasonable preference' that should be given to the following categories of people. These categories have not been changed by the statutory guidance.
- People who are homeless with the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need).
  - People who are owed a duty by the housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under s192(3).

***These two categories primarily relate to 'homeless people'***

- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions,
  - People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including relating to a disability, and
  - People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others).
- 2.5 In the report to Members on 8 March 2012 a number of recommendations were presented at Annex B to Agenda Item 10 and these were approved by the HRB. There are a number of issues that require to be reconsidered in light of the DHC Board decisions. These are:
- 2.5.1 Under occupation – the DHC Board agreed that all 'downsizing' applicants should be placed in band B. This was to maximise the number of tenants who wish to downsize before the Welfare Reforms come into effect where tenants under occupying will lose benefit entitlement. At the meeting on 8 March Members agreed the recommendation to maintain separate priority for those downsizing by one bedroom (band C) and those downsizing by two or more bedrooms (band B). It is recommended that we approve the DHC Board decision that all downsizers are placed in Band B.

### 2.5.2 Additional preference groups and priority – Armed Forces.

The statutory guidance has confirmed our agreed approach to applicants who are members of the armed forces or former service personnel and not disqualifying them on the ground that they lack ‘local connection’. The DHC Board has agreed to remove the need for armed forces personnel to meet the local connection criteria to qualify for an offer of accommodation. The Government also asked that authorities consider whether any additional priority should be given to persons who formerly served in the regular forces and who have an urgent housing need. The DHC Board has agreed that applicants who formerly served in the regular forces who would normally be placed in band D “no permanent home” are now to be placed in band C. It is recommended that we adopt this approach.

### 2.5.3 Additional preference groups and priority – other groups.

The DHC Board agreed that applicants who become foster carers or adopt should receive additional priority if they require to move to a larger property to enable this to happen and are supported by social services. These applicants will be placed in band B. It is recommended we agree to this proposal.

2.5.4 The current DHC policy does allow the Council to ‘review’ an applicant who refuses a number of homes that they have bid for and been offered. If it is found that they continue to refuse what are considered to be suitable homes they will have their priority reduced to the No housing need band (Band E). The key issue is refusal of a ‘number’ of homes. At the meeting on 8 March 2012 Members asked that **any** refusal on ‘unreasonable’ grounds should result in the applicant being placed in band E. This was not supported by DHC Board and the existing policy will remain in operation. Members are asked to agree to this approach.

## 3. Revised Devon Home Choice Policy

- 3.1 A revised Devon Home Choice policy document incorporating the agreed changes is at **Annex A**. Members are asked to approve the revised DHC Policy on allocating social housing in East Devon.

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### Legal Implications

The policy changes are in line with current Housing Allocations law and require no comment.

### Financial Implications

There are no identifiable financial implications.

### Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet

None.

### Background Papers

Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England, CLG, June 2012.

The Devon Home Choice Policy

## Agenda Item: 12

**Housing Review Board**

**6 September 2012**

**PL**



### **Development Statement for increasing Council housing stock**

#### **Summary**

This report intends to advise Housing Review Board (HRB) members of how we propose to continue to increase the Councils housing stock through new build, and acquisition of homes and obtain Board support for the proposed approach.

This is our first attempt at producing a Development Statement and it is likely to evolve over time as our experience as a developer of affordable housing expands.

#### **Recommendation**

That the Development Statement be adopted and used as the basis of securing more Council homes through acquisitions and new build.

#### **a) Reasons for Recommendation**

To enable the continued development or acquisition of suitable property to add the Councils housing stock and to help meet the affordable housing need in East Devon.

#### **b) Alternative Options**

Not to increase Council Housing stock and operate a development programme.

#### **c) Risk Considerations**

Diminished HRA surplus due to higher than predicted Right to Buy purchases. Sudden increase in borrowing rates. Unknown Force Majeure events that effect HRA income. Developers and Construction Company's going bust.

#### **d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

These are explained in the report. New build and acquisitions will be funded by Housing Revenue Account surpluses, borrowing, commuted sums, Right to Buy receipts, Homes and Communities Agency grant or any combination of these sources of finance.

#### **e) Date for Review of Decision**

An annual review of activity and financing is proposed.



## 1 Background

- 1.1 Following on from the successful completion of 17 new Council Homes in 2011 and the proposed purchase of 11 new houses in Axminster this year. Our appetite for development has continued to grow. This approach is consistent with our new Homes and Communities Plan and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, which includes increasing the amount of affordable housing. We estimate that in the future we will have the resources to run a modest development programme as well as maintaining existing Council homes in good condition.
- 1.2 We are qualified to develop as a Homes and Communities Agency Investment Partner and we are currently a member of Partnership South West a Registered Provider development consortium.
- 1.3 The attached development statement intends to outline and form the basis of this endeavour. The proposed 'Virtual Housing Development Team' will use the intended outcomes of this report to secure funding to work up potential schemes and be able to make quick decisions on other development or acquisition opportunities as and when they arise. (Development Statement for increasing Council housing stock attached **Annex 1**).
- 1.4 If we are to continue to build or purchase housing then some opportunities we respond to will inevitably prove to be abortive, but we need to be quick and responsive to the development and acquisition opportunities that arise if we are to meet our growth aspirations.

## 2. The Proposal

- 2.1 To use the development statement as a mechanism to secure funding from a number of sources that include the Housing Revenue Account borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board, surplus funds, Right to Buy receipts, and using commuted sums from Section 106 Agreements.
- 2.2 Other funding and development opportunities are mentioned within the Development Statement. We will always assess the financial viability of a project and consider how projected rental income might meet the development costs together with what, if any, subsidy is required by the scheme. A financial appraisal will be produced for every scheme prior to seeking approval to proceed.
- 2.3 To create a Virtual Housing Development Team with the autonomy to make decisions quickly, as and when circumstances dictate.
- 2.4 To set a Development budget subject to identifying an HRA surplus at the end of this financial year. This budget would facilitate the continued Council house building programme and or property acquisitions.
- 2.5 The development budget would include an 'at risk' pot that enables potential council own build schemes to be worked up to planning consent stage. These schemes would be almost 'shovel ready' subject to securing construction funding etc. This budget equates to approximately £50 / £80,000 per ten properties.
- 2.6 As well as the 'at risk' budget, a further budget of £500k / £1m is proposed to enable future council house



development. This may include building our own council homes, buying from a developer or from the open market. At this level it ensures that the Virtual Housing Development Team have a greater range of choice when deciding how to allocate these funds, and achieve best value for money. It is envisaged that this budget be added to year on year if not spent.

An example of this choice could be where £1.2m builds approximately ten council homes on our land, where as £850,000 could buy eleven homes direct from a developer using a planning requirement via a Section 106 Agreement.

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 Due to the Housing Revenue Account reform earlier this year we remain hopeful that a funding surplus will be identified so that a budget can be set ensuring the continued delivery of new council homes. The financial health of the Account will also give us the confidence to borrow up to our 'headroom' limit if necessary to finance new affordable housing.
- 3.2 If the Housing Review Board is minded to endorse this approach it should enable the Development Team to establish itself as a serious operator within the affordable housing sector in East Devon. It is expected that this desire to continue to provide new Council homes, alongside the more traditional route via a Registered Provider (Housing Association) will help to increase the overall numbers of affordable housing delivered in East Devon.

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications highlighted at this time on which to comment. Legal Services will continue to advise the development team as proposals for new schemes become firmed up.

### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications are contained within the report but the viability of the proposal is dependent on building sufficient HRA surpluses over and above the agreed minimum balance of £2.1m. The proposal is to identify a budget for the next financial year but the threat to the collection of rent income, and thus the HRA surplus, as a result of the Welfare Reform Act must be taken into account before committing further significant expenditure.

### **Consultation on Reports to the Executive**

None.

### **Background Papers**

- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- Homes and Communities Plan.
- Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy.

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Paul Lowe  
Housing Development and Enabling Officer  
9 September 2012

Housing Review Board



## Development Statement for increasing Council housing stock

### Introduction

The Homes and Communities Plan 2012, and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan has as its first aim to 'provide a range of affordable housing to meeting housing needs'. The development of new council homes and the building on suitable council owned land is incorporated within this aim.

This Development Statement **deals only with delivering more council owned housing stock.** Affordable housing provided by other means, such as by housing associations and other developers, is considered elsewhere. We are likely to refine and add to this development statement as our experience and knowledge grows.

It is important that any affordable housing is made available at a cost low enough for people to afford, taking into account local incomes and house prices. It should remain affordable for future eligible households.

Following on from the successful completion of 2 homes in 2009/10 followed by 17 new council homes in 2010/11, councillors and staff are keen to see the Council continue to add homes to the council's housing stock. This is particularly important in relation to the changes in the Right to Buy regulations which are likely to mean that the sale of existing council properties increases over the next few years.

We have set out below the desired outcomes, the possible options available for acquiring new council properties, the options for financing such acquisitions, the resources required and other matters to be considered.

### Desired outcomes

The Homes and Communities Plan 2012 sets an aspiration that we will deliver at least 100 new affordable homes per year. These will include both homes delivered by housing associations and other developers, as well as new council owned properties.

We anticipate that of these 10% will be council owned properties (approximately 10 per year) and that we will be able to at least replace the number of homes sold under the Right to Buy with new council owned stock. We have entered into an agreement with the Communities for Local Government to use Right to Buy receipts on the provision of affordable housing.

### Options available for building or acquiring new council housing:

1. Build our own properties, on our own land, using in house management expertise, and contracting out to builders.
2. Buy properties developed via a section 106 agreements directly from the developer or housing association.
3. Buy properties through a development consortium such as Partnership South West.
4. Buy back ex-council homes in areas of agreed high housing need, where Section 106 money is available (Exmouth, Honiton).

5. Buy individual open market properties to meet the housing need of specific tenants.
6. Consider land banking council owned land for future development.
7. Purchase land for future development.

#### **Options available for financing own build development**

1. Direct funding from the Housing Revenue Account
2. Borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board
3. Using commuted funds from Section 106 money (for this we will endeavour to keep the restrictions for use of the S106 money as broad as possible)
4. Sell housing assets such as garage sites, decommissioned properties, individual development sites, and ring fence the receipt for housing development
5. Allocating any receipts from Right to Buy sales, licence agreements etc are ring fenced for new housing
6. Building a number of properties and selling a percentage either as open market or affordable housing. Receipt for the sales of these properties could then fund further council own build development

#### **Resources available**

1. We have one full time Housing Enabling Officer, whose role also encompasses considerable work in liaising with local housing associations, other developers, planning and rural housing enablers.
2. The part time support of the Housing Projects Officer and the Senior Technical Officer (who has architectural expertise to bring to any council own build projects).
3. Management support from the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager, and the Head of Housing.

It should be remembered that running a council own build programme will require significant amount of staff time. It is estimated that the time involved to complete the council own build project 2010/11 came to approximately 780 man hours.

#### **Tenure of new council properties**

A rental income at the level of social rent is unlikely to be able to finance a council own build project unless there is a significant subsidy from the Housing Revenue Account or other grant funding.

Therefore we would expect to charge an intermediate rent for any new council housing. This would be rent below open market rent but above social housing rent, and would typically be 80% of Market Rents and be no higher than the applicable Local Housing Allowance.

We could also consider introducing a shared ownership model to some new properties, whereby the resident purchases part of the equity, the remaining staying with the Council and for which the Council charges rental income. Typically this would be between 2 and 3% of the un-owned equity.

The properties will be let through Devon Home Choice and in accordance with our Tenancy Policy and Strategy.

### **Larger scale redevelopment**

We will consider redevelopment of areas of council housing land that are under-utilised and where redevelopment would allow for the density of housing to be increased. The costs involved in re-housing, and compensating, existing tenants would need to be taken into account, especially as it is likely many of these tenants may be vulnerable.

### **Design and standards**

We will always look to procure new affordable housing that achieves the highest possible standards and achieves value for money. We will attempt to meet the Homes and Communities Agency design and quality standards relevant at the time of build/acquisition and report any variation.

Over time we will produce a detailed development brief for new build which sets out the Council's minimum requirements for homes, services, facilities, and environment.

We will use our own standard house type where appropriate. This will be refined over time and influenced by tenant's feedback.

### **Budget and decision making**

To be able to work up schemes to a 'development ready' stage will require up front, at risk costs. A budget to cover such work will allow schemes to be properly assessed and considered. It is estimated that a budget of £50-80K per 10 properties would be sufficient.

With the recent changes to the financing of Council Housing, and considering other potential funding sources, a yearly budget of approximately £1m would enable the delivery of 10 new council homes per annum.

It will be necessary to have a clear and swift decision making process, particularly with regard to any approaches to purchase ex-council or open market properties, or direct from a developer.

It is suggested that a virtual project team (The Housing Development Team) is set up to review the development of council own build projects bi-annually, or sooner should circumstance dictate. It is suggested that this is made up of: The Head of Housing, the Cabinet Member(s) for Housing and Sustainable Communities, the Chair of the Housing Review Board, the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager, the Development and Housing Enabling Officer, and a Council Tenant. Other Officers will be invited to contribute as and when required.

A financial appraisal and risk assessment will be undertaken in relation to each development/acquisition project. This will determine the level of funding required, the funding costs, and allow for management and maintenance, rent loss due to voids etc.

We will assume a 2% loss of rental income and standard rate of £1400 p.a. management and maintenance cost.

### **Virtual Housing Development Team (remit and responsibilities)**

The purpose of The Virtual Housing Development Team (VHDT) is to be able consider and make, if necessary, quick decisions about development opportunities and or house acquisition or other related matters. If we are going to be successful at increasing the Councils housing stock it will be necessary for the Team to become more commercially minded, and be able react to opportunities in a similar way to a developer.

The Team will report to the Housing Review Board on decisions made in relation to the development programme.

The VHDT will carefully consider all opportunities that arise, and be particularly mindful of the following;

- Does it represent 'value for money'?
- Is the opportunity financially viable?
- Consider how best to fund, this may be from the HRA surplus, external borrowing or using commuted sums etc
- Assess risk
- Ensure that any decisions are consistent with Homes and Communities Plan.
- All opportunities to increase the councils housing stock, whether it's building, buying from a developer or from the open market, will be considered against known costs / values.
- Carefully consider any impact on the Housing Review Account's Business Plan.

July 2012.

## Agenda Item: 13

Housing Review Board

6 September 2012

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### Equalities and Diversity Charter for Housing

#### Summary

This report reminds the Board of the importance of equalities and diversity in our housing activities and outlines the contents of a new Charter published by the Chartered Institute of Housing. We are working towards many of the principles contained in the Charter which represent good practice in the housing sector. I am therefore proposing that we 'sign up' and embrace the core commitments building them into our operational arrangements for service delivery.

#### Recommendation

To approve the content of the Equalities and Diversity Charter for Housing and authorise that we 'sign up' to formally adopt the Charter.

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

The core commitments represent good practice in the housing sector.

#### b) Alternative Options

Not to 'sign up' to the Charter and stick with our existing corporate and housing specific commitments.

#### c) Risk Considerations

Damage to our reputation if we fail to meet the requirements of the legislation on equalities or good practice.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

The policy position is explained in the report and there are no significant budgetary implications.

#### e) Date for Review of Decision

Annual review through the Annual Report to Tenants.

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## 1 Equalities and Diversity Charter for Housing

- 1.1 Some time ago we adopted a housing position on equalities that was consistent with our corporate policy, but went into more detail on specific housing activities. This position statement is on our website under Housing policies and procedures:

[http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/equality\\_and\\_diversity\\_commitments\\_for\\_housing-2.pdf](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/equality_and_diversity_commitments_for_housing-2.pdf)

- 1.2 The corporate equalities objectives have recently been updated and adopted to keep up with a changing national agenda, recent legislation and good practice on equalities.
- 1.3 In July the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) published an Equalities and Diversity Charter which includes eight core commitments. We have an invitation to 'sign up' to the Charter to signal our commitment to treating customers equally and welcoming diversity. These are practical and relevant considerations, many of which we already embrace.
- 1.4 The CIH Charter represents good practice in the housing sector and I would like the support of the Housing Review Board to 'sign up' to the commitments.
- 1.5 We need to ensure that the new commitments are cascaded throughout the Service, are understood and become part of our operational culture. This will be a task for Service managers who have championed equalities and diversity over recent years alongside improved customer awareness.

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications.

### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

None.

### **Background Papers**

- Equalities and Diversity Commitments for housing.
- EDDC Equalities and Diversity policy and objectives.

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John Golding  
Head of Housing

Housing Review Board  
6 September 2012





Annex 1



*Equality and diversity:  
CIH charter for housing*

**Learn with us. Improve with us. Influence with us | [www.cih.org](http://www.cih.org)**

# Equality and diversity: CIH charter for housing

The CIH equality and diversity charter is a flexible framework that helps you identify what outcomes a fair and accessible housing service can deliver.

Housing plays a fundamental role in everyone's life. Homes, and the communities in which they are located, directly influence access to key social and economic opportunities and affect wellbeing.

**Equality** means that the housing sector is striving for a better balance in opportunities, resources, and decision-making processes for staff, customers and communities. Being more aware of and proactive about the **diversity** of customers will ensure housing organisations provide the right services and meet the right needs and aspirations.

The charter includes a set of commitments which are underpinned by a range of outcomes – together, the commitments and outcomes provide a framework against which organisations can assess where they are now and where they aspire to be. The charter consists of 2 core elements:

- **Who we are:** inclusive leadership and organisational culture
- **Who we serve:** involved and empowered customers in the communities where we work

By signing up to this charter, you are making a public commitment to deliver a fair and accessible housing service which is clearly focused on outcomes for staff, tenants and communities.

There are 6 core principles underpinning the equality and diversity charter for housing:

1. Sign up is voluntary and based on self assessment
2. It has been developed using sector expertise
3. It is flexible and can be tailored to suit the outcomes that matter to you and your tenants
4. It is focused on outcomes, not processes
5. It drives sector led improvement
6. It complements existing frameworks or initiatives

# What are we signing up to?

## Who we are: inclusive leadership and organisational culture

Core commitment	We can demonstrate:
<b>Equality and diversity is driven from the top</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is strong leadership from our governing body, chief executive and management team endorsing a strategic commitment to equality and diversity across all nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation; and to supporting an understanding of the role of human rights in housing</li> </ul>
<b>Equality and diversity informs our business planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and diversity lies at the heart of our business planning process and informs our investment decisions, how we design and deliver value for money services, how we procure services; and how relationships with partners, suppliers, contractors, customers and communities are sustained</li> <li>• We undertake equality analyses which show how equality and diversity informs our business objectives and equality analyses are transparent, monitored, reported and acted upon</li> <li>• We are committed to on-going improvement in providing fair and accessible services to our existing customers and to future customers</li> </ul>
<b>Equality and diversity shapes our organisational culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and diversity informs recruitment and staff development - the staff we employ represent the communities we serve. Diversity is represented at all levels of the organisation and our staff in their diversity are satisfied with us</li> <li>• Our commitment to equality and diversity is public, clear and transparent – all language, imagery, policies, procedures and publicity are inclusive and representative of our diverse communities. Information is provided in alternative or accessible formats where this is required</li> <li>• Our organisation communicates a zero tolerance approach to discriminatory attitudes or practice from staff, partners, contractors, suppliers, customers and from</li> </ul>

	individuals in the communities in which we work
<b>Equality and diversity is supported through staff training, development and engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff at all levels are supported to gain appropriate knowledge and skills to deliver equal services to our staff and our customers in their diversity</li> <li>• Staff in their diversity have an opportunity to shape and influence the delivery of fair and accessible services</li> </ul>

**Who we serve: involved and empowered customers in the communities where we work**

<b>We know who our customers are</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We proactively use customer profiling to develop customer insight information to help us develop fair and accessible services</li> <li>• Staff and customers clearly understand how customer profiling can improve our organisation and where service improvements have been made – we will share our successes</li> <li>• We will develop our capacity to understand and respond to the housing needs and aspirations of migrants and new arrivals in the communities which we serve</li> <li>• We will develop our capacity to understand and respond to the housing needs and aspirations of future customers in their diversity</li> <li>• Customer insight information is regularly reviewed, monitored and refreshed and measured against our strategic plan and business objectives for equality and diversity</li> <li>• Customer profiling is informed by best practice, is undertaken confidentially and in line with the Data Protection Act 1998</li> </ul>
<b>We involve our customers in shaping and scrutinising services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We actively encourage and proactively seek the involvement of customers in their diversity across all nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, in the shaping and delivery of fair and accessible services</li> <li>• We provide structures, resources, training and capacity building opportunities for customers to enable them to contribute to delivery of fair and accessible services</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We effectively empower our tenants to scrutinise, monitor and review our services for equality and diversity - we provide our customers with regular, robust and appropriate information in accessible formats which have been agreed with them and customers are encouraged to challenge our performance in relation to equality and diversity. We will report to our customers on our progress</li> </ul>
<b>We represent the communities which we serve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We build visible links with local, diverse and representative community groups and community advocates to strengthen our relationships with the communities which we serve and to build trust</li> <li>• We work openly with partners and other service providers in the community to ensure that our services are representative and diverse and to ensure that the diverse customers which we serve are safe and secure in their homes and communities</li> </ul>
<b>We support the communities which we serve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with the communities which we serve and with community partners to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups within the communities which we serve</li> <li>• We will work with the communities which we serve and with community partners to eliminate discrimination, tackle harassment, hate incidents and hate crime and domestic violence</li> </ul>

# Signing up to the equality and diversity: CIH charter for housing

We recognise that the housing sector is diverse and that capacity, resources and priorities will vary from organisation to organisation. It is also really important that organisations have the space to innovate and be creative in their approach. As such, we recommend that you use the equality and diversity charter as a framework which can be built on and adapted to respond to individual and local circumstances. It is up to you and your tenants how you use the equality and diversity charter – to drive continued excellence or to act as a springboard for change - the key thing is that you deliver the right outcomes.

Organisations that sign up to the equality and diversity charter will benefit from the following:

1. **Sharing practice and learning from others:** CIH will support a free, open-access website and participating organisations will be invited to up-load short, practice examples which align to the charter principles which they will share with the wider sector. This reflects the principles of transparency and sector-wide shared-learning which underpins the charters.
2. **Joining our equality and diversity network:** organisations that sign up to the charter will join our free equality and diversity network where other charter signatories can share ideas, expertise and knowledge to drive improvements in equality and diversity across the housing sector.

To sign up to the **equality and diversity: CIH charter for housing** visit the webpage [www.cih.org/equalityanddiversitycharter](http://www.cih.org/equalityanddiversitycharter)

## Support and assistance

While this charter can be used as a self-assessment framework, CIH has a team of experts who can provide external assistance and critical challenge. More information on our services can be found at [www.cih.org/charters](http://www.cih.org/charters)

## Agenda Item: 14

Housing Review Board

6 September 2012

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### Housing Review Board Task and Finish Forum - Garages

#### Summary

This report sets out the outcome of the work of the Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) on Garages. The Council owns 751 garages that provide rental income of £430,000. We currently have in excess of 126 garages empty at a loss of £72,000 – 16% of total debit. Members, Tenants and Officers undertook site visits to most garage sites in East Devon and considered whether the garages should be retained or an alternative use be made of the site.

#### Recommendation

Members are asked :

1. To agree the recommendations contained in Annex A to the report.
2. To consider the issues at paragraph 2.2 and agree a way forward.

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

The TAFF has visited each garage site and considered the options available to either continue with garage provision or whether there is an alternative use for the site.

#### b) Alternative Options

Continue with garage provision and to accept a significant loss of income through empty garages

#### c) Risk Considerations

None identified.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

Any significant budgetary implications are included in the report.

#### Positive Impact Overall

Affordable Homes.  
Safe Environment.  
Green Environment.  
Excellent Customer Service.  
Inspirational Council.  
Providing same service at less cost.

## e) Date for Review of Decision

June 2012

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### 1 Background

- 1.1 Garage management is a key function in Housing. We own 751 garages that provide income in excess of £430,000. There has been a steady increase in the number of empty Council garages due mainly to the current economic situation. Many people have stated that cost is the reason for them ending their tenancy or declined the offer of a garage. The cost of a garage is currently £11 per week for a secure tenant and a private occupier must pay £11 plus VAT.
- 1.2 The HRB agreed to set up a Task and Finish Form (TAFF) to review the use of garages and to look at any alternative options the Council could consider.
- 1.3 The TAFF visited most garage sites on 13, 19 and 20 April 2012 and considered a detailed presentation by the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager on 15 June 2012.

### 2. Issues and Recommendations

- 2.1 The Garage TAFF considered the various opportunities available for alternative use of garage sites and the schedule at **Annex A** to this report sets out the recommendation for each garage site.
- 2.2 In addition a number of issues relating to use or management of garages were raised and discussed during the presentation on 15 June 2012. The Board is asked to consider these issues and agree a way forward.
  - 2.2.1 The problems of monitoring and enforcing garage tenancies, includes:
    - How was the agreement enforced to ensure that garages were only used for the purpose of parking a car, and not for storage?
    - If this was enforced, there was the potential for many more garages to become vacant.
    - Many modern cars do not fit into some of our older garages.
  - 2.2.2 The option of doubling the garage rent on an *ad hoc* basis when it was discovered that the tenant was using the garage for storage purposes (not for parking a car). This might include:
    - The option of doubling the garage rent for people living in one location and renting a garage in an entirely different location (and therefore using the garage for storage purposes).
    - The option of charging a small amount for spaces used for parking next to garages, as a revenue raiser.
    - To consider the opportunities on Council garage sites and other areas of Council owned land to mark out parking spaces and charge for permits to park in these. It was thought the increase in revenue from this would pay for the enforcement officers required.



- Whether garages should be sold immediately when their value was higher, or whether the Council should wait until repairs were required before selling them off (and retaining an income stream in the meantime).
- 2.3 A report outlining the issues and options for consideration and recommendations is at Annex A. Members are asked to consider the options and approve the recommendations.
- 2.4 The following general analysis of the schedule at Annex A may help Members to focus on the key decisions to be made. There are 83 blocks (locations) of garages with a total of 751 garages. The recommendations can be grouped into three main categories:
- 2.2.1 Garages to be retained – usually in satisfactory or good condition that have or have no development potential that can be an alternative consideration when major repairs are required. This relates to the majority of the recommendations at Annex A.
- 2.2.2 Garage sites that should be developed now or in the foreseeable future. These are:
- a. Elizabeth Way Seaton
  - b. Summersby Close Seaton
  - c. Courtnay Drive Colyton
  - d. Plymtree
  - e. Payhembury
  - f. Prestor Axminster
  - g. Millwey, Axminster (A, B and C blocks)
  - h. George Street Honiton
- 2.2.3 Garage sites that should be sold on the open market. These are:
- a. Peazen Flats Beer
  - b. Eyewell Green Seaton
  - c. Coombe Orchard Axmouth
  - d. Higher Doatshayne, Musbury
  - e. Lashbrook Talaton
  - f. Fairview Honiton (large block)
  - g. Charles Road Honiton
  - h. Turner Close Newton Poppleford (2 x small blocks)
  - j. Moorhaven, Budleigh Salterton
  - k. Churchill Road Exmouth
  - l. Salters Meadow Sidmouth (2 x small blocks)
  - m. Farway
- 2.5 Our garages are an asset providing in excess of £430,000 income. However, some of the garage sites are in poor condition and will require considerable investment now or in the short term to continue use as garages. It is recommended that when blocks of garages require major repairs or refurbishment that the garage sites should be reviewed by Officers to consider and implement the recommended action at Annex A.

- 2.6 An annual review of the recommendations at Annex A should be reported to Members.

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### **Legal Implications**

The garages are built on housing land and will therefore require the necessary formal procedures under ss32-34 of the Housing Act 1985. S123 Local Government Act 1972 will also need to be considered. Legal Services to be consulted as and when disposal is sought.

### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications are not quantifiable at this stage. Retained garages will continue to provide rent income but will have to be maintained. Garages that are sold will provide capital receipts which can be used to fund capital expenditure but will mean a loss of revenue but also a reduction in maintenance costs. Garages to be developed will also mean a loss of rent income and maintenance costs but expenditure may be necessary to realise the development.

### **Consultation on Reports to the Cabinet**

None.

### **Background Papers**

- TaFF agenda and associated papers.

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Dennis Boobier  
Housing Needs and Strategy Manager

Housing Review Board  
6 September 2012

**GARAGE TASK AND FINISH FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Annex A**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of garages (total)</b>	<b>Number of vacant garages</b>	<b>Is the garage easily accessible</b>	<b>What is the condition of the garage</b>	<b>Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose</b>	<b>Any other information</b>	<b>Action points</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Branscombe</b>	12 (7 private lets)	1	Yes	Good condition Recently painted	Yes – possible development opportunity	These garages were well used		Possible development opportunity Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider development opportunity
<b>Beer – Peazen Flats</b>	1	0	Yes	Poor	Development possibly for flats at end of Peazen flats, depending on ownership of No. 15 Peazen flats.	Currently let to tenant in Peazen Flats	Check the ownership of No. 15 Peazen Flats	Possible development opportunity. If no development opportunity sell garage on open market.

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Beer – Underleys Block A</b>	10 (4 private lets)	2	Yes	Reasonable condition	Yes	Additional land to side of Block A could be added to development opportunity		Possible development opportunity Retain as garages Consider development when major repairs required.
<b>Beer – Underleys Block B</b>	14 (10 private lets)	2	Yes	Reasonable condition Narrow	Large amount of land	Ideal place for housing Adjacent to Pecorama	Check Pecorama right of way and the surrounding ownership of the land	Possible development opportunity Retain as garages. Consider development when major repairs required.
<b>Seaton – Homer Lane</b>	4 (2 private lets)	0	Yes	Satisfactory	Possible development opportunity	Parking was an issue in the area and the garages were on a bend (off the road)		Retain as garages. Consider development opportunity or sale of garages when major repairs required

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Seaton – Elizabeth Way</b>	8 (inc 5 private)	0	Yes	Poor condition – need major repairs/ replacement	Good development opportunity	Adjacent to play park owned by Seaton Town Council – maybe possible to acquire some additional land		Develop this site. Consider opportunity to use adjacent ‘sold’ bungalow as part of development area. Consider use of part of adjacent playground land
<b>Seaton – Eyewell Green</b>	4 (2 blocks of 2) (all private lets)	1 privately owned	Yes	Poor	No development potential	Majority of houses were privately owned		Sell on open market.
<b>Seaton – Harepath Road</b>	23 (15 private lets)	5	Yes	Poor condition – both garages and access road	Possible development potential  Large area of land in total, as well as a parking area at the end of the road (Powell Close)	Lot of complaints received from neighbouring sheltered housing bungalows	Check usage of garages - one appears to be used for business purposes  Check ownership of adjacent houses  Check access at far end	Retain garages until major repairs required and then consider development opportunity  If development not possible, demolish garages (when major repairs required) and create parking spaces.

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
							<p>Check permission for parking in end of rear gardens</p> <p>Clear dumped lawnmower at side of block</p>	<p>Mark off the area currently being used for car parking and offer permits to local residents.</p>
<b>Seaton – Summersby</b>	23 - 2 blocks (13 private let)	5	Yes	Poor condition	<p>Possible development opportunity</p> <p>Possible use of adjacent land owned by DCHA.</p>	Demolish one garage block and develop a similar block of Summersby flats		<p>Possible development opportunity</p> <p>Demolish one garage block near Flats 15-20 and build similar block of flats to existing using part of adjacent land owned by DCHA.</p> <p>Consider using other garage block in Summersby Close as part of development. Alternatively retain as garages until major repair required – consider demolition and providing parking.</p>

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Seaton – Powell Close</b>			Yes	Poor condition	Yes		Clear debris at the side of the garages	Retain as garages Consider demolition when major repairs required and provide parking spaces.
<b>Axmouth – Coombe Orchard</b>	2 (1 private let)	0	Yes	Poor	No although small parcel of land on site leased by tenant of garage No. 2.	Sell the 2 garages and adjacent land on the open market - tenant of garage No2 has already enquired about possible purchase.		Sell garages and land on the open market.
<b>Musbury – Northfield garages</b>	10 (3 private lets)	5	Yes	Satisfactory	Large site with development opportunity	Speak to the owner of the one privately owned garage.		Possible development opportunity. Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider development of site for housing
<b>Musbury – Higher Doatshayne</b>	2 (2 private lets)	0	Yes	Poor condition	No development opportunity			Sell garages on open market

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Coly Vale, Colyton</b>	2 (both private lets)	0	Yes	Good condition	No development potential	Consider the wider parking issue in the area		Retain as garages until major repairs required and then sell on open market, or sell on open market now
<b>Colyton – Courtney Drive</b>	16 (inc 5 private lets)	2	Yes	Poor condition	Good development opportunity – large area of land	Favourable development site EDDC also own the properties adjacent to the site.	(Cllr Knight – interest) Clear the area behind the garages	Development opportunity Garages require major repairs now therefore develop site for housing
<b>Gittisham</b>	4 (inc 2 private lets)	1 privately owned	Yes (over a small stream)	Good	Possible development opportunity	Land to the side and behind the garages had been cultivated for a number of years	Consider giving notice to residents cultivating land around garage site in Council ownership	Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider options.
<b>Feniton – St Andrews Close</b>	13 (2 blocks) (inc 7 private lets)	2 & 1 privately owned	Yes	Poor condition	Possible development opportunity	Possibly develop one block		Consider leaving until garages require major works



Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Talaton - Lashbrook</b>	4 (2 blocks) (1 private let)	1 privately owned	Narrow	Poor	No		(Victor Kemp – interest) Check land ownership of huge green area at front of Lees Meadows	Sell garages on open market
<b>Plymtree</b>	4	2	Yes	Satisfactory	Possible development opportunity	Ideal site for affordable homes		Development opportunity Consider use of adjoining tenanted property to create larger site.
<b>Payhembury</b>	12 (inc 4 private lets)	5	Yes	Poor condition	Good development potential – large site - garages and adjacent land	Massive site for future development	EDDC to negotiate with owner of property No. 4 who would like to know if EDDC were interested in buying back his property.	Development opportunity Use adjacent Council owned land

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Axminster – Ridgeway Court</b>	16 (inc 7 private lets)	3	Yes	Satisfactory	Large area of land Good development opportunity	Retain – good income stream		Retain as garages Leave as garages until major repair required and then develop for housing
<b>Axminster – Foxhill Block A</b>	9 (inc 6 private lets)	0	Yes	Satisfactory	Yes	Potential development site		Retain as garages Leave until major repair works required and then consider development opportunity
<b>Axminster – Foxhill Block B</b>	16 (inc 13 private lets)	1	Yes	Satisfactory	Large area Potential development site	Line out the area to allocate parking spaces		Retain as garages Leave until major repair works required and then consider development opportunity
<b>Axminster – Prestor</b>	3 (inc 2 private lets)	0	Yes	Good condition	Potential development opportunity using large area of land to rear.			Retain as garages Progress development opportunity

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Axminster – Poplar Mount</b>	6 (inc 4 private lets)	0	Yes	Satisfactory condition	In an EDDC car park No development opportunity	Retain No development options	Note – roots of tree are lifting the tarmac, next to Calam House in the corner of the car park	Retain as garages Leave until major repairs required and then consider demolition and providing additional car parking spaces to add to existing car park – possible income
<b>Axminster – Millwey Block D</b>	12 (inc 2 private lets)	3	Yes	Satisfactory	Good development potential	Option across Millwey to relocate garage tenants to other blocks if demolishing a block		Retain as garages Consider develop opportunity when garages require major repairs
<b>Axminster – Millwey Blocks E, F &amp; K</b>	18 (inc 4 private lets)	5	Yes	Satisfactory	Large site Some potential development opportunity using allotment land and land to rear of allotments.	Electricity substation between blocks E & F Near the community centre. This needs replacing in the short term.		Retain as garages Consider develop opportunity when garages require major repairs.

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Axminser – Millwey Block J (Bonners Causeway)</b>	22 (inc 5 private lets)	11	Yes	Good	Possible small development site	Some garages previously sold to facilitate housing development (11) at Bonners Glen.	Promote garage occupancy	Retain as garages, Revisit if the balance of let garages falls below the number of unlet garages. Future development potential.
<b>Axminser – Millwey Block H (St Davids Drive)</b>	12 (inc 2 private lets)	4	Yes	Satisfactory	Large amount of land surrounding the garages  Possible development potential.	Could do an L shaped development if the end of the nearby properties gardens' were reclaimed	Investigate the poor condition of the outhouse at 11 St Davids	Retain as garages  Consider development opportunity using Council properties at 11 and 12 St Davids Drive to form large site.
<b>Axminser – Millwey Blocks A, B &amp; C</b>	30 (inc 11 private lets)	9	Yes	Poor condition	Good development potential  Huge amount of EDDC scrub land to the side  Could create a small estate	Existing access not adequate for any development.  Option of redevelopment , although there were 2 privately owned houses	Check garden boundary line behind block B garages  Garage 5C is full of old rotting furniture	Progress development opportunity using adjacent land and surrounding Council owned properties and private homes where possible.

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
						in the middle of the potential development site		
<b>Waggs Plot</b>	6 (inc 1 private let)	3	Yes	Satisfactory	Yes	Good development potential		Retain as garages Consider development opportunity when major repairs required
<b>Uplyme – Cooks Mead</b>	6 (inc 3 private)	1	Yes	Satisfactory	Limited development potential	Consider leaving as let garages or consider selling on open market	Garden rubbish is being dumped behind the garage block	Retain as garages Consider sale of garages on the open market when vacant
<b>Dalwood</b>	1	0	Yes	Good	No development opportunity	The other 2 garages were sold off and turned into the shop. The one remaining is adjacent to the community shop.	Check usage of the garage. UPVC windows in the side Check ownership of the shop building itself.	Retain as garage Consider sale when vacant or requires major repairs

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Wilmington - Whitefields</b>	12 (inc 1 private let)	2	Yes	Good condition	Yes. Big site Good development potential	Good site for future affordable housing development, if sufficient village demand.		Retain as garages Consider development opportunity when major repairs required
<b>Honiton – Whitebridges 1-49</b>	49 (inc 18 private)	15	Yes	Good	Possible site behind (and including) block 9-13	Possible development opportunity – will need to develop whole site.		Retain as garages until such time as major repairs require then consider development opportunity
<b>Honiton – Whitebridges 50-59</b>	10 (inc 6 private lets)	0	Yes	Good	Yes	Possible future development site		Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider development opportunity
<b>Honiton – Whitebridges 60-66</b>	7	2	Yes	Good	Yes	Possible future development site		Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider development opportunity

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Honiton – Whitebridges 67-70</b>	4	1	Yes	Good	Yes	Possible future development site		Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider development opportunity
<b>Honiton – Whitebridges 71 - 74</b>	4	0	Yes	Good	Yes	Possible future development site		Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider development opportunity
<b>Honiton – Whitebridges 75-85</b>	11	1	Yes	Good	No	No development options		Retain as garages No development potential.
<b>Honiton – Studley House</b>	8 (inc 3 private lets)	3	Yes	Good	No	No development opportunity		Retain as garages No development potential.
<b>Honiton – Kendall House</b>	12 (inc 1 private)	3	Yes	Good	Yes No development opportunity	Consider linking the garages to the flats when the opportunity arises	Car parking problem	Retain as garages Consult tenants to obtain a clear view of whether they want garages linked to the flats their view on car

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
						Consider limiting access to site to tenants only		parking problems.
<b>Honiton – Fair View</b>	14 (inc 7 private lets)	2 (1 in each block)		1 – 9 poor condition 11 – 14 good condition	No development opportunity			Retain garages 11-14. Sell garages 1-9 on the open market No development opportunity
<b>Honiton – Jerrard Close</b>	7 (inc 3 private lets)	0		Poor condition	Limited development potential			Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider development opportunity or sale on open market
<b>Honiton – Westcott Way</b>	12 (inc 1 private let)	0		Good condition	No development potential	Lots of parking. EDDC should be charging for spaces		Retain as garages
<b>Honiton – Langford Avenue</b>	33 – 3 blocks (inc 20 private lets)	0		Good condition	No development opportunity at two small blocks			Retain garages until major repairs required and then consider sale on open market of the



Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
					Possible development potential at larger block			small blocks Consider development opportunity for large site opposite Charles Road on Clapper Lane.
<b>Honiton – Lee Close</b>	10 (inc 7 private lets)	1	Yes	Good condition	Large area for parking could be used for housing	Garages were under the flats, therefore no development opportunity Garages not linked to the flat tenancies	Garage No. 2 is full of junk Garage No. 3 has an electricity cable going into it from the flat above	Retain as garages
<b>Honiton – Charles Road</b>	5 (inc 3 private lets)	1		Poor condition	No development opportunity			Consider sale on open market
<b>Honiton – George Street</b>	6 (inc 4 private lets)	2	Yes	Poor condition	Large grassed area to the side of the block	Good development potential		Progress development opportunity

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Honiton – Northcote Lane</b>	12 (inc 4 private lets)	0	Yes	Good condition	Large area	Good development potential		Retain as garages Consider development opportunity when major repairs required
<b>Honiton – Phillips Square</b>	25 (inc 11 private lets)	1	Yes	Good condition	Possible development potential Consider removing walls at entrance end of garages and providing parking bays	Potential future development at the bottom end EDDC should line out the area and charge for parking in the future		Retain as garages until major repairs required then consider development opportunity
<b>Honiton – Joslin Road</b>	9 (inc 6 private lets)	0	Yes	Good condition	Good development potential	Consider use of car parking area on opposite side of road adjacent to play area		Retain as garages Consider development opportunity when major repairs required
<b>Ottery St Mary – Yonder Close</b>	14 (inc 10 private lets)	0	No Very poor turning area	Good condition	Limited development potential	Long narrow strip of land adjacent to an electricity sub station		Retain as garages

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Ottery St Mary – Long Dogs Close</b>	11	1	Very narrow Hard to turn	Good condition	Land behind garage block, but ownership not known	Possible development potential	Check land ownership behind the garage block	Retain as garages
<b>Ottery St Mary – Church View</b>	5	1	Yes	Good	Yes	Large number of electricity poles and cables which would make development difficult		Retain as garages
<b>Newton Poppleford – Turner Close</b>	13 3 x blocks	0	Yes – at the bottom of a hill	Good condition		No development opportunity		Retain main block as garages Sell 2 x smaller blocks on open market when vacant
<b>Newton Poppleford – Hillside</b>	5 (3 private lets)	1	Yes	Good condition	Large area – lot of ‘free parking’ behind	Potential development site		Retain as garages Consider development opportunity when major repairs required

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of garages (total)</b>	<b>Number of vacant garages</b>	<b>Is the garage easily accessible</b>	<b>What is the condition of the garage</b>	<b>Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose</b>	<b>Any other information</b>	<b>Action points</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Otterton – Ropers Court</b>	6 (3 private lets)	1	Yes	Good condition	No	Possible development potential		Retain as garages until major works required then consider development opportunity
<b>Budleigh Salterton – Moorhaven</b>	1 (private let)	0	Yes	Satisfactory condition	No development opportunity	Link the single garage to the sheltered housing property adjacent to it in the future		Sell on the open market
<b>Budleigh Salterton – Greenhaven</b>	6 (4 private lets)	1	Yes	Satisfactory condition	No development opportunity	Line out the area outside Moorhaven flats to allocate parking spaces and raise revenue		Retain as garages until major repair required then consider demolition and providing parking spaces
<b>Exmouth – Churchill Road</b>	4 (3 privately owned)	1	Yes	Satisfactory condition	No development potential	Sell the remaining garage on the open market		Sell garage on open market

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Exmouth – Brooklyn Park</b>	16 (11 private lets)	2	Yes	Good	Possible development potential	Large privately built garage at the end of the block limits options	Clear debris at side of garage No. 11	Retain garages until major repair required then consider development opportunity
<b>Exmouth – Moorfield Road</b>	12 (5 private lets)	1	Yes, although would be poor access for development purposes	Good	Large area Possible development potential, but access difficult	Keep as a revenue raiser	Check ownership of the tarmac area (with campervan on it) behind the garage block.	Retain as garages
<b>Exmouth – The Green</b>	7 (3 private lets)	1	Yes	Satisfactory condition	No. Adjacent to the old railway line and an electricity sub station	No development potential	Check occupancy of garage No. 7	Retain as garages Consider demolition when major repairs required
<b>Exmouth – Capel Lane</b>	12 (5 private lets)	1	Yes	Good condition	Possible development potential	2 garage blocks on the site, but one is EDDC and the	Check ownership of the garages in Mountain	Retain garages until major repairs required and then consider

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
						other is privately owned (with right of way on land)	Close	development opportunity
<b>Exmouth – Summer Close</b>	7 (inc 3 private lets)	0	Very poor access to garages	Satisfactory condition	No	No development options due to poor access Retain as a revenue raiser		Retain as garages Consider sale on open market when major repairs required or demolition.
<b>Lympstone – Glebe Close</b>	18 (inc 10 private lets)	3	Yes	Poor condition	Large L shaped site Development potential	High density housing area Most properties privately owned Possible future development		Retain as garages Progress development opportunity when possible.
<b>Woodbury - Govetts</b>	5 (all privately let)	0	Yes	Good condition	No development opportunity	Retain		Retain as garages
<b>Woodbury – Park Close</b>	1	0	Yes	Good	No development opportunity	Single garage rented by resident mobile support officer		Retain as garage or possibly sell on open market, or link the garage to the

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								adjacent bungalow when the bungalow becomes vacant
<b>Sidmouth – Orchard Close</b>	14 (2 blocks) (6 private lets)	1	Yes	Good	Yes Possible development opportunity	Retain as a revenue raiser		Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider options
<b>Sidmouth – Salters Meadow</b>	5 – 1 individual + 2 blocks of 2 (1 private let)	2	Yes	Poor condition of 2 blocks and good condition of 1 block	No development opportunity			Retain block of two garages on end of row of properties Sell remaining garages on open market
<b>Seaton - Elizabeth Road</b>	3 (all private lets)	0	Yes	Good	Possible development opportunity			Retain as garages
<b>Axmouth – Hawkesdown Close</b>	3 (all private lets)	0	Yes	Good	Possible small development site			Retain as garages until major repairs required and then sell on open market

Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
<b>Colyton – St Andrews Orchard</b>	5 (inc 1 private let)	0	Yes	Good		Car parking issues – resolution to problem being progressed		Retain as garages
<b>Shute – Bakers Mead</b>	4 (2 private lets)	2	Yes	Satisfactory	Possible development potential	Small site, limited		Retain as garages Sell on open market when major repairs required
<b>Luppit garages</b>	7 (inc 2 private lets)	0	Yes	Poor	Possible development potential	Plenty of parking outside housing – off road		Retain as garages until major repairs required and then consider options
<b>Farway garages</b>	2	0		Poor	No development potential			Sell on open market
<b>Sidmouth – Tyrell Mead</b>	1	N/A	Yes	Poor	No development potential	All garages in block sold privately apart from 1, which is in great demand. EDDC still own the site and have responsibility for the	Test the sale of the land (freehold of the site) on the open market. Test the value of the 1 remaining garage on the open market.	Retain the garage for the time being due to the demand for it, but test the market for the sale of the site and the 1 garage.



Location	Number of garages (total)	Number of vacant garages	Is the garage easily accessible	What is the condition of the garage	Is there nearby Council land that can be used for development purpose	Any other information	Action points	Recommendations
						maintenance of the site.		
<b>Sidmouth – Lymebourne Park</b>	1 (unlet)	1	Yes	Bottom part of garage is poor (wooden and rotting)	No development potential			Demolish and provide 2 residents' parking spaces.
<b>Sidmouth – Lower Brook Meadow</b>	8 (inc 3 private)	0	Yes	Good	No development potential	Underneath flats.		Retain as garages

### **Item: 15**

#### Exclusion of the Public

The Vice-Chairman of the Committee to move the following:-

“that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description(s) set out on the agenda is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing these items in private session (Part B)”.