

Service Area Plan 2018/19

Part 1 - Service Information/links to policy

Part 2 – Managing Service Delivery

Part 3 – Managing and Improving People

Part 4 – Budget

Part 5 – Managing Planned Changes/Projects

Service Area :	Housing Services
Service Area Manager:	Lisa Barker
Deputy Chief Executive:	Bill Hunt
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Peter Phillips

1 Purpose of the Services Provided

To provide effective, value for money, customer-focussed housing services by:

- Helping people to find and maintain housing appropriate to their needs by providing housing advice and homelessness services
- Managing the HomeChoice scheme on behalf of all affordable housing providers operating within the district.
- Improving standards within the private rented sector by licensing Homes in Multiple Occupation, undertaking Housing Health & Safety Rating System inspections and taking enforcement action if appropriate.
- Providing people-based services, tailored to reflect individual needs, that allow council tenants and leaseholders to thrive and participate in their community and succeed to the best of their abilities.
- To provide effective management of our council housing stock including tenancy enforcement, rent collection and estate management.
- Supporting people to live independently by providing high quality sheltered and supported housing, Lifeline services, Disabled Facility Grants, an aids and adaptation service for council homes, affordable warmth and financial inclusion advice.
- Maintaining a financially viable Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to ensure the provision of a high quality council housing service through timely collection of income, value for money deployment of management resources and prudent management of costs.
- To ensure that the housing stock is maintained to a satisfactory standard, meets appropriate safety requirements and improvements are made to ensure compliance with decent homes standard.
- Supporting the creation of stable, inclusive communities by managing an effective Housing Strategy for the district.
- Encouraging the development of affordable housing across the district through effective use of s106 funding, deployment of commuted sums and exploration of options to increase the level of council housing to offset Right to Buy sales.
- Supporting the delivery of key corporate projects or studies.

1.1 Linkages to Fit For the Future Strategy

External	Direct	Indirect
Service (Green, Clean and Safe)	Maintaining our homes to a good standard of energy efficiency across the district	
People (Health, Homes and Communities)	Providing tenants with good housing across the district	Enabling the development of affordable housing for sale and to rent
Money (Infrastructure, Enterprise and Employment)	Provide money advice to council tenants and ensure that the majority of homes are let at social rents thereby enabling tenants to gain employment	

Internal	Direct	Indirect
Service (Maintain or Improve Services)	Direct delivery of housing and estate management services, working with contractors to improve services to tenants	Work with a range of partners across statutory and voluntary sector agencies to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping
People (Effective Staff)	Ongoing training of staff to provide them with the skills to carry out their roles.	
Money (Firm Financial Footing over Long Term)	Regularly review the Housing Revenue account business plan	

2 Managing Service Delivery

2.1 Service Overview

Service Being Delivered	Priorities (with Justification)	Service Demand/Service Requests
<p>Sustaining Tenancies Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring options to maximise the delivery of affordable housing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Working with developers to effectively use resources made available through s106 planning obligations or CIL contributions. o Taking advantage of any public funded investment made available by the Homes and Communities Agency or other Government funding streams. o Explore the potential of development sites, both publically and privately owned which can be used to deliver affordable housing for rent, shared ownership or sale. o Purchasing shared ownership properties e.g. Sayer court , Great Field Drive, Cloister Way, as opportunities present themselves. o Buying properties in the open market. • Providing high quality Council homes by regularly reviewing the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan to ensure the Council can continue to effectively manage and maintain its landlord function and continue to make a proactive contribution to the provision of a range of housing options for the district. • Providing an effective financial inclusion support service for Council tenants. • Contributing to the 'Breathing Space' project, operated in partnership with other housing associations providing homes in the district, to support residents who are struggling financially by offering money advice and signposting services and referrals to Job Clubs. • Letting the majority of Council owned homes on social rents. 	<p>240 affordable homes completions 1/4/2017 to 31/12/2017</p> <p>15 WDC Shared Ownership properties</p> <p>163 financial inclusion referrals 1/4/2017 to 31/12/2017</p>

- We reduce anti-social behaviour by having the Tenancy Enforcement Officers work alongside the Community Safety Team therefore sharing capacity and skills.
- Ensuring effective engagement with the county-wide safeguarding structures.
- Training staff to recognise potential safeguarding issues, incidents of domestic violence and equipping them to make effective referrals to ensure appropriate action is taken.
- Working to reduce the distress and ill-health that can be caused by the loss of a home by carrying out regular routine tenancy visits to all WDC tenants to help make sure that people get the right support to sustain their tenancy and allowing potential problems to be identified early and solutions deployed to maintain pleasant neighbourhoods and well-kept homes.
- Maintaining and improving the Council's 24/7 Lifeline service which currently has over 3,000 users.
- Ensuring our sheltered housing schemes maximise the opportunity for older people to maintain their independence, by providing social activities that improve residents' mental and social wellbeing.
- Engaging with tenants and leaseholders through a variety of approaches.
- Ensuring tenants are represented on the Housing Advisory Group which assists in the development of housing policy and practice.
- Direct provision of council homes at social rents in a district with an unbalanced housing market and high costs of private sector renting or home purchase.

999 Tenancy Update
Visits 1/4/2017 to
31/12/2017

Service Being Delivered	Priorities (with Justification)	Service Demand/Service Requests
Housing Strategy & Development Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and delivering financial inclusion strategies. • Hosting the Warwick District Priority Families Programme officer. • Direct provision of affordable council homes in many villages across the district. • Helping people to find, maintain and enjoy a secure home by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Deploying effective homelessness prevention strategies and providing support for those threatened by homelessness at an early stage. o Providing high quality temporary accommodation for anyone whose homelessness cannot be prevented with as little use of bed and breakfast accommodation as possible. o Operating the HomeChoice scheme to ensure affordable housing is allocated in a fair and transparent way. o Helping council tenants to sustain their tenancies by providing advice and tailored people-focussed services that equip people to develop the skills and knowledge they need to maintain their tenancy. o Assisting older people to maintain their independence by providing housing support and developing the Council's 24/7 cross-tenure Lifeline Service. • Contributing to the effective management of the county-wide HEART service to deliver a programme of Disabled Facilities Grants (all tenures) and Aids & Adaptations (Council homes) so that people can continue to enjoy their homes regardless of any disability. • Providing housing with support for vulnerable people. • Improving the quality of the districts existing housing stock, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Raising the standard of homes in the private rented sector by deploying an effective 	

regime for HMO licensing and HHRS inspections, supported by enforcement action when necessary.

- o Supporting a Landlord Steering Group and a Landlords' Forum.
- o Helping people remain healthy and safe in their homes, we will provide discretionary grants to owner occupiers where the condition of their home is dangerous but they do not have the means or capacity without help to resolve the situation.
- o Maintaining high standards of cleaning of communal areas and grounds maintenance on housing estates where the Council is the majority landlord.

- Preventing homelessness and providing temporary accommodation and a route into housing in cases when it cannot be prevented.
- Helping to reduce the number of admissions to hospitals and care homes and help people return home more quickly after receiving treatment by carrying out aids and adaptations and providing Disabled Facilities Grants so that residents can remain in their homes safely and for longer.
- Visiting every illegal gypsy and traveller encampment to identify if there are particular housing needs amongst the occupants that need to be addressed.
- Providing financial advice to tenants to maximise their income.
- Effectively administer the district-wide HomeChoice scheme.
- Reduce the time people have to spend waiting for a new home and reduce income loss to the Council's landlord service by letting empty homes to new tenants as quickly as possible.
- Prevent people from becoming homeless or when that is not possible help them find a new place to live as quickly as possible by providing a homelessness service that is compliant with the legal requirements placed upon the Council to help those who are homeless.

2400 HomeChoice Applications as of 31/12/2017

Average 32 day void turnaround 1/4/2017 to 31/12/2017

2.2 Measures

Customer Measures – those important to the people/organisations who use our services

Note: These measures should be used on a daily, weekly or monthly basis to identify the impact of interventions in the system and to plan future interventions. Interventions may be very small adjustments to resources, or may involve transformational change.

Measure	Target	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4
Homeless households per 1000 population					
The average number of weeks each homeless applicant spends in temporary accommodation	6 weeks				
The average number of days it took to let each property	33				
Rent Collection Rate					
Total Rent Arrears as % of rent debit					
Percentage of calls to Lifeline answered within 30 seconds	90.0%				
Number of empty homes brought back into use as a consequence of PSH team activity	8				
The percentage of private sector housing service requests responded to within target	90%				
Time taken to close HEART cases					
Total number of Tenancy Update Visits	432				

Operational Measures – other (non-customer) measures essential to ensure that “purpose” can be achieved.

Note: This section will not be used by most service areas as their Customer Measures are expected to be sufficient. However, there may be cases where an operational measure is required to ensure the smooth running of a service area.

Measure	Target	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4
The average number of days applicants remain in Band 1	N/A				
Total number of people registered with HomeChoice	N/A				
Total number of affordable homes completions	N/A				
Total income earned by Lifeline	N/A				
Number of HMO Licences which were relicensed	N/A				
Number of open ASB cases	N/A				

Asset Management Measures					
Measure	Target	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4
Percentage of HRA repair requests completed on time	90%				
Percentage of HRA repair requests which were subject to a recall	<10%				
Percentage of HRA properties with a gas safety inspection completed within the last 12 months	100%				
Percentage of HRA properties with in date Electrical Test certificates	100%				
Percentage HRA properties with in date Fire Risk Assessment	100%				
Percentage of HRA properties with an up to date EPC	100%				
Percentage of HRA properties with a minimum D standard EPC	100%				
Percentage of HRA properties with stock conditions survey information updated within the last 5 years	-				

2.3 Managing Risk

Risk	Planned Actions during year	Comments
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the monthly budget monitoring regime. • Review HRA budget assumptions when further information on implementation of outstanding Housing & Planning Act proposals and timescale for local implementation of changes to the social security system are known. • Ensure savings/additional income is planned for reduced income from Supporting People for funding our housing related support. 	
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure contracts are managed well. In particular ensure current risk issues with the cleaning contract are mitigated. 	
Contract Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly reviews of the Contracts Register at Housing Management Team meetings. 	
Audits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audits undertaken this year Rents and collection, cleaning. 	
Risk Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly review of Risk Register by Housing services. 	
Service Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance responsibilities for new Head of Service continue and the process includes an in-year review of assurance arrangements. 	
Corporate Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Assessments to be regularly checked and updated. • Contribution to corporate agenda to be reviewed as part of Risk Register review. 	

Part 3 – Managing and Improving People

Category	Sponsor	Activity	Budget Impact	Impact on Service Areas	Milestones
1. Succession Planning (E.g. planning for leavers)	Lisa Barker	Decision on service team manager secondments	None	Support from HR	VARF Recruitment
2. Skills, Training, Competency Needs	Lisa Barker, Simon Brooke, Ken Bruno	Develop a service area training plan (training matrix) from appraisal PDPs	Budget for training needs to be adequately resourced to support officers, in particular those doing professional courses	Finance Training	Appraisals
3. Service Changes	Lisa Barker, Simon Brooke, Ken Bruno	Skilling the teams to enable them to be more flexible to change Working differently supporting a work/life balance Deployment of ICT to support flexible working	Within existing budgets	HR/IT	Training ICT considered

3.1 Staff Resource

Housing Services employ 84.04 FTE as of March 2018

3.2 Workforce Planning

Category	Sponsor	Activity	Budget Impact	Impact on Service Areas	Milestones
Workforce Planning	Ken Bruno, Simon Brooke	Apprentices	Apprentices with budget	HR Support	September 2018 start
Workforce Planning	Ken Bruno	Homeless staff for new HRA	Government grant	None	April 2018 start
Workforce Planning	Ken Bruno	Additional Officers to support extension of private sector housing legislation	Existing	None	Recruitment Training
Skills, Training, Competency Needs	Lisa Barker, Ken Bruno, Simon Brooke	Engagement with corporate training framework	Service area and corporate budget	HR	Ongoing
Service Changes	Lisa Barker, Ken Bruno, Simon Brooke	Activities detailed in section 5	Various	Asset HR	In accordance with section 5
Determining the need for additional resource	Ken Bruno, Simon Brooke	Review of services	Unknown	HR Finance	Review of: - Neighbourhoods - Tenancy Management - Homelessness - Allocations

Part 4 BUDGET – Main budgetary pressures and changes

Activity	Budgetary Impact	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Housing Revenue Account				
Social security changes	<p>Tenants aged under 35 will be affected by the shared room rate that for some will be below our rent levels and therefore tenants will have a shortfall to pay, and some single occupiers of larger/more expensive properties may also be affected and have a shortfall from the one room rate. Occupiers in the private sector are already subject to LHA rates. HA tenants will be more severely affected due to higher rents than we charge.</p> <p>The introduction of Universal Credit has now started to impact upon us, although due to the small numbers involved this is not having a negative impact on rent collection overall, The full roll out from October 2018, will have a bigger impact and we will monitor the impact and measures prior to this time.</p>	Bad debt provision (BDP) set at 1.5% £399k	HRA BDP increased to 2% £524k to reflect increased risk of rent arrears	BDP set at 2% in HRA BP £517k

Activity	Budgetary Impact	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Reduction in cost/increase in income for Lifeline Service	The funding shortfall of £546K identified from July 2017 when Housing Related Support funding from WCC was withdrawn has been made. The service is now required to maintain income levels and increase charitable work to increase turnover and operations margins.	HRA has agreed budget of up to £546k as per HRA Budget report at February 2017 Executive.	Current funding shortfall of £819k at 2017/18 values (Pending re-design and income generation programme).	TBA
1% annual rent reduction	Mandatory until 19/20	£253k reduction	£243k reduction	£237k reduction

Part 5 – Managing Planned Changes, Major Work streams and Projects

Change/Project	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
Agree and implement work plan for Year two actions for the Housing & Homelessness Strategy	Ken Bruno	None	Identify as work progresses	Plan agreed	31/3/19
Promote the Lifeline Service to increase number of users and maximise income	Simon Brooke	Increased Income	None	None	31/3/19
Review the effectiveness of the Housing Advisory Group and formulate an approach to resident involvement	Ken Bruno	Unknown	TBC	Review complete	30/9/19
Review services provided to leaseholders including S20 consultations	Ken Bruno	None	TBC	Consultation Review	31/3/19
Review service charges	Simon Brooke	TBC	TBC	Determine Approach	31/3/19
Income maximisation advice to all sheltered scheme tenants adversely affected by Universal credit	Simon Brooke	Rent Income maintained	None	Tenants Identified Advice Starts Advice Ends	December 2018
Complete the fire alarm system improvement programme	Simon Brooke	HRA	Assets to support work	Radcliffe works Gas removed Other high rise communal Other high rise doors	March 2018
Develop a strategy to tackle rough sleeping in the district	Ken Bruno	Will become clear as work progresses	Neighbourhood Services Health & Community Protection	Consultation Action Plan approved	31/3/19

Change/Project	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
Review the operation of the cleaning contract	Simon Brooke	TBC	Neighbourhood Services Finance	Consultation Review	31/3/19
Complete the re-licensing of existing HMOs and the new licensing required by the revised regulations	Ken Bruno	Existing	None	Legislation Start work	Ongoing
Effectively settle and support Syrian refugees	Ken Bruno	None	Possible at year 2	2 years 5 years	Ongoing
Review of options to develop new HRA homes	Head of Housing	None (for review)	Finance	Paper written Approvals	Paper May 2018
Review HRA Business Plan assumptions in light of budget pressures, social security changes and emerging thinking on the unimplemented provisions of the Housing & Planning Act	Head of Housing, Andrew Rollins	None (for review)	Finance Assets		
Review Housing Support and the Lifeline service	Simon Brooke	TBC	None	Review Complete	
Review our approach to tenancy management in light of the Housing and Planning Act and specifically fixed term tenancies. This may mean the introduction of a new Tenancy Agreement as well as related procedures and current tenancy agreement	Simon Brooke	TBC	Legal	Unknown	Per government timelines
Ensure the newly established Neighbourhood Officers team is operating effectively in improving the management of our estates and undertaking appropriate safety inspections	Simon Brooke	TBC	HR Finance	Review Approvals Consultation	June 2018

Change/Project	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
Prepare customers and the service for the introduction of universal credit	Simon Brooke	None	HB	Plan produced Tenants identified Advice provided	October 2018
Review whether to renew the Tunstall centre or to replace with another product extend the reach and the income achieved by lifeline	Simon Brooke	None	IT	Consideration of alternative products Determine service requirements	November 2018
Monitor HEART service ensuring that the council interests are embedded	Ken Bruno	Existing	None	None	Ongoing
Introduce the revised allocations policy	Ken Bruno	Existing	None	New policy in place	1/8/18
Complete the 12 month review of the new allocations Policy. After a sufficient period	Ken Bruno	Existing	None	Analysis completed	1/8/19
Implement and review the void process	Ken Bruno	Existing	None	Complete review	31/3/19
Implement the housing and homelessness strategy	Simon Brooke	TBC	Assets		
Review accommodation for supportive housing	Simon Brooke, Ken Bruno	Existing	None	None	None
Effectively manage new temporary accommodation provision e.g. PSC and review the level of service provision provided to households in temporary accommodation	Ken Bruno, Simon Brooke	Existing	None	None	Ongoing
Prepare a student strategy	Ken Bruno	Existing	Supports Development Services	Strategy in place	30/9/18
Implement the new homeless reduction act, ensuring a smooth transition to the new arrangements	Ken Bruno	Existing	Maybe greater workload for front line	None	Ongoing

Change/Project	Sponsor / Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
Formulate a new approach to tenant involvement and engagement	Ken Bruno	None	None	Strategy agreed	30/9/18
Let ICT support and develop contract/system for HomeChoice	Ken Bruno	Existing	IT impact already agreed	In place	1/5/18
Maintain effective administration of the service area	Ken Bruno	Existing	None	None	Ongoing
Effectively manage new temporary accommodation provision e.g. PSC and review the level of service provision provided to households in temporary accommodation	Simon Brooke, Ken Bruno	Existing	None	None	Ongoing